



STIRRINGS Mar-May 2013 – Folk and roots in Sheffield and South Yorkshire

REVIEWS

LONDON KLEZMER QUARTET

Welcome To Butterfield Green N16

LKQ 002

The four women who make up the London Klezmer Quartet certainly know their stuff. Listening to this is like a textbook tour through the different facets of the genre. However, a phrase as simple as that really doesn't do them justice. Their own compositions hew to the klezmer tradition, and even expand it (Billabong Bulgar, for instance, includes some sly Waltzing Matilda references, and they make sense in the context, while Romanian Sirbas begins with a clarinet wail that's a distant echo of Rhapsody In Blue). They can write, they can interpret, and by God, they can play. For a four-piece (violin, clarinet, accordion, double bass) they make a sound that's almost orchestral, with each player a vital component in the carefully-arranged material. There are also ample nods to the past, such as Ahava Rabo and the slow, stately Boybriker Nign, as well as material by Dave Tarras, who was the biggest name in the American klezmer boom a century ago. In the last twenty years klezmer has risen from the ashes, first in the US (think Klezmatiks) and then in Europe. With bands like this, Britain is in the forefront.

Chris Nickson