

Mp3 An Tua - Six Of One 5 Of The Other



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A bright selection of Irish and Scotch songs and tunes jam-packed with energy, a wealth of talent, rich in texture and played without sacrificing tradition or being held back by it. 11 MP3 Songs WORLD: Gaelic FOLK: Traditional Folk Six of One 5 of the Early Songs Details: KLCC "Best Music of 2004" List - Eugene, OR "From showery Seattle comes the wonderfully sunny sounding group An Tua, fronted by singer and flute/whistle player Hanz Araki (once of The Paperboys), who's joined by a varying cast of accompanists on guitar, mandolin, fiddle, bass, and light percussion. Six of One is a consistently pleasing collection named for its contents, six traditional songs and five tune sets. The disc alternates fresh arrangements of ballads that showcase Araki's smooth tenor vocals, like a jazzy, syncopated arrangement of "Jock O'Hazeldean" and a brisk but sensitive take of "Plains of Waterloo," with medleys of reels and jigs driven by his masterful wooden flute playing, which is sweet and lush and full of feeling and nuance." -- Dirty Linen "One of a generation of global beat players who adapt to whatever genre fascinates them, Araki has turned his considerable chops to mastering the Irish flute. On his debut CD, he has surrounded himself with some of the Northwest's finest young sidemen and women. He gives a wonderful rhythmic spin to the trans-Atlantic chestnut "Reynardine," and does the same for "Jock O'Hazeldean," arranged for guitar and bass by Araki and Zak Borden. Araki's flute playing ranges from fiery ("The Devils of Dublin") to sweet ("Bocht Agus Sona") and shows his complete mastery of Irish flute style. My favorite moment in this CD, however, is his and vocalist Nancy Conescu's arrangement of the song "The Boys of Barr Na Sride." We need to hear more from Araki ... and soon!" -- SingOut! "His singing is great! and great care is taken with each tune and song..." -- Niamh Parsons ----- A lot of people ask me how, with a name like Hanz Araki, I came to play Irish music (I like to tell people it was bad luck). When I mention that I come from a musical family I get a glimmer of understanding -- until I tell

them that I'm a sixth generation Japanese shakuhachi player. It went something like this... When I was about 17, I asked my father (Kodo Araki the 5th) to teach me the shakuhachi, this instrument that had been in our family for generations. My father had taken quite a few years away from music but after 10 years, began to make trips back to Japan to play and teach music. I suppose there's a genetic disposition to playing wind instruments in the Araki family because after four months, in August of 1988, I debuted in Shimonoseki, Japan. I spent the next three years playing for hours and hours every single day. At that time though, there was a dearth of professional musicians my own age and I found myself suffering not from a cultural gap so much as a generational one. I lived in Tokyo and between playing recitals and concerts, taught shakuhachi at my father's alma mater, Keio University. But this was the late 80's at the peak of Japan's bubble economy and very few had interest in traditional Japanese music. I was worried that this lack of interest from younger people - people my own age - would lead to a very stagnant and ultimately short career. Discouraged, I moved back to the U.S. in 1991. However, I grew up listening to an odd combination of mainly jazz and early punk. The Pogues were soon to follow then two cassettes of my mother's made their way into my rotation; The Chieftains, "Boil the Breakfast Early" and Sean Potts and Paddy Maloney "The Tin Whistle". As unlikely an instrument as it was, I had taught myself a handful of simple Irish and Scotch melodies on the shakuhachi. This was to be my undoing. Shortly after I arrived back in my hometown of Seattle, Washington, five friends (one of them being my brother Hutch) and I formed the band The Whyos to play a St. Patrick's Day party. I had bought a tin whistle and we quickly put a set together of about 20 "pub" songs. Over the next three years we became regulars on the Irish pub scene. During that time I met Irish music virtuosos Tom Creegan, Finn MacGinty, Dale Russ, Conor Byrne and protagonist Mel White, as well as Irish music diva, Niamh Parsons. Seeing Tom play the uilleann pipes and whistle and hearing Niamh sing were true inspirations. I started to steer away from the drinking/rebel songs and focused on learning tunes and I also began collecting some of the great ballads. From 1996, I toured in the U.S. and Canada with Vancouver, B.C.'s The Paperboys, winning the Juno Award in 1998. In 1999 I started playing with Casey Neill and Zak Borden (The Casey Neill Trio), crisscrossing the States, the UK and Scotland. The band An Tua is really my first attempt to try something of my own -- with a lot of help from the people who got me where I am. So, there's no one thing that got me playing Celtic music. Some people are strangely assuaged when I tell them that my mother is Irish, but things may well have been the same had she been Brazilian or Dutch. At least the whole "Hanz" thing

wouldn't've been so hard to explain.

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