



Noctambule — what the web and papers say



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WEEKLY MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE....

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Newry brings history and heritage in exciting month

Museum to mark Heritage Open Days, World War II exhibit and culture night



If you haven't visited Newry and Mourne Museum before, September 2019 is the time to do it as there is plenty on offer throughout the month.

September 14-15 are designated European Heritage Open Days, and on the Saturday of that weekend Tracey Jeffery from NI Food Tours will visit the museum for a demonstration of traditional bread making, with sampling of course at 2.30pm. On Sunday, September 16, there will be a

museum. You will be guided through the galleries and displays that highlight the history of this unique region including the new exhibition *War Declared: the local impact of World War II*. September 20 is Culture Night and there will be an evening of music with San Francisco's wonderful Noctambule (Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor), pictured, who will begin at 7pm. Finally, on Saturday,

Mallon. There will be a viewing of the film after the presentation. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council chairperson, councillor Charlie Casey, said: "The wide range of activities on offer, from the tours of the exhibitions, through to music and various workshops, means there is something for all visitors at Newry and Mourne Museum." Admission for all these events

A busload of entertainment

Take a bus ride into ancient and contemporary Celtic culture with Iúr Cinn Fleadh – Newry's flourishing festival.

The pop up Gaeltacht on a double decker bus in Marcus Square offers a chance to brush up on Irish language with Linda Ervine and Gaeláras Mhic Ardghail tutors. Also just the ticket are the Armagh Rhymers. Through music, storytelling and drama, this unusual ensemble offer an entertaining and educational experience – with colourful costumes and a sense of tradition and history. In addition, Linda Ervine will speak on *The Hidden History Of Protestants And The Irish Language* at Riverside Church. These are just some of the offerings at the Fleadh which runs from September 5-8. Headline acts at other city venues will be singer-songwriter Paul Brady, Kilfenora Céilí Band and four of Ireland's most enduring comedy acts in a full evening of laughs called

You Must Be Joking.

The weekend line-up includes Dundalk's Gerry O'Connor presenting the backstory to the Gaelic cultural revival of the early 20th Century; Manchester poet Tony Walsh whose work came to worldwide attention at the vigil for victims of the arena bomb outrage; and Moon and Sixpence Puppet Theatre, Ireland's only travelling marionette (string puppet) theatre. A special event will be *Call The Musician: Healing People & Communities*, with local singer-songwriters Tommy Sands and Finbar Magee with San Francisco's Noctambule – Bruce Victor and Marla Fibish.

Join them for an afternoon's reflection on the power of music to help communities find roads to recovery.

Some events will require a purchased ticket from Sean Hollywood Arts Centre, Buttercrane or www.iurcinnfleadh.com.





Irish Music Magazine official

11 July · 🌐

Noctambule : The Return

www.noctambulemusic.com

Ireland can wake up again to the 'night owl'. Noctambule are Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor - making a return visit here with their unique mix of traditional and original music.

Last year Noctambule - French for 'night owl' - travelled from their California home to undertake their first Ireland tour. They delivered seven gigs in one weekend at lúr Cinn Fleadh in Newry, gave concerts in Bantry, Dublin, Cork and Limerick - and launched their latest album A Sweetish Tune.

Now Noctambule have been invited back, for lúr Cinn Fleadh from 5th-8th September, the Gerry Whelan Memorial Weekend festival in Cootehill, Co Cavan, from 13th-15th September, and Culture Night at Bagenal's Castle, Newry, on 20th September.

Bruce is an eclectic and accomplished guitarist and cittern player, seemingly resisting any single musical genre, Marla is one of the prominent voices of the mandolin in Irish music. She brings a deep and distinctive sensibility to the music on one of its lesser heard instruments.

Together, they play traditional and original music in a variety of forms - traditional Irish tunes and songs, their own tunes written in traditional forms, and compelling musical settings of a broad array of poetry.

Their music is rendered with artistry, sensitivity and humour on an unusual array of strings - various guitars in varied tunings, mandola, mandolin, cittern, tenor guitar - and their blended voices.

"We were delighted by the warm welcome," Bruce and Marla said about their first tour of Ireland, "and we're thrilled to be invited back."

