



Lisa Ornstein & Dan Compton

Music from Québec, Appalachia & Beyond

Reviews

Devon Leger, *Victory Review* (Feb. 2011):

If you don't already know that one of the best fiddlers in North America is now living in Portland, Oregon, you need to get moving on this! **Lisa Ornstein** is known best as an authority on French-Canadian fiddle traditions, and as one of the most powerful French-Canadian fiddlers. After moving to Portland last year, she also dusted off her repertoire of Southern old-time tunes learned directly from Tommy Jarrell when she was in her teens. She's one of the VERY few musicians who can play adeptly in multiple traditions without having each style sound the same. When she plays French-Canadian fiddling, she sounds like she's stepped out of a snowy cabin in Chicoutimi, Québec. When she plays old-time, she sounds like she could be jamming on Tommy Jarrell's front porch. And now on her new CD with ace Northwest accompanist **Dan Compton**, she demonstrates a mastery of Irish fiddling as well. Is there anything this woman can't play?

On ***The Magic Paintbrush***, Lisa's fiery fiddling is brought to the fore. She mixes styles slightly, slipping a French-Canadian tune in with an old-timey tune, but is mainly content just to play the hell out of some of her new favorite tunes (and old favorites too). Some of these tunes are compositions of hers (she's a noted tune composer) and others are compositions of guitarist and tune composer Dan Compton.

Living a short ways from Dan in Portland, she's clearly formed a solid musical partnership and in fact recently toured through the Northwest with him. Together, they bring new life to these tunes, with Dan's inventive DADGAD guitar, drawn from his time playing Irish trad music, and Lisa's sweet, yet explosive fiddling.

Standout Tracks: Lisa's many beautiful tunes, drawn from home visits with older fiddlers in French Canada, are well displayed on this album. My favorites are the medleys "La Pêcheuse/La Contredanse/Le Set/La Cardeuse" and "Air d'Adrien St-Hillaire/Reel St-Pierre/Jerry Holland's/Reel à Eric à Théotime à Six-Pouces". The first medley starts with a stunning slow tune from Lisa's mentor, Louis 'Pitou' Boudreault, and the second medley ends with two barn burners from the backwoods of New Brunswick. "The Black Swan" and "Link of Chain" are two other standouts, the first for the beautiful and understated playing of Dan Compton and the second for being a strangely compelling old-time composition from Lisa.