



LOREENA MCKENNITT  
THE VISIT

*I have long considered the creative impulse to be a visit – a thing of grace, perhaps, not commanded or owned so much as awaited, prepared for. A thing, also, of mystery. This recording endeavours to explore some of that mystery.*

*It looks as well into the earlier eastern influences of the Celts and the likelihood that they started from as far away as Eastern Europe before being driven to the western margins of Europe, particularly in the British Isles. With their musical influences came rituals around birth and death which treated the land as holy and haunted; this life itself as a visit. Afterwards, one's soul might move to another plane, or another form – perhaps a tree. The Celts knew then, as we are re-learning now, a deep respect for all the life around them. This recording aspires to be nothing as much as a reflection into the weave of these things. – LM*

*Longtemps, j'ai pensé que l'inspiration artistique était en fait une manifestation – un état de grâce, pour ainsi dire, qu'on ne pouvait inviter ou posséder, mais auquel on devait se soumettre et se préparer. Un état empreint de mystère, s'il en est un. Cet enregistrement propose d'effleurer ce mystère.*

*L'album explore également l'histoire des Celtes : ses premières influences venues de l'est et l'hypothèse selon laquelle ils seraient venus d'aussi loin que l'Europe orientale avant d'avoir été repoussés vers les frontières de l'Europe occidentale, tout particulièrement sur les Îles Britanniques. À leurs influences musicales s'ajoutaient les rituels qui accompagnaient les mystères de la naissance et de la mort, et la croyance que la terre était à la fois sacrée et animée. Aussi, que cette vie était comme une rencontre, une visite, au-delà de laquelle l'âme pouvait transcender vers un autre plan ou incarner une autre forme - comme un arbre, par exemple. Ainsi, le peuple celte reconnaissait alors l'importance, comme nous le redécouvrons aujourd'hui, d'un réel respect pour toutes les formes de vie autour d'eux. Cet album n'aspire qu'à être l'expression de ce sentiment. - LM*

## ALL SOULS NIGHT 5:05

*Music and Lyric: Loreena McKennitt*

Bonfires dot the rolling hillsides  
Figures dance around and around  
To drums that pulse out echoes of darkness  
Moving to the pagan sound.

Somewhere in a hidden memory  
Images float before my eyes  
Of fragrant nights of straw and of bonfires  
And dancing till the next sunrise.

CHORUS:

I can see lights in the distance  
Trembling in the dark cloak of night  
Candles and lanterns are dancing, dancing  
A waltz on ALL SOULS NIGHT

Figures of cornstalks bend in the shadows  
Held up tall as the flames leap high  
The green knight holds the holly bush  
To mark where the old year passes by.

CHORUS

Bonfires dot the rolling hillsides  
Figures dance around and around  
To drums that pulse out echoes of darkness  
And moving to the pagan sound.

Standing on the bridge that crosses  
The river that goes out to the sea  
The wind is full of a thousand voices  
They pass by the bridge and me.

CHORUS

*LM: Vocals, keyboards, accordion  
BRIAN HUGHES: Balalaika, electric guitar  
AL CROSS: Drums  
GEORGE KOLLER: Bass, cello, mad fiddle, tamboura*



*This piece was inspired by a Japanese tradition celebrating the souls of the departed by sending candle-lit lanterns out on waterways to the ocean, and by the Celtic celebration of All Souls Night, when bonfires were lit to mark the new year and warm the souls of the departed. - LM*

*Cette chanson s'inspire d'une coutume japonaise qui consiste à rendre hommage à l'âme des morts en déposant des lanternes à bougie sur les cours d'eau affluant vers l'océan et des festivités celtiques de la nuit de l'halloween où d'immenses feux de joie étaient allumés pour célébrer l'arrivée du nouvel an et réchauffer les âmes trépassées. - LM*

## BONNY PORTMORE 3:57

*Music and Lyric: traditional, arranged and adapted by Loreena McKennitt*

O BONNY PORTMORE I am sorry to see  
Such a woeful destruction of your ornament tree  
For it stood on your shore for many's the long day  
Till the long boats from Antrim came to float it away.

O BONNY PORTMORE you shine where you stand  
And the more I think on you the more I think long  
If I had you now as I had once before  
All the Lords in Old England would not purchase Portmore.

All the birds in the forest they bitterly weep  
Saying "where will we shelter or where will we sleep?"  
For the Oak and the Ash they are all cutten down  
And the walls of BONNY PORTMORE are all down to the ground.

O BONNY PORTMORE you shine where you stand  
And the more I think on you the more I think long  
If I had you now as I had once before  
All the lords in Old England would not purchase Portmore.