For more details visit www.noctambulemusic.com



NOCTAMBULEMUSIC.COM

Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor | Noctambule

Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor are Noctambule, Acoustic music, Irish and...

2020
NEWRY
VISION PROJECT

IÚR CINN FLEADH

NEWRY CITY MUSIC FESTIVAL
5 - 8 SEPTEMBER 2019



CALL THE MUSICIAN: HEALING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

Friday 6th September 2-4pm Newry Library
Tommy Sands, Finbar Magee and Noctambule reflect on
the power of music to help us find roads to recovery
www.iurcinnfleadh.com



Noctambule entertaining on Level 7 in the Buttercrane Shopping Centre Car Park as part of Iúr Cinn Fleadh. R1937247



Call the Musicians - Healing People and Communities with Tommy Sands, Noctambule and Finbar Magee in Newry Library. R1937255

Key Insights

A significant volume of research, surveys, workshops and consultation has been undertaken in the past eight years, which has helped to build a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities now facing us. The key findings and emerging themes of this work to date are summarised in this section.





Newry&Mourne Museum

@NandMMuseum



Many thanks to our packed audience who came out to see the wonderful Noctambule who performed tonight as part of our Culture Night experience.

Thanks to Bruce and Marla



8:49 PM · Sep 20, 2019 from [Newry, Northern Ireland](#) · [Twitter for Android](#)

NOCTAMBULE TAKE THEIR TUNES HIGHER AND HIGHER

By: Columba O'Hare

Published: 17 September 2019

Popular acoustic duo Noctambule keep going up in the world. For *Iúr Cinn Fleadh* they played above Newry's rooftops with their car park gig on Buttercrane's Level 7. This Friday (20th September) they take their trad-with-a-twist to the lofty banqueting room of Bagenal's Castle for *Culture Night*.

French for 'night-owl', Noctambule are Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor. There will be no admission fee for their concert in the historic setting of Newry and Mourne Museum, which starts at 7pm.



Noctambule at the Buttercrane in Newry

surprising qualities in these seasoned musicians. Their work is rendered with sensitivity and humour on an unusual array of strings - different guitars in varied tunings, mandola, mandolin, cittern, tenor guitar - and their blended voices.

Bruce and Marla take their audiences on a journey. Their love of traditional music shines through as they wrap you in their well crafted songs. They're warm-hearted and funny, too!

And that's not all. Just before *Culture Night*, this hard-working couple will play at Rostrevor sessions in *The Corner House* from 10pm on Tuesday and *Crawford's Bar* from 8.30pm on Wednesday - as well as two daytime sets at Synge and Byme in Kilbroney Forest Park from 11.30am and 2pm on Thursday (19th September).

They've already won hearts not just at *Iúr Cinn Fleadh*, but also at the *Gerry Whelan Memorial Weekend* and *Spirit Store*, Dundalk, on this, their second Ireland tour. Marla and Bruce delighted local audiences last year when they launched their album *A Sweetish Tune* on their first ever tour of this island.

Noctambule play a variety of musical forms - traditional Irish tunes, their own compositions in a traditional vein, and compelling settings of a broad range of poetry. This unique collaboration brings out

Culture Night at the Museum



As part of the events and activities organised for Culture Night, Newry and Mourne Museum is delighted to host an evening of music with the wonderful Noctambule, who will begin at 7pm.

San Francisco's Noctambule, Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor, are no strangers to Newry. They delighted audiences here last year with Irish trad, their own compositions, and poetry set to music. They also launched their latest album *A Sweetish Tune* on that 2018 Ireland tour. They perform with sensitivity and humour on guitars, mandola, mandolin, cittern – and their blended voices.

