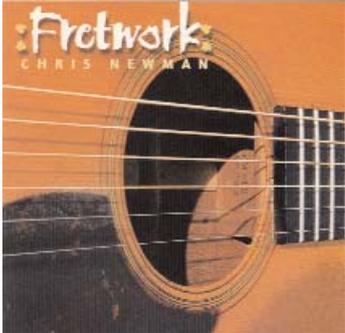


chrisnewmansoloalbum



“FRETWORK”

"What do you get when an acoustic guitarist of this stature asserts total quality control over his first solo album in 15 long years? ...The answer is, of course, total quality. This CD is delightfully accessible: not just for pickers & pluckers but for heart & feet as well as head & fingers. A cerebral, guitar tutor approach would never have stuck the foolish grin on my face, or had me dancing round the room bashing into furniture... I'd blithely cross snow-capped mountains & ford raging rivers to see Chris and Máire play..."
- THE LIVING TRADITION

FOLK ROOTS, JULY 1998

"Chris Newman has...produced a stylistically-varied and stunning bunch of tunes...In the company of long-time collaborator, harpist Máire Ní Chathasaigh and her sister, Nollaig Casey (incredible fiddler, but you knew that), he tackles many of own tunes and a couple of well-known ones. This lot ranges from flat-picked swing, through delicate airy picking and jolly mandolin to some ear-boggling, finger-tangling flat-picking on the challenging Scott Skinner medley. Having watched fiddlers struggle with Skinner's deliberately-difficult "Mathematician", it's a little depressing to hear Newman's apparently effortless guitar gallop through it, articulating each note with clarity and punch. In fact, this whole set's depressing - to hear someone play in as many different styles so well. Unusually for a largely self-penned set, this collection is heaving with good tunes - probably helped by Chris's own admission that he's not made a solo album since 1983, so there's 15 years of accumulated writing here!

The UK has produced some staggering and influential acoustic guitarists in the past few decades - no sign of any let up here."

THE INVERNESS COURIER, 10.7.98

"The John Williams of folk guitar combines elements of Celtic, country and swing on his first solo album in 15 years - but it's been well worth the wait. All three musical styles are seamlessly combined on "Pass the Pick"; the intricate lines of the title track are given a gentle rock beat, "The Arctic Goose" is a lovely slow air, marimba adds a tropical touch to "The Last Call" and the fingerpicking on a bluegrass medley takes the breath away... Newman wears his virtuosity lightly and his music has immense vitality and charm."

FOLKWRITE 68, JULY 1998

"A neatly understated title! Chris Newman's first solo release since 1983 is, as anyone who has seen or heard him would expect, a dazzling display of guitar virtuosity. It's also a thoroughly tasteful and enjoyable varied affair... Chris's background in jazz and swing is evident in the pace and invention of his plectrum-work but, apart from in the breezy opening number and the title track - not in his choice of material. There's a Swedish Polska, two American reels (Tell Her Lies And Feed Her Candy and a gloriously ornamented Old Joe Clark), a set of Scott Skinner fiddle tunes - and the rest of the pieces are self-penned... The playing is, by turns, lively and reflective, energetic and expressive: the whole album is a delight."

TAPLAS, AUGUST/SEPT 1998

"Chris Newman's third solo album, his first since 1983, is a veritable feast of immaculate guitar playing. You're picked up with a racy bluegrass opener and straight into a ragtime blues. Then, just as you think you're in for fifty minutes of country folk, he unleashes "The Riverside", a sweet track on classical guitar. NAfter only six tracks, it feels like an album full. Yet, there are seventeen slices of very rich guitar forest gateau to get through - a marvellous achievement. The moods change throughout, from the yearning and soulful "Arctic Goose" to the evocative Mediterranean-sounding "Where's the Bar?" Newman adds detailed sleevenotes on all the tunes, almost all original compositions. Not a single word is uttered or sung throughout - a testament to Newman's ability to make the guitar grab your attention and never let you go. A great album from a respected and revered folk guitarist."