

## **Tom Fairnie Band Exclusive - Making of Lightning In The Dark**

Musselburgh singer songwriter, Tom Fairnie, received a wonderful offer to record an album in Austin, with Grammy nominated producer, Merel Bregante. Merel had heard Tom's music through a friend, Madelaine Cave. Madelaine is originally from North Berwick but now residing in Boulder Colorado where she has a local radio show. She played a track by Merel's wife Sarah Pierce on her show and Merel wrote to thank her, asking if he could do anything in return. Madelaine asked him to listen to a couple of Tom's songs and it all kicked off from there. Tom's family and friends in the creative community did an amazing job in fundraising with concerts, creating and selling a compilation CD and crowd-funding in order to get Tom there.

Tom writes many of his songs with local poet, Bob Shields, and they are both extremely proud of the way the CD, called **Lightning In The Dark**, has been received, many reviewers noting the poetic quality of the words. Tom says that he tries to write accessible songs with melodies that give the words space to work; words that he and Bob often infuse with layers of meaning to reward extended listening.

The recordings featured performers who have played alongside some of the biggest names in American music. Merel himself having played in The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, with Loggins & Messina, Jackson Browne and with Chris Hillman of The Byrds. The CD was mastered by Jerry Tubb in Austin who has worked on music by Townes Van Zandt, Sam Baker, Steve Earle and hundreds more. When one considers that Mark Epstein, on bass, has previously accompanied Joe Bonamassa, Dr John and David Crosby (of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young) or John McEuen from The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band on banjo who has played on stage or recorded with Bob Dylan, Emmylou Harris, Kris Kristofferson, John Denver and hundreds more; or Dave Pearlman, on dobro, who has been involved in the music of The Beach Boys, The Band, The Monkees and REO Speedwagon you start to get an inkling of how special this project is.

The "*Let's get Tom to Austin*" campaign having successfully managed to fund the trip, Tom having been to Austin, recorded his parts in the songs and having been involved with the other musicians on the sessions, it was left to Merel to

complete the recordings and do a massive amount of work in bringing everything together, which was no mean feat as it involved recordings made in Austin, Edinburgh, Dunbar and The Netherlands.

The recording done and the tracks now being mixed, Tom and his good friend, local Musselburgh artist, Ronnie Elliot, set about discussing the graphics for the CD and the accompanying booklet. Ronnie has created many pieces of civic art locally and is rightly acclaimed for the quality of his work. He has produced what many people consider to be a work of art in its own right. The booklet illustrations are wonderfully evocative of something much deeper than mere images to go with the lyrics; they add layers of context and meaning. The CD itself has four sets of handprints on it as if to physically imprint the fact that this music, these songs and this CD came from four people in particular, Tom, Bob, Merel and Ronnie, combining their talents and a host of others providing their support, advice and encouragement.

The CD, **Lightning In The Dark**, was released on May Day and has already received airplay on shows on-line and on Celtic Music Radio and on The Iain Anderson Show on BBC Radio Scotland and has gathered some fantastic reviews. Here's what people are saying about Lightning In The Dark...

*"Poetic and hopeful songs of love, friendship and brotherhood and a touch of human frailties. Awesome stuff....deserves to be heard by all lovers of finely crafted songs."* **Allan Drysdale**

*"Absolutely fab; I can't stop listening to it."* **Audrey Mcgregor Williams**

*"Tom is Scotland's Kris Kristofferson. To have an album like this is what every artist dreams of; a work of shining art. Be proud. I was moved to tears."* **Kathy Stewart-Kennedy**

*"Tom Fairnie and producer Merel Bregante set out to create a testament to a long forgotten time that still has a message for our times if only we take heed. Tom is a superior tunesmith, storyteller and word crafter with "Lightning In The Dark" he has created a body of songs full of hidden messages that slowly reveal their beauty over the many travels along a journey you will certainly want to take. On this journey you will be introduced to a cast of characters lost and lonely, broken and beautiful, whores and gamblers, innocents before, during and after their falls from grace and back again. You will be accompanied by a cast of truly remarkable and prescient musicians adding the colour, smoke and*

*smell to Tom's stories all brilliantly mixed and lit by the genius of Merel Bregante."* **Brad Mock**

*...this has definitely earned a place on my albums of 2020 list.* **Mike Davies**  
<https://folking.com/>

*The sound is special but so, too, are the songs. Tom Fairnie's gift as a songwriter and the easy-going but thought-provoking lyrics, many of them composed with songwriting partner and fellow poet, Bob Shields, make this a stand-out album. An absolute gem of an album. If you love Americana seek out Tom Fairnie's Lightning In The Dark. You will not be disappointed."* **Darren Johnson (Darren's Music Blog)** <https://darrensmusicblog.com/>

*An album of depth, one that is beautiful and haunting, yet abundantly creative, Lightning In The Dark is a source of musical power.* **Ian D. Hall (Liverpool Sound and Vision)**

All in all, Tom says that he is immensely proud of this piece of work, his fifth solo CD and not least because, despite its heart being immersed in the Americana sound that provides the backdrop to the songs, there is a soul in every song that has a distant echo of the fishing community, the pits, the mills and the people of Musselburgh. The lightning illuminated a Texan ranch and back in Scotland we can hear the thunder of a great CD.

If you want to find out more about Tom Fairnie, listen to the tracks, buy or download the tracks then go to [www.tomfairnie.com](http://www.tomfairnie.com) or you can find him on Amazon, iTunes, Spotify, Reverbnation, YouTube or Birnam CD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-jkUVqvzsE>

