



Switchback brings early rock vibe to 'Ghosts'

By Pete Maher, Publisher & Editor, Midwest Irish Focus

Spending some time with Switchback's latest release "Ghosts of the River Folk" I could not shake a sense of déjà vu.

It took some time to put my finger on it because I usually encounter the talents of Marty McCormack and Brian Fitzgerald as they apply them to Irish and otherwise Celtic tunes, and have only begun to scratch the surface of what they have accomplished on the folk/American scene, but this new sound had a familiar ring to it that was something outside of what I'd experienced with Switchback's music before.

Then it hit me that what I was hearing was very similar in tone and delivery to one of my favorite periods in rock history - that innocent period just after the break from traditional folk but just before drugs began to become commonplace. A time when lyrics were cleanly delivered, the melodies were catchy and the message was optimistic.

Because in every tune on this new offering, McCormack and Fitzgerald, ably backed by a full band, revive that kind of vocal purity and musical honesty that was the hallmark of so many songs of that era. These songs even somehow manage to capture the naiveté that made so many of those old songs not only endearing but timeless.

It would be easy to pick out a favorite from this collection of bouncy tunes, "The Miser" perhaps, or "The Mayfly Dance" and its story of one incredible and unforgettable night, or even the wistful "Black Mountain," but it is perhaps better to listen to this CD as a whole. Because then you may hear what I heard here and, like me, become transported back to a time when rock and roll was still being sung by fresh-faced, optimistic former folkies.

Trust me, it's a trip well worth taking, all courtesy of two very talented gentlemen named Martin McCormack and Brian Fitzgerald.