

Nik Marten (with J. P. Kallio)

The Story Of Siobhán The Temptress

Siobhan is a beautiful, young and kind woman always ready to help anyone. However, a stranger, a man, arrives to the village – uses her, seduces her, abandons her. Far from being defeated or cowed in any way she embarks on turning the tables. She becomes the seducer, seducing these men and leaving them as she was left. Siobhan, has become The Temptress, is she still here, who knows, the story, as we all sadly know, still is and goes on.

Storytelling in music, whether it be in full blown symphonies or in simple folk songs, is found in numerous examples. Ireland, where Nik Marten lives and Scotland, where I live, have many tales of folklore and myth most of which have been handed down from Prehistoric times through to the Celtic tribes and are normally associated with power struggle or internal tribal strife. Was Siobhan involved in one of these? Throw in a few battles and wars since then and there is a ready-made source for instrumental storytelling.

The main storyteller is the flute which appears to weave an intricate conversation of self-doubt in Siobhan's mind, what can she do, how does she retain self-belief. This quickly joined by percussive elements including the drumkit and handheld instruments. One of these is the Handpan, a relatively new instrument with ties to Indonesian, Thai and West Indian traditions, if rhythmically played it also has ties to the Bodhran – the big difference is that the instrument can be played in different keys and tones. Another instrument making a fantastic contribution is the Didgeridoo, it lays the platform with its incessant pedal point rhythmic playing and occasional sforzandos (sudden loudness). It adds mystery and pushes forward the story telling.

Putting this all together must have been no easy task; it works beautifully, the production is world-class.

The accompanying video with scenes of lochs and trees adds to music, almost impressionist in style, a Monet picture that moves.

Nik Marten describes himself as a drummer that loves percussion, he obviously loves flute as well going this example of intricate playing. J. P. Kallio adds an extra dimension adding occasional guitar to mix, adding to the song with subtle style.

If Siobhan is listening, she'll be impressed, just like the rest of us!

Drew Jarvie (The Delerium Trees)

Brecon Indie Reviews

Short Review

Irish myth, flutes, didgeridoos, handpans, guitars all entwine to tell the myth of Siobhan. Nik Marten has created a piece of vivid music story telling. Fantastic production, fantastic music, an ancient tale retold using instruments ancient and new. Brilliant!!