*LM: Vocals, keyboards  
BRIAN HUGHES: Electric guitar  
ANNE BOURNE: Cello  
TOM HAZLETT: Bass  
PATRICK HUTCHINSON: Uilleann pipes*

## BETWEEN THE SHADOWS (PERSIAN SHADOWS) 4:03

*Music: Loreena McKennitt*

*LM: Harp, keyboards  
BRIAN HUGHES: Guitar, balalaika  
AL CROSS: Drums  
RICK LAZAR: Percussion  
GEORGE KOLLER: Bass  
HUGH MARSH: Fiddle*

*The destruction of old-growth forest has become an important conservation issue of late, but it is not a new concern. Many of Ireland's old forests were levelled for military and shipbuilding purposes over the centuries, and only recently have efforts been made to re-establish them. The Great Oak of Portmore stood on the grounds of Portmore Castle on the shore of Lough Beg. - LM*

*La préservation des forêts ancestrales est récemment devenue une grande préoccupation, mais le problème n'est pas nouveau. De nombreuses forêts en Irlande ont été dévastées pour des raisons militaires ou pour la construction de navires, et ce n'est que récemment que des mesures ont été prises pour les repeupler. Le Grand Chêne de Portmore s'élève sur le domaine du château de Portmore aux abords de la rivière Lough Beg. - LM*

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT 11:05

*Music: Loreena McKennitt  
Lyric: Alfred Lord Tennyson,  
adapted by Loreena McKennitt*

On either side of the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And thro' the field the road run by  
To many-towered Camelot;  
And up and down the people go  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four grey walls, and four grey towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle embowers  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly  
Down to tower'd Camelot;  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers "tis the fairy  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT."

There she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colours gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

And moving through a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot.  
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The Knights come riding two and two.  
She hath no loyal Knight and true,  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights  
And music, went to Camelot;  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed.  
"I am half sick of shadows," said  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.





A bow-shot from her bower-eaves  
He rode between the barley sheaves  
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;  
From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
From the bank and from the river  
He flashed into the crystal mirror,  
"Tirra lirra" by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces thro' the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
"The curse is come upon me," cried  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

In the stormy east wind straining  
The pale yellow wods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining.  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot;  
Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

And down the river's dim expanse  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance –  
With a glassy countenance

Did she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darkened wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.  
For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame  
And round the prow they read her name,  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Who is this? And what is here?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer;  
And they crossed themselves for fear,  
All the Knights at Camelot;  
But Lancelot mused a little space  
He said, "She has a lovely face;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
THE LADY OF SHALOTT."

*LM: Vocals,  
keyboards  
BRIAN HUGHES:  
Balalaika, guitar  
TOM HAZLETT:  
Bass  
ANNE BOURNE:  
Cello  
HUGH MARSH:  
Fiddle*

## GREENSLEEVES 4:15

*Music: traditional, arranged and  
adapted by Loreena McKennitt  
Lyric: King Henry VIII*

Alas my love you do me wrong  
To cast me off discourteously;  
And I have loved you oh so long  
Delighting in your company.

GREENSLEEVES was my delight,  
GREENSLEEVES my heart of gold  
GREENSLEEVES was my heart of joy  
And who but my Lady GREENSLEEVES

I have been ready at your hand  
To grant whatever thou would'st crave;  
I have waged both life and land  
Your love and goodwill for to have.

GREENSLEEVES was my delight,  
GREENSLEEVES my heart of gold  
GREENSLEEVES was my heart of joy  
And who but my Lady GREENSLEEVES

Thy petticoat of sendle white  
With gold embroidered gorgeously;  
Thy petticoat of silk and white  
And these I bought gladly.

GREENSLEEVES was my delight,  
GREENSLEEVES my heart of gold  
GREENSLEEVES was my heart of joy  
And who but my Lady GREENSLEEVES

*LM: Vocals, keyboards  
BRIAN HUGHES: Guitar  
GEORGE KOLLER: Cello*

*I always wondered how Tom Waits would sing 'Greensleeves'. When preparing my previous recording 'Parallel Dreams', while waiting to do something else, we spontaneously recorded this track in one take without intending to release it. However, here it is, Tom. - LM*

*Je me suis toujours demandée comment Tom Waits interpréterait la chanson "Greensleeves". Alors que nous préparions l'album précédent, 'Parallel Dreams', nous avons spontanément enregistré cette chanson en une seule prise dans nos temps libre, sans penser l'inclure sur l'album. Eh bien, Tom, la voici. - LM*



## TANGO TO EVORA 4:03

*Music: Loreena McKennitt*

*LM: Harp, Keyboards, vocals, accordion  
BRIAN HUGHES: Guitar, balalaika  
TOM HAZLETT: Bass  
RICK LAZAR: Udu drum, percussion  
HUGH MARSH: Fiddle*

*This was originally conceived for the National Film Board of Canada documentary 'THE BURNING TIMES', directed by Donna Reid. - LM*

*À l'origine, cette pièce instrumentale a été créée pour le documentaire "THE BURNING TIMES", réalisé par Donna Reid et produit par l'Office nationale du film du Canada. - LM*

