

# Jennifer Crook



## Short Biography 2010

**"A special talent"** Maverick

**"A vocalist of sublime power"** fRoots

**"A master musician"** Green Man Review

Jennifer Crook is not easy to pigeonhole. Alongside earning herself a growing reputation as one of the best new singer songwriters around, she is also widely regarded as one of Britain's top lever harpists - performing recently with **Eddi Reader**, and on a major tour of the UK and Ireland with **Snow Patrol**.

Since reaching the finals of the **BBC Radio 2 Young Tradition Awards** in 1993 Jennifer has toured throughout Britain and Europe, becoming well known for her inventive and versatile approach to the celtic (and electric) harp.

However, in 2008, when Jennifer released her first solo album, "A Few Small Things" it was an intimate collection of original songs that embraces folk, pop and country. With special guests Clive Gregson and Miranda Sykes, it was described by **Maverick** as "*A remarkable CD*" and by **fRoots** as "*One of those records that repeatedly delights and captivates*"

Jennifer has since performed her unique blend of English folk and Americana at some of the country's leading roots music venues with a band that includes some of the finest musicians on the British folk scene today.

### **"Spellbinding"**

*Acoustic*

Jennifer's past collaborations include Cythara (who performed the soundtrack for the award-winning David Attenborough BBC series *The Private Life of Plants* and appeared on BBC1's *Pebble Mill* and *'Summer in the City'*), celtic-pop band Madigan, the duo Jenny Crook & Henry Sears and a stint on electro-harp with world-dance fusion outfit Elephant Talk.

Her trademark harp playing has been featured on many CD's - including recordings at Realworld for artists such as Susana Baca and Joji Hirota, and she has worked with many artists including Mercury Award winner Susheela Raman, Luke Daniels and Eleanor Shanley on "A History's Rhyme" for the English National Opera and as a duo with Miranda Sykes (*Show of Hands*).

Jennifer is also an inspirational teacher, and has lead classes and workshops at festivals across Europe.



Since releasing "A Few Small Things" Jennifer has worked on the UK Songwriting Festival team, reached the semi-finals of the UK Song Contest with her song "A Bicycle in Need of Repair" and is already writing and arranging her next full album.

In the meantime she has recorded some new tracks with the band and an EP release is planned for early 2010.

*"Jennifer has taken elements of English folk music – not only the instruments, but the singing style, the general outlook – and arranged them in a modern, minimal, spacious way that might even be termed Anglicana. It works beautifully. Her lyric writing is done with real craft and care, her melodies are tunes you can remember. There are even a couple of songs that sound, in the best sense, like pop hits. Though there are legions of North Americans mining this neo-traditional territory loosely termed Americana, there surprisingly aren't many English singer-songwriters following a parallel course. Most seem to be either hung up on imitating American songcraft or sticking to a purist version of English folk. A Few Small Things is unique, a breath of fresh air, and hopefully the way forward"*

**Charley Dunlap 2008**

## **The Band**

### **Bethany Porter – Cello & Vocals**

Cellist Bethany Porter is in high demand and is well known for her improvisational flair, sensitivity and passion for variety. She performed at Womad this year with **Peter Gabriel**, and has been touring with **Eliza Carthy**, **The Cedar**, **Babel** and **Bellowhead** amongst others.

Beth also plays and arranges for **The Stringbeans Quartet** and **Bath Spa String Quartet** and has played on many artists recordings, including **Newton Faulkner**, **Benji Kirkpatrick**, **Kula Shaker** and **Kenny Young**. She also writes lovely quirky songs on the ukelele.

### **Maclaine Colston – Hammered Dulcimer & Vocals**

A prodigy of **Jim Couza**, Maclaine is the leading hammered dulcimer player in the country.

A **BBC Young Tradition Award** Finalist (3 times no less!) he has recorded several albums and toured Europe with **Cythara**, **Epona** (with Nancy Kerr), folk-rock band **Pressgang**, and **Eliza Carthy & the Kings of Callicutt**. He continues to perform with **Saul Rose** with whom he recently released a new album.

Maclaine has recorded for many artists and composers including **Waterson:Carthy's** 'Common Tongue', Richard Grassby Lewis's soundtrack for **David Attenborough's** 'The Private Life of Plants', and performed the Oscar-winning soundtrack to 'The Lord of the Rings' with the **London Philharmonic Orchestra** at the Royal Albert Hall.

### **Josh Clark – Cajon, Percussion, Guitar and Vocals**

Cutting his teeth as drummer for Sacred Turf (folk-rock), Ausgang (gothic-punk!) and **BBC Young Folk Award winners The Black Cat Theory** amongst others, Josh is now in great demand as an engineer and producer but somehow ends up playing in the bands he records! These have recently included **Sunna**, **Sheelanagig**, **Rabbi John**, and **Daily Planet**. He is a member **The Scoville Units** with Leon Hunt and Ed Boyd and, as a long time collaborator with **Leon Hunt** (Get Real Records), Josh has worked on recording projects with **Jackie Leven**, **Flook**, **Buffalo Gals** and **Nizlopi** and engineered FOH live sound for many top roots artists.