Date

Friday 20 September

Time

The Museum is open
from 6pm – 9pm

Venue

Newry and Mourne
Museum

Admission:

FREE

Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

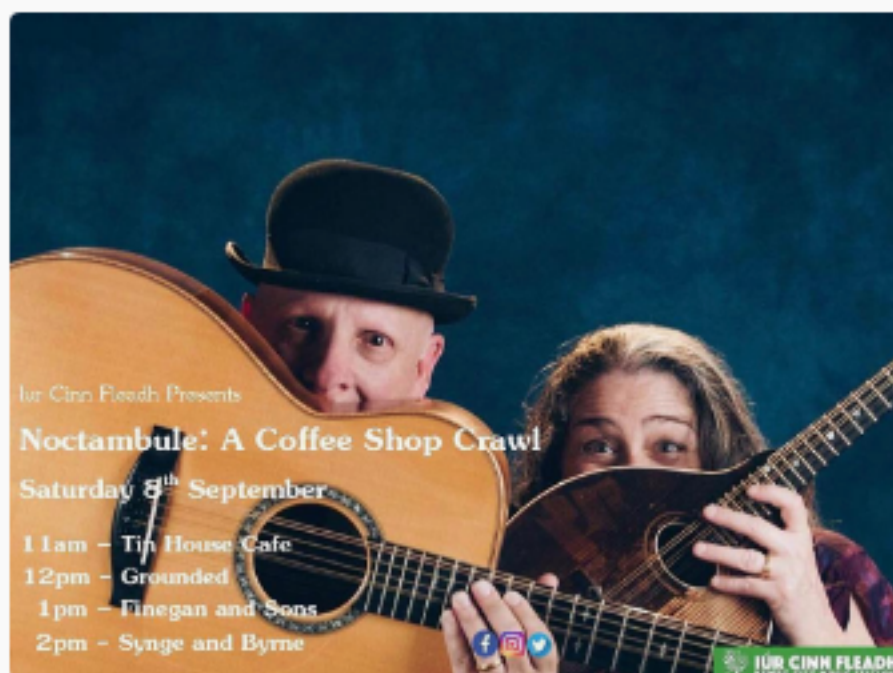
Clár Fómhair na nIarsmalann Museums Autumn Programme



Ag freastal ar an Dún
agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down
and South Armagh



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down
District Council



Flying in from sunny California, Noctambule are joining us for two days of the Iúr Cinn Fleadh to give us a flavour of the trad scene across the pond. Relax to their gentle music over a coffee along their coffee bar crawl on Saturday 8th September around Newry! [#iurcinnfleadh](#) [#newry](#) [#coffee](#) [#livemusic](#) [#irishtrad](#) - 4 months ago

♥ 4 Likes

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👥 0

SHARON SHANNON

When future historians write the annals of Irish music, Sharon Shannon will be among the top names on their list. Newry is most fortunate to welcome this ace accordion player from County Clare, who keeps traditional Irish sounds at the core of her work, but frames them with influences from other cultures and genres. Don't miss this living legend as she fills Newry Town Hall with magical tunes. Sharon will be joined on stage by Jim Murray and Jack Maher. Support from Tiarnan & Meabh Smyth. Bar Facilities Available.



Friday 7 September | 8pm (Doors 7.30pm) | Newry Town Hall | £15

KIERAN CUNNINGHAM AS DAVE ALLEN



The best of Irish comedy from Father Ted to Mrs Brown's Boys owes much to the late Dave Allen, whose work comes alive in an inspiring one-man show by local lad Kieran Cunningham. Kieran weaves drama and comedy into his own tapestry of Dave Allen's genius. Make sure you catch Kieran's highly popular production 'From the Cradle to the Grave' at the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre on 6th September. Bar Facilities Available.

Thursday 6 September | 9pm (Doors 8.30pm) | Sean Hollywood Arts Centre | £12

NOCTAMBULE

After appearing at events with the likes of actor Liam Neeson, President Michael D Higgins and fiddle player Martin Hayes, Noctambule bring their captivating mix of traditional Irish and contemporary folk sounds to the Fleadh. Leading lights from America's Irish music scene, this entertaining acoustic duo are guitarist Bruce Victor and mandolin player Marla Fibish. Chill out to Noctambule (French for night owl) on the Trad Cruise, coffee bar crawl and Lunchtime Session.



Saturday 8 September | 11am - 2pm | Coffee Bar Crawl Various Locations (See Event Guide)

Saturday 8 September | 7pm | Trad Cruise Albert Basin

Sunday 9 September | 2 - 4pm | Buttercrane Shopping Centre

Noctambule - Back in Newry
Friday, 14 September 2018 7:30



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Acoustic duo Noctambule came from California to Ireland - and played a 'Magnificent Seven' sessions for Newry's music festival Iúir Cinn Fleadh last weekend!

