

Steve Tilston

different Strings

Ask anyone on the English folk scene who is their favourite guitarist, singer, songwriter and entertainer and nine times out of ten the same name will crop up in the top three of every department. Steve Tilston is one of our most celebrated song-smiths; widely recognised within the world of folk and contemporary music: the words, arrangements and subtle but quite superb guitar playing could be no one else.



The writer of the classic songs **The Slipjigs and Reels**, **The Naked Highwayman** and **Here's to Tom Paine**, has a new album out now! On **Ziggurat** hear Tilston deftly weave his mastery on a dozen new insightful songs of love, loss, war and gold, plus a couple of traditional gems.

In 2007 he was given the Free Reed Records boxed-set treatment! The company behind the Richard Thompson anthology released **Reaching Back: the Life and Music of Steve Tilston**. Featuring classic, rare, previously unreleased and new recordings, Reaching Back is a timely celebration of one of this country's finest performers. Compiled with unprecedented access to Steve's own archives, the deluxe boxed-set comprises five full-length themed CDs featuring tracks contributed by Steve's many fellow musicians and admirers as well as Steve himself, finished off with a beautiful full-colour book.

Born in Liverpool and raised in the Midlands, Steve made his recording debut in the early seventies with the classic **An Acoustic Confusion** and has been turning out quality albums ever since. **Life by Misadventure**, **And So It Goes**, **Solo Rubato** and **Such and Such** all featuring first-class song-writing, quintessentially English in style and typically Tilston, marking him out as one of this country's finest writers. Whilst the instrumental **Swans at Coole** is testament to his guitar virtuosity. Though known as a songwriter, Steve has always had an ear for the tradition and included new interpretations of old favourites on his original recordings. **Of Many Hands** is his first "all-traditional" album paying homage to his roots, with unique arrangements of timeless classics. He's also released a "best of" anthology, **The Greening Wind** and a live album **Live Hemistry** recorded on tour with Fairport Convention.

He joined an illustrious band of guitarists including Martin Simpson, Michael Messer and Wizz Jones, when he was invited to contribute to the **Guitar Maestro** series of DVDs; a combination of live studio performance and interviews, revealing the real passion behind these talented musicians...If anyone ever deserved the moniker Guitar Maestro, it's Steve Tilston!

Steve has toured with John Renbourn's Ship of Fools, in a stunning musical partnership with traditional singer Maggie Boyle; making the classic recordings **Of Moor and Mesa** and **All Under the Sun**, as guitarist with Ballet Rambert with Maartin Allcock and Pete Zorn in WAZ! and with **Brooks Williams** in A Transatlantic Song-Swap. His most recent collaboration, with daughter **Martha Tilston**, is the charming "like father, like daughter..." show.

A celebrated artist in Britain and abroad, winning accolades in Europe, Australia and the USA, his songs have been recorded by **Fairport Convention**, **Dolores Keane**, **The House Band**, **Peter Bellamy**, **North Clegg**, **Bob Fox** and **John Wright**. Here's to Tom Paine is the adopted theme song for the Tom Paine Society of America and it's been rumoured, has featured in Bruce Springsteen's live shows. His music has also featured on radio and TV.

Steve is probably best loved as a solo performer, but he also works with accordionist **Chris Parkinson** and bassist **Dave Bowie** and occasionally his daughter Martha.

www.stevetilston.com & www.myspace.com/stevetilston

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Q u o t e s ... t h e m u s i c i a n ' s m u s i c i a n

He is one of my and Fairport Convention's favourite performers. If you haven't heard him, I suggest you go and check him out as soon as possible. A remarkable talent!

