



Lucy Wise

Singer Songwriter From Melbourne, Australia

Press Reviews

Lucy Wise & The B'Gollies Debut Self-Titled Album – Sound on Sound Magazine, UK

Receiving a large quantity of demos and self-released albums allows you to get a good grasp of the overall standard of music that's out there, as well as how few acts really manage to set themselves apart

As a result, it's unfortunately quite rare that you'll mention an artist to all of your best friends, rarer still that you'll bemoan the fact that they're on the other side of the world to you, because you want so much to go and see them, play a support gig for them, or join in on a song or two!

Well, that's just how I feel about Lucy Wise & The B'Gollies and their first album. This 11-track, self-released affair combines English and Celtic folk with American mountain-folk, throwing in universal narratives to wonderful effect. It's very easy to listen to, and often quite moving.

Lucy's voice is charming. She's an Australian with a very English delivery and an individual mix of pronunciations in there. Her vocal delivery is so soft and touching that I found myself tearing up during some tracks. Yes, this Sound On Sound editor has a heart.

My only sonic criticisms relate to the choice of vocal recording equipment: whatever combination of mic and preamp is used for Lucy has a little bit too much 'cut' on many tracks, while an alternative selection is a bit 'honky' and resonant on others, 'Missing' in particular sounding a little too thick. Some tracks could do with a little more bass depth and body, for me, but it is a very natural, clean and pretty sound overall, and immaculate in terms of performance.

If you're over in Australia or New Zealand where the band are touring, go and see them! But whatever you do, don't tell me about it; I'll be too jealous.

J G Harding

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Lucy Wise & The B'Gollies Live Concert Review – Colosoul, Australia

As a general rule, if a band uses a ukulele as one of their primary instruments, for me it falls a little too far along the 'cute' scale. You know when folk music just feels too sugary? But at Kulcha on Saturday night Lucy Wise and the B'Gollies crept up on me with light dancing feet, swept me up in their warmth and nestled themselves into my heart. Consider me a complete uke-convert.

This music is the perfect balance of the elements of folk. The lightness of the tenor ukulele – who we're told is called Tony, with the richness of the double bass, called Mortimer. There are shades and levels of light and dark. It's sweet but soulful, fresh but full. With trundling syncopation and folky minor chords it feels like magic.

I want to dedicate a whole paragraph to an unidentifiable quality to Lucy Wise's voice. It is depth, warmth, colour, a sort of oaky flavour. But I just can't seem to articulate it. I suppose there is magic in that. You will just have to listen to understand what I mean.

A few B'Gollies seemed to be missing – and I would have loved to have heard the piano-accordion, but the remaining two had such a presence. Fiddle player Chris Stone moved so beautifully with the music. I could feel the joy in what he does – he just can't contain it. It buckled his knees and his hair fell across his eyes as he bended with the flow of the music. Holly Downes wore a dress with large green polka dots and was absolutely mesmerising. I always feel like double bass players are really dancers, with a beautiful elegantly stoic wooden partner, whom they guide through wambling bass lines.

Lucy Wise's stage presence is gentle and graceful. It's all so beautiful in a pure and wholesome way. And there is a genuineness that I adore – I think she puts it best in her song Little Bag when she sings "you can see what's hiding in plain sight." There is such value in music that has no performance, no pretence. I feel the artist gives so much, gently but boldly and intimately. And I walked away from the gig feeling so much fuller and richer.

Lucy Wise's words are poetry. With vivid imagery of hats with feathers, bike rides through the country, well dressed birds and love songs dedicated to hot air balloons, her songs are free, warm and lovely. I love imagining what inspired her to pen such sublime words.

Kulcha as a music venue is fantastic. It feels sophisticated and jazzy. We sat in a long narrow room, only as wide as the stage. It is an intimate space – a perfect environment for this special music.

I'm completely hooked on how this music lifts my heart. It is just so joyful.

Words by Fiona Hugo

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