San Francisco couple Bruce Victor and Marla Fibish performed their blend of traditional and contemporary sounds for enthusiastic audiences at no fewer than four coffee houses in five hours. In addition, they played on the Trad Cruise, at a Buttercrane Shopping Centre concert - and at the Final Fling at the Railway Bar.

For those who missed any of those performances - or who simply want to see them again - Noctambule return to Newry this Friday (14th September) for a full evening concert at the city's stylish brew bar Finegan & Son in Kildare Street.

They will launch their new album A Sweetish Tune - which has already earned them rave reviews. The recording includes traditional and contemporary ballads, some O'Carolan tunes and poetry set to music.

In performance, Bruce and Marla take their listeners on a journey with an unusual array of strings - various guitars in varied tunings, mandola, mandolin, cittern, tenor guitar - and their blended voices.

They take the name Noctambule, French for 'night-owl,' from a Robert Service poem about a nocturnal ramble through the back alleys of Paris, which they set to music and included on their first album, Travel In The Shadows.

'We've been overwhelmed by the warm welcome,' said Bruce and Marla, 'and we appreciate the heartfelt interest and support we've received. Thank you, Newry, you are great. See you again soon!' The couple are heading to Dublin to perform a gig there, before their return to Newry.

Noctambule's concert at Finegan & Son, Kildare Street, starts at 7.30pm on Friday 14th September. Admission is £5. For more details about the duo, visit <http://www.noctambulemusic.com>.

THE PLAYERS



Cormac Begley [concertina]

Cormac Begley is a bass, baritone, treble and piccolo concertina player from a West Kerry musical family. He plays in a number of projects including duets with Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh and Liam Ó Maonlaí and with the band Ré. He is the founder of Airt and the award-winning Tunes in the Church live concert series in Galway and Dublin. His debut solo album has received critical acclaim amassing nine 5-star reviews to date. He is currently the artist-in-residence at the Dock Arts Centre and will be the traditional artist-in-residence in the National Concert Hall later this year.

Dennis Cahill [guitar]

Dennis Cahill is a native of Chicago, born to parents from the Dingle Peninsula. His spare, essential accompaniment to Martin Hayes' fiddle is acknowledged as a major breakthrough for guitar in the Irish tradition. Dennis has also performed with such renowned fiddlers as Liz Carroll, Eileen Ivers and Kevin Burke.

Karan Casey [singer]

Karan Casey has been one of the most innovative, provocative and imitated voices in Irish traditional and folk music. Her career has spanned twenty five years from the early days as a jazz performer in Dublin to her heady days in New York with the band Solas to her now established solo career and she has sold over half a million albums. As a soloist, Karan has released 6 albums, a duo album (with John Doyle) and an album for children. Karan has won awards for Best Folk Album from Irish Music Magazine and been nominated for the BBC Folk Awards and the Danish Grammys.

Clockwise from left: Cormac Begley, Dennis Cahill and Marla Fibish



Steve Cooney [guitar]

Steve was born in Melbourne, Australia and in 1981 he bought a one-way ticket to Ireland where he joined Stockton's Wing as bassist. Since then he has popped up all over the place, with a major contribution to Sharon Shannon's first album, and performances and recordings with Dermot Byrne, Altan, Martin Hayes and others.

Marla Fibish [mandolin]

One of the most prominent voices on the mandolin in Irish music, Marla Fibish brings a deep and distinctive sensibility to the music on one of its lesser-heard instruments. Her playing is featured on the 2017 Noctambule release *A Sweetish Tune*, the 2010 eponymous recording with the San Francisco trio Three Mile Stone, and *The Morning Star*, a duo CD with legendary Irish singer and bouzouki player Jimmy Crowley. In addition to the mandolin, Marla plays mandola, tenor guitar and button accordion. She sings and writes music and is known for her musical settings of works from a variety of poets.

Martin Hayes [fiddle]

Martin Hayes' unique sound, his mastery of the fiddle and his acknowledgement of the past and his shaping of the future of the music, combine to create an astonishing and formidable artistic intelligence. He remains grounded in the music he grew up with in his own locality, in Feakle County Clare where the music which he learned from his late father, P. Joe Hayes, the legendary leader of the long-lived Tulla Ceili Band, profoundly influenced his musical accent and ideas forever after. His latest performing project is The Gloaming, a band which has burst on the music scene with a rare combination of Irish tunes, ancient sean-nós song, brave explorations and exhilarating and explosive medleys with a distinctive new sound.



