

Finest Kind - GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME (ADA Recordings ADA113CD)



I've been singing the praises of this Canadian trio for a few years now, and each time they tour the UK they seem to win a host of new fans, but still they remain the province of the cognoscenti, the connoisseurs of song, rather than achieving anything like household-name status even within the folk fraternity. Perhaps it's because they really can't be pigeonholed (and good for them!) - they do so many things so damnably well for a start. And they stride boldly ahead with the all-

embracing and thoroughly sensible maxim that a good song is a good song, whatever its provenance. All power to them, I say!

So, in honour of the trio's 20th anniversary (believe it!), the estimable Mick Peat has brought out a special "tour edition" compilation CD that provides the finest possible kind of shop-window for them to proudly display their multifarious wares. It assembles representative tracks from four of their five CD releases (the lion's share, six, from *Heart's Delight*, and four from *Lost In A Song*, topped up with three from *Silks and Spices* and one from the seasonal offering *Feasts And Spirits*).

Quite simply, Finest Kind - who comprise Ian Robb, Ann Downey and Shelley Posen - have got it all: all three are excellent singers, but together their grasp of harmony and counterpoint is truly second to none, whereas none of them is anything less than a highly competent instrumentalist. Shelley and Ian are both songwriters of note too, while the group members' individual and collective appreciation and understanding of idiom and heritage from all parts of the musical compass is singularly impressive.

Thus, on this collection we find a comparatively unorthodox (but totally valid) take on a Bob Dylan song (*The Times They Are A-Changin'*) alongside an equally unexpected treatment of a song from the deepest English tradition (*Banks Of The Sweet Primroses*); a thoughtfully rousing account of Kipling's *A Pilgrim's Way* as set to music by Peter Bellamy cheekily set alongside the pop classic *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?* and the novelty number *Home In Pasadena*; Shelley's own powerful commentary *No More Fish* and his celebration of the joys of singing *Fa-Sol-La*; Utah Phillips' iconic *Goodnight-Loving Trail*; and, to round it all off perfectly, the old Marty Robbins chestnut *At The End Of A Long Lonely Day*. Is this all *Good Enough For You?* Well, it should be!

So get yourself off to one of Finest Kind's current crop of tour dates forthwith and sample the joys of their live music-making and the brilliant, warm, all-inclusive rapport

they achieve with their audiences; then buy this CD, and if this process hasn't converted you to a fully-fledged card-carrying Finest Kind aficionado overnight, well... I rest my case there...!

www.finestkind.ca