

When the world closes, open up your living room to the world.

"A tour-de-force display of outstanding songwriting – by any standards."

John Waltham, The Living Tradition Magazine

"Winter Wilson have a touch of the prolific about them, but when prolific's this good, more please."

Neil King, Fatea Magazine

"Your writing is magnificent, your settings and playing equal to that and the both of you sing with a rare assured passion that I oft think has gone. It's a rare gift you have - cherish it mightily."

John Tams, Warhorse, National Theatre

2020 was looking set to be another great year for **Winter Wilson**.

Live & Unconventional, the duo's ninth album, recorded on tour with (and featuring) Fairport Convention, had been released in 2019 to a rapturous reception. The diary was looking good, with tours of the UK and Europe already organised and a full schedule of festivals for the summer. Planning was also well underway for return tours to Australia, New Zealand and Canada for the following year.

In fact, Kip Winter and Dave Wilson could have been forgiven a touch of self satisfaction as they set out in March 2020 to tour Germany and the Netherlands. Little did they know.....

With ten days left to complete the trip, it became clear that world events were taking a serious turn for the worse, and the pair's plans would have to be abandoned. "We agreed to cancel all the remaining gigs, rebooked the



ferry and set off driving back up from the south of Germany towards Calais," says Kip. It felt really

What the press said about **Live & Unconventional**:

"If you need evidence of just how special the duo Winter Wilson is, then Live & Unconventional delivers in abundance."

Steve Caseman, RnR Magazine

"A brilliant, exceptionally well-recorded live album, that really does convince that Kip and Dave are well and truly at the top of their game."

David Kidman, The Living Tradition

"There is no doubt Dave is one of the best songwriters we have in the UK at present."

Graham Hobbs, Shirefolk

weird, with borders literally closing behind us, and messages coming in from friends in similar situations who were having problems getting back into the UK." In actual fact, the journey was pretty uneventful, and the couple settled back into their Lincolnshire home for what they felt would be "a few weeks' rest".

Dave continues, "How wrong can you be? After a couple of weeks, we decided to do a bit of a live stream on Facebook, as much as anything to give ourselves a focus, but also to keep in some kind of contact with the outside world." That "bit of a live stream" was destined to become a sixty-week odyssey, bringing fun, music and friendship to regular viewers across the world, and raising over £4,000 in charitable donations.

Indeed, Live from the Lounge's regular fans included viewers from not only the whole of the UK, but also all

over Western Europe and Scandinavia, as well as Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

“We really had no idea what we’d started,” explains Kip. “We genuinely thought we’d stream live for a few weeks, and then life would get back to normal. After a couple of weeks people started asking how they could donate, so we set up a button on our website. The donations were divided equally between the MU’s Musicians’ Hardship Fund and our local food bank.”

Dave continues, “Then people asked if they could also donate to us and let’s face it, we weren’t going to say no. Like many others in the arts, we fell through the cracks in the government’s support scheme. We’re lucky that we have enough to get by on, but every little helps, as they say.”

So how did the couple fill over 60 hours of music? “We alternated,” says Kip. “One week it was all original songs, then the next all covers. And the regulars would send us in requests – at least they said they were requests; some felt more like challenges! We genuinely did everything from Dylan, Tom Waits and Randy Newman to Crosby, Stills & Nash and Lady Gaga.”

But even learning over 500 songs couldn’t completely fill the void for a couple who have lived their life (and made their living) on the road for nine years. Dave received a very welcome commission to write some songs for the folk musical *Nel Gwynne* by Graham Hopkins. “Dave has a habit of saying

yes and worrying about the details later,” says Kip. “So, aside from him writing for the play, we then found ourselves performing some of the songs live and I also have a speaking part. Life is anything but boring.”

However the duo’s main focus over the past few months has been the new album, which was written and recorded for release in September 2021. Twelve brand-new songs and, as existing fans of the duo would expect, there’s a wide range of subject matter here.

Of course, there’s plenty of social commentary, starting from the title track, through *Pity Me*, a tale of a traveller’s life, and including the stunning *The First to Fall*, a tribute to all front-line workers

and especially to Dr Adil El Taya, the first NHS employee to die of Covid 19.

Then there’s the intensely personal, from the trad-folk style *The Angry Mother* (incidentally the first song recorded by Winter Wilson to be written by Kip, rather than Dave) to *Once More for the Old Times*, a poignant tale of the loss of a good friend.

But it’s by no means all doom and gloom, with the uplifting *Jennifer’s Story* and the glorious, full-on rockabilly of *What Would Johnny Cash Do Now?* providing a great balance to the more serious numbers.



“We hope this album is good representation of what we do,” explains Dave. “A mix of the serious and the lighthearted, but always aiming to engage and entertain.”

Mission accomplished.

And what about the future? Kip tells us “Well, we’re already back out gigging, but obviously life isn’t back to normal yet. We’ve played a couple of festivals this summer, and the other gigs have mainly been outdoors too, but Autumn is drawing on, and we have to move back indoors at some point. People are understandably still nervous about mixing, and quite a few venues have closed, or at least not yet re-opened, so everything’s still a bit up in the air for the whole industry. We’re planning for more village hall gigs, and also any local venues such as churches, arts centres etc. Fingers crossed they all go ahead.”

The Passing of the Storm is officially launched on-line on 16th September and with a home-town concert on 25th. Pre-orders are now available on www.winterwilson.com and all major download and streaming sites. Details of where to see Winter Wilson are also available at www.winterwilson.com/dates.

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