PETER HORNE

60 Second Life Coach

THE FOOD OF LIFE

Bruce Victor is a practising psychiatrist in the sunshine state of California. He is one of those thoroughly modern practitioners who has learned first-hand the wisdom and benefit of taking a holistic approach to treating the human condition.

Having been a practising clinician for more than 30 years and former clinical professor of psychiatry in the School of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, Bruce was already aware of the healing capacity of music and research into its positive effects on the immune system, pain and anxiety reduction, and enhanced mobility in patients who suffered strokes or from Parkinson's disease. Until the year 2011, there had been no need to apply any of this knowledge to himself.

Bruce had been playing the guitar since he was ten but considered himself to be an amateur musician. As he put it, "I had some talent, but I was hardly a prodigy." Beginning in 2011, several events propelled him into giving himself permission to become a "serious musician". This was the year that Bruce met and initiated a partnership with accomplished musician Marla Fibish, who taught Irish music on the mandolin.

It was also the year when he got very sick. With no warning, Bruce started to develop both severe hypothyroidism and alopecia universalis (loss of all body hair). With these disorders came physical and psychological symptoms that he



“I NEVER CONSIDERED BRUCE WILLIS OR YUL BRYNNER TO BE TONSORIAL ROLE MODELS.”

described as "somewhat untethering – after a lifetime of luxuriant hair, I wasn't exactly happy about this, as I never considered Bruce Willis or Yul Brynner to be tonsorial role models".

Inspired after hearing Marla's original musical settings of poetry to music, Bruce had the revelation that the function of music was to *connect* with others above and beyond *impressing* others. Music then became important – even quite central – in his own healing process. Bruce became convinced that being very ill was somehow necessary to facilitate the transition from physician to physician/musician – and that he "needed to develop a different set of skills, in general... and to play with Marla, in particular. "I've come to realise these pursuits

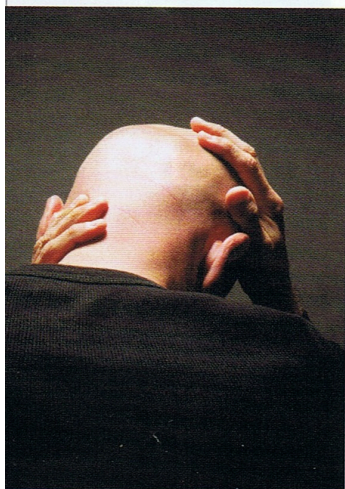
may have a uniting rubric to them," said Bruce, 'as they are both paths to connection... and healing is about 'making whole'; the only way that it is done [is] through the enhancement of connection."

Bruce mused, "So now I have *both* a medical licence and musical 'licence' to help people establish connection both with others and within themselves – two ostensibly different jobs that ultimately have connection and healing at their core."

So for the past seven years he's also been a professional musician, playing with wife Marla Fibish in acoustic duo Noctambule (noctambulemusic.com) who will be touring Ireland and the UK towards the end of this summer. ■

PETER HORNE BIOGRAPHY

Peter Horne is a qualified life coach with a passion for helping people change things in their lives when they feel stuck. He works with individuals and organisations, and can be contacted at enquiries@therealyou.eu. Peter is married with four children and attends St Peter's Church in Brighton.



A SWEETISH TUNE FROM A PAIR OF NIGHTOWLS

Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor are Noctambule. You may well recall Marla is one of the foremost Irish traditional mandolin players in North America. Seán Laffey asks some early morning questions to a pair of night owls.



Seán: Your new release, *A Sweetish Tune*, is an album of mostly traditional Irish tunes, along with some of Marla's original tunes, written in traditional forms. How did this project come about?

Marla: "I had been playing Irish Traditional Music for over thirty years when I met Bruce and we started playing music together. Our immediate connection was around songs, the poetry I had previously set to music, and we began exploring that form and writing together with great enthusiasm. The first two albums we made together centred around this music. Then I found myself feeling the pull to make a trad album, as it had been too long away from my first love."