*The photographs in this booklet were taken at Quinta das Torres, a 16th century hunting lodge near Azeitão, Portugal. The lodge, and its gorgeous courtyard full of orange trees where this piece was conceived, reminded me of the Unicorn Tapestries, which hang in The Cloisters in New York City. Both tapestries and lodge are rich with earthy, pre-Christian iconography depicting the mysterious life cycle of the seasons. - LM*

*Les photographies dans cette pochette ont été prises à Quinta das Torres, un pavillon de chasse construit au XVIème siècle près de Azeitão, au Portugal. Le pavillon et la magnifique cour adjacente remplie d'orangers où j'ai composé cette chanson me rappelaient les tapisseries aux motifs de licornes conservées au musée "The Cloisters" à New York. En effet, ils partagent la même riche iconographie préchrétienne illustrant le mystérieux cycle des saisons. - LM*



## COURTYARD LULLABY 4:50

*Music and Lyric: Loreena McKennitt*

Wherein the deep night sky  
The stars lie in its embrace  
The courtyard still in its sleep  
And peace comes over your face

"Come to me" it sings  
"Hear the pulse of the land  
The ocean's rhythms pull  
To hold your heart in its hand"

And when the wind draws strong  
Across the cypress trees  
The nightbirds cease their songs  
So gathers memories

Last night you spoke of a dream  
Where forests stretched to the east  
And each bird sang its song  
A unicorn joined in a feast

And in a corner stood  
A pomegranate tree  
With wild flowers there  
No mortal eye could see

Yet still some mystery befalls  
Sure as the cock crows at morn  
The world in its stillness keeps  
The secret of babes to be born

I heard an old voice say  
"Don't go far from the land  
The seasons have their way  
No mortal can understand."

*LM: Vocals, harp, keyboards  
BRIAN HUGHES: Electric guitar  
ANNE BOURNE: Cello  
TOM HAZLETT: Bass*

## THE OLD WAYS 5:25

*Music and Lyric: Loreena McKennitt*

The thundering waves are calling me home to you  
The pounding sea is calling me home to you.

On a dark New Year's night  
On the west coast of Clare  
I heard your voice singing  
Your eyes danced the song  
Your hands played the tune  
T'was a vision before me.

We left the music behind and the dance carried on  
As we stole away to the seashore  
We smelt the brine, felt the wind in our hair  
And with sadness you paused.

Suddenly I knew that you'd have to go  
My world was not yours, your eyes told me so  
Yet it was there I felt the crossroads of time  
And I wondered why.

As we cast our gaze on the tumbling sea  
A vision came o'er me  
Of thundering hooves and beating wings  
In clouds above.

As you turned to go I heard you call my name.  
You were like a bird in a cage, spreading its wings to fly  
"The old ways are lost" you sang as you flew  
And I wondered why.

*LM: Vocals, Harp, bodhrán, keyboards  
BRIAN HUGHES: Electric and acoustic guitars  
TOM HAZLETT: Bass  
PATRICK HUTCHINSON: Uilleann pipes  
HUGH MARSH: Fiddle*



*I spent a haunting New Year's Eve in Doolin, County Clare, Ireland some years ago, and was moved by the antiquity of the celebrations and the reminder that they may be the remnants of the old world meeting the "new". - LM*

*Il y a plusieurs années, j'ai passé un réveillon du nouvel an inoubliable à Doolin, dans le comté de Clare, en Irlande, et j'ai été émue par le caractère antique des festivités et l'idée qu'elles sont peut-être autant de vestiges du passé venant à la rencontre de la "nouveau" du présent. - LM*

## CYMBELINE 4:48

*Music: Loreena McKennitt*

*Lyric: William Shakespeare*

Fear no more the heat o' th' sun  
Nor the furious winters' rages;  
Thou thy worldly task hast done,

Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.  
Golden lads and girls all must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

The sceptre, learning, physic, must  
All follow this and come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' th' great;  
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke.  
Care no more to clothe and eat;

To thee the reed is as the oak.  
The sceptre, learning, physic, must  
All follow this and come to dust.

All lovers young, all lovers must  
Consign to thee and come to dust.

*LM: Vocals, keyboards, harp*  
*GEORGE KOLLER: Bass, sitar*



*Here are Shakespeare's thoughts on this earthly visit, taken from the end of Cymbeline, which was written near the end of the author's life and set in ancient Britain when the Romans were invading the last outposts of the old Celtic order. -- LM*

*Réflexions de Shakespeare sur notre passage sur terre, tirées du dénouement de Cymbeline, drame écrit vers la fin de sa vie qui se déroule dans l'île de Bretagne à l'époque où les Romains envahissaient le dernier des avant-postes de l'ancienne civilisation celte. – LM*

Produced by Loreena McKennitt.

Co-produced by Brian Hughes.

All tracks recorded and mixed by Jeff Wolpert at Inception Sound, Toronto. Additional recording by John Whynot at Studio 306, Toronto, and Grant Avenue Studio, Hamilton. Mastered by George Graves at Lacquer Channel.

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