

folk cd review

Bill Jones Turn to Me (Bedspring, distributed by Proper Music)

BEHIND the blokish name is a young woman christened Belinda. Her place among English folk's front-runners was reinforced this week when she was named best newcomer in the Radio 2 Folk Awards. She has a simple style, a freshness underpinned by years of training. For much of the album, she confines herself to the piano or accordion accompaniments, but she is also comfortable on flute and whistle.

Yet it is Jones's natural instrument that makes the CD so heartening. There is nothing flashy; her singing is understated, leaving the impression that she must have more in reserve. Most of the songs are traditional, and I particularly warmed to her treatment of *A Jug of This*, with a delightful tune, *Hexham Lassies*, bolted on.

In the magnificent, self-composed title track, Jones explores the pain of a woman who follows her man far from home, against all instincts, as he searches for work. It relates, as so often, to the North-East, her adopted homeland, but could apply with equal force to other regions. I suspect that she will be required to sing it wherever she goes. **Colin Randall**

Telegraph

Saturday

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