Bruce: "When Marla brought up the idea of doing a trad album together, frankly, I was somewhat apprehensive. While I have always

is my reference point for playing any music. I come from the melody first and can intuit my way to a harmonic framework, but that is never my starting place."

Bruce: "I am something of an eclecticist. I am originally from Detroit, Michigan; I grew up listening to and loving Motown music. This influence appears on this album when I back Marla on the two jigs (*Bold Doherty* and *Bill Harte's*). However, my life changed upon listening to John Renbourn and the other 'alternate tuning' stalwarts of the Folk Baroque movement in the UK in the 1970's, which, in turn, led me to Irish music. I still have my Bothy Band, Planxty and Clannad 33's from the early 80's."

Seán: "Can you tell us about composing the title track *A Sweetish Tune*?"

Marla: "*A Sweetish Tune* came to be in two stages, the A part on a trip to Oregon, and the B part on a subsequent trip to Colorado. It was winter, and cold in both places. I don't know if that influenced the vague Northern European feeling to the tune. It was fun to play with moving the stressed beat in the turn, without letting it cross over into crookedness. Bruce emerged from the shower one morning with the name. We couldn't claim it to be Swedish, but we could certainly claim it to be sweet(ish)."

Seán: "Marla's Gibson mandolin has a bit of a "Willy Nelson's guitar" look about it, but what a tone. How did she find the instrument and is it really as good as the CD makes it sound?"

Marla: "The instrument found me, and yes, it really is as good as the CD makes it sound! Capturing its particular sound is very much a priority for me in the recording process."

"This mandolin belonged to my grandfather. He owned a few mandolins, tenor banjos and guitars – he loved to play the American music of his day. He passed away when I was in high school. A few years later I got the notion to play, and asked my aunt if I could have one of Grandpa's mandolins – she brought me this one, and that is now more

"At the end of the day, we push, challenge, and cajole each other, which often lands us in wonderful strange places"

loved Irish music, it was never my exclusive focus the way it was with Marla and I was concerned that I might not bring enough to the table – or session, as the case might be – for this kind of album. But it turned out to be a wonderful musical journey, having discovered that Marla actually wanted the full breadth of my sensibilities. Ultimately, there was an emphasis on the shared vision of the arc of a piece and what to make explicit that was formerly implicit. At the end of the day, we push, challenge, and cajole each other, which often lands us in wonderful strange places."

Seán: "It sounds like you were coming from different places prior to making this album. Can you tell us something about your own musical backgrounds?"

Marla: "I learned to play the mandolin by learning to play Irish traditional music, learning both at the same time. Traditional Irish music

than 35 years ago. I've never played another. My grandfather was not its original owner; it was made in 1922 and he acquired it in the 1960s.

"The damage you see on the finish of the instrument was largely caused by my grandfather, who was a bit of a tinkerer, and liked to glue and tape electronic pick-ups and such to the instrument. At this point in its busy life, it bears plenty of wear from me as well!"

Seán: "Have you any plans to tour *Sweetish Tune* and would that involve a trip to Ireland?"

Marla: "We are just now putting together tours for 2018 in various parts of the US. We do not yet have plans for Ireland, but we would positively love for that to happen and are looking for those opportunities!"

Bruce: "So....uh, Seán...you know any booking agents?"

Find out more at www.noctambulemusic.com

"A Sweetish Tune" by Noctambule: a must have for fans of Irish music – traditional and experimental.

Reviews

Patrick O'Heffernan · 7th September 2017 · No Comments · 164 views

(Chapala, Mexico) For fans of traditional Irish music, "*A Sweetish Tune*" by the duo Noctambule is a must have. This long awaited second album by Marla Fibush and Bruce Victor, who produce and record under the *nomme de music* Noctambule, builds on their previous releases, *The Waking* and *Travel In Shadows*, but goes far beyond them with heavenly mandolin and mandola finger picking by Fibush that perfectly blends and harmonizes with Victor's 6- and 12-string guitar melodies. They create not just music, but a visual adventure through the Irish countryside and the people who have lived there over the centuries.