Dave Pegg, Fairport Convention

It seems to me that Steve Tilston has never sought fame on anything but his own terms. He has been driven by his own enthusiasm for his chosen subject matter. He writes beautiful words and melodies and when our generation of songwriters is assessed on our contribution to our time, Steve's work will rank alongside much better known artists. **Ralph McTell**

Steve Tilston has an annoying habit of doing things with his guitar and lyrics that I wish I'd thought of first, coupled with an integrity of expression that compels me to say things like this in public. **Chris Smither**

One of the select band of songwriters with the vision to write great songs rooted in the tradition. **Robin Williamson**

A songwriter and guitarist I admire. **Bert Jansch**

Over the years Steve has become my all-time favourite songwriter on the British acoustic guitar scene. He's a fine singer who combines beautifully executed original melodies with superb lyrics on almost every subject under the sun. **Wizz Jones**

Q u o t e s ... t h e c r i t i c s r o u n d u p

Tilston achieves a great sound that percolates. It is a wonderful combination of a great voice matched by equally impressive instrumental work blended with just-right production. This charming CD will appeal to a broader range of listeners. **Sing out!**

Steve Tilston, in case events have conspired to conceal the fact from you thus far, is that very rare combination of singer, songwriter and guitarist who actually excels in all departments.

Folk Roots

...excellent singer/songwriter... **Time Out**

His musicianship is beyond question, while the arrangements set a standard against which other acoustic/roots albums ought to be measured. **The Daily Telegraph**

Please don't ask me how he does it; I don't know the chemical formula for stardust. What I do know is that Steve Tilston has a rare and precious gift that transcends mere musical ability.

Folk on Tap

...can stand shoulder to shoulder with any guitarist/songwriter in the world. **Dirty Linen**

Unlike many of his contemporaries though, his work simply gets better as time goes on. **Mojo**
Steve Tilston, singer songwriter and exquisite guitarist... is hard on the heels of Richard Thompson in the perennially underrated stakes. **Q Magazine**

...absurdly accomplished singer/songwriter and guitarist. **Living Tradition**

His music has a flow and poignancy, which makes it, stand out from the plethora of singer/guitarists on the scene. **Guitar Magazine**

...He's an unsung hero quietly going about the art of music making. **Zip Code**

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Q u o t e s ... S u c h & S u c h

Another highly polished collection from Tilston. **fROOTS**

... has to be a strong contender for folk album of 2003. **Get Ready to Rock!**

Tilston is a composer and storyteller par excellence and a complete guitarist, whose decorative and technically superior fretwork makes him as impressive solo as with accompaniment. Soul food for those who appreciate quality words and music ... Album of the week. **Barfly, Australia**

You must buy this album, if you are a fan of folk, jazz, blues, country music. Basically, you must own this; it's in a different class. **Folking.com**

...one more fine album from a thoughtful and creative musician. **Dirty Linen**

.... I really thought the chamber-scale craftsmanship of Solorubato was unsurpassable. Yet even by Steve's own exacting standards, Such And Such is also one of Steve's most varied collections, easily yet ever unassumingly parading Steve's stylistic versatility, instrumental facility and consummate musicality. **David Kidman - netrhythms.com**

Q u o t e s ... O f M a n y H a n d s

If there were any justice in the world, Steve Tilston's mantelpiece would be sagging under the weight of awards. **Dave Haslam, Taplas**

Classic songs sung beautifully - a truly wonderful CD. **Mike Harding, BBC Radio 2**

100% - exactly what we've come to expect from Steve Tilston. **John Tams**

...this exquisite new album. **WUMB Boston**

It's a fine record - genuinely innovative. Steve has always been a guitarist I've greatly admired, one of the best in Britain. **Richard Thompson**

It's all magic of the highest order, assembled with typical Tilston tastefulness...

David Kidman - netrhythms.com

...but Best in Show must go to Steve for this hugely pleasurable listening experience.

Alan Rose - Living Tradition

...a refined and perfectly paced masterwork. **Colin Randall - Telegraph**

Q u o t e s ... R e a c h i n g B a c k

...it's a set you very probably need even if you don't think you do!... **Netrhythms**

His music has a gently political undertone and his lyrics ask awkward questions without shouting out the answers, but above all he's a generous entertainer with an impressive back catalogue of popular songs. **Acoustic**

Q u o t e s ... Z i g g u r a t

...in better form than I've ever heard him. **Mike Harding, BBC Radio 2**

...there will be few better discs released this year. Unreservedly recommended. **Fish Records**

...he is back, on fine form, producing one of the best collections of melodic, intelligent songs of his long career. **Keith Clarke, Bristol Evening Post**