At nine songs, the album seems diminutive on the surface, but Victor and Fibush have slipped a little Irish humor in the arrangement, as most of the album's songs are combinations of two or even three tunes, giving the album a richness that overflows with emotion, imagery and sparkling cleverness. The album opens with "Patty Canny' Toast", a Charlie Lennon composition from County Leitrim, that swirls hypnotically with mandolin and 6-string threads interweaving almost invisibly. They drop the invisibility cloak for "Bold Doerty/Bill Hart's Jig", ostentatiously traversing two genres in a mashup that is altogether more than the sum of its two parts. Ostentatiousness continues with "The Creel/The Sweetheart Reel", a familiar Irish story of illicit love, but with a 33-foot ladder thrown in for fun, as sung by Marla in this version of Ballad #281 from Francis James Child's 19th century collection.



Fibush continues her musical tale-telling with "Trip to Skye" by J. Whelan and "The Good Doctor", her own creation that ingeniously changes keys throughout. "Blind Mary" combines with "Cold Missouri Waters" in a tale we have heard in many variations, this one with the mandolin, 6-string and tenor guitar with Victor laying down the lyrics in a ghostly voice. "Blind Mary" is my personal favorite, with a refrain – some would call it a hook – that sticks with you.

The pace again picks up with "The Cloone/ March Reel/The Abby Reel" which brings in the resonance of the 12-string, and the baroque "Mister O'Conner" combined with the singular "The Broken Pledge", played delicately but fiercely on the mandolin, mandola and cittern.

The pair wrap up the album with two of their own creations, " Song of the Wave" drawn from Khalil Gibran's poetry sung by Fibush with harmony by Victor, and the title song, "A Sweetish Tune" featuring Aryeh Frankfurter on the nyckelharpa, a traditional Swedish musical instrument played with a bow with keys attached to tangents that serve as [frets](#) to change the pitch of the string.



"A Sweetish Tune" will delight the legions of traditional Irish music and excite those who like to see boundaries pushed. Noctambule's world class musical artistry on modern and traditional instruments combined with their willingness to experiment with an ear for what sounds right, make this a must-have album from a must-follow musical couple.

Patrick O'Heffern, host of Music Friday Live! And MusicaFusionLA radio

Noctambule <http://www.noctambulemusic.com>

A Sweetish Tune available on CD Baby or on the website.



Larkspur couple's lyrical, lovely 'Sweetish Tune'



MORE

Video: 'A Sweetish Tune'

By **Paul Liberatore**, *Marin Independent Journal*

POSTED: 08/17/17, 11:53 AM PDT

UPDATED: ON 08/17/2017 0 COMMENTS

After two albums of poetry set to music, Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor, a Larkspur married couple performing as Noctambule, combine their talents on acoustic stringed instruments on "A Sweetish Tune," an album of Irish traditional music sweetened by some original tunes and a poem turned into a love song.

For Fibish, who's known for playing Irish music on mandolin, this album is in her wheelhouse.

She contributes a pair of original instrumentals, the jaunty "The Good Doctor," twinned with their friend John Whelan's beautifully lyrical waltz "Trip to Skye"; and the whimsical "March Reel," sandwiched between the traditional pieces "The Cloone" and "The Abbey." She named "The Good Doctor" after Victor, a practicing psychiatrist and former clinical professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco, medical school.

Playing six- and 12-string guitars and cittern, a kind of Irish bouzouki, Victor has an almost telepathic musical relationship with Fibish, weaving his creative accompaniment around her intricate melodies on mandolin, mandola and tenor guitar. The result, as on the title instrumental, which they wrote together, is often exquisite. It features Aryeh Frankfurter on nyckelharpa, a Swedish "keyed fiddle" played with a bow.

They return to the format of their first two albums on "Song of the Wave," a Khalil Gibran love poem set to music. She sings the lead vocal in her pure, pretty alto and he joins in, singing in soft harmony.

There's an old saying about couples making beautiful music together, metaphorically speaking. In the case of Noctambule (French for "night owl"), it's more than a figure of speech.

local review

This week: "A Sweetish Tune," Noctambule, independent, noctambulemusic.com CD Baby, \$16.50 CD, \$9.99 download

Participate: If you or your band are from Marin with an album or EP to be reviewed, send a CD and contact info to Press Play, 4000 Civic Center Drive, Suite 301, San Rafael, CA 94903