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- 1971** - Records first album, *An Acoustic Confusion* on the **Village Thing** label. **Melody Maker**, Album of the Month. **Rod Stewart** likes it and orders a box to give to friends.
- 1972** - Records second album, **Collection** for **Transatlantic Records** and **MCA** in the USA. Tours Scandinavia with **Fairport Convention** and **Mott the Hoople**. Booked to represent Britain in a musical capacity at the **Munich Olympics**, but cancelled due to terrorist activity. **1973** - moves to Bristol.
- 1977** - Sets up **Cornucopia** label and releases third album, *Songs From The Dress Rehearsal*, with support from **Mike Giles (King Crimson)**, **John Parry** and pre-Fame **Rupert Hine**, who also produced.
- 1978-81** - Moves back to London. Secures publishing deal and concentrates on writing, performing in London with his band, **Loose Shoes**. Meets and marries singer **Maggie Boyle**.
- 1982-85** - Back to Bristol, Steve forms his own rock band and releases a fourth album on the **TW** label: *In For A Penny In For A Pound*. Also performs in an acoustic/folk duo with Maggie Boyle and as part of a group of touring musicians for the **Ballet Rambert Dance Company**.
- 1985** - Helps set up **Run River Records** and records its first album, *Life By Misadventure*.
- 1986** - Records tracks for US label **Shannachie's** music of O'Carolan and *Silently Falls the Snow*.
- 1987** - With John Renbourn, **Tony Roberts** and **Maggie Boyle**, forms **Ship of Fools**, and records album for US label **Flying Fish**. Tours Canada and USA to great success.
- 1988** - Fired by his own interest in the instrument, he commissions the Kinkade Brothers of Bristol to resurrect the arpeggione (bowed guitar)
- 1989-90** - Records the all-instrumental *Swans at Coole*. Plays mandolin and arpeggione on friend **Bert Jansch's** album *The Ornament Tree*, also on Run River. Moves to Yorkshire.
- 1990-93** - Records *Of Moor & Mesa* with Maggie Boyle (**Run River/UK & Green Linnet/USA**) Album of the Year on Boston's prestigious folk radio station **WUMB**. Tours USA and Canada.
- 1995** - Sets up own label, **Hubris**, releases *And So It Goes*. Secures a US release on **Rounder/Flying Fish**. Completes a solo tour of US. **Fairport Convention** record Steve's classic songs, *The Slip Jigs & Reels* and *The Naked Highwayman*, for **Jewel in the Crown** album.
- 1996** - Duo releases, **All under the Sun**, with backing from members of **Fairport Convention**.
- 1997** - Tilston Boyle duo splits. **Fairport Convention** records *Here's to Tom Paine*, Irish songstress **Dolores Keane** records *The Night Owl*.
- 1998** - Steve records **Solorubato** for **Fellside**; *An Acoustic Confusion*, re-released by **Scenescoff** in USA.
- 1999-2000** - Releases first 'best of,' album: **The Greening Wind** for Hubris - **Fairport** records *Rocky Road* from **Solorubato**. Tours UK and USA.
- 2001** - Tours UK with Fairport Convention. Releases first live album *Live Hemistry* for Hubris. *Life by Misadventure* re-released on **Market Square Records**.
- 2002** - I Really Wanted You, covered by Chicago band **Mascott**, later used as **Super Bowl** soundtrack.
- 2003** - *Such & Such* released on **Market Square**. Voted Album Of The Year on **WUMB Boston**. First Songbook Published. Tours UK with band. Surprised to find himself an answer on **Mastermind!**
- 2004** - Featured guest on Andy Kershaw Show. In the studio recording first all-traditional album.
- 2005** - Tour with Brooks Williams - **A Transatlantic Song-Swap**. *Of Many Hands* released to critical acclaim – a favourite of BBC Radio 2s Mike Harding, in the top ten WUMB Boston and the top five best of 2005 theacousticstage.net.
- 2006** - Toured with Chris Parkinson - A DVD in the **Guitar Maestro** series released in March.
- 2007** - Touring for the first time with daughter **Martha Tilston** the "like father, like daughter..." tour. **Reaching Back** CD boxed set retrospective released by **Free Reed Records**.
- 2008** - New CD **Ziggurat** released June 2008. Proposed tour with fellow guitar maestros Wizz Jones and Duck Baker autumn 2008.

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