

The Scotsman
29 December 2009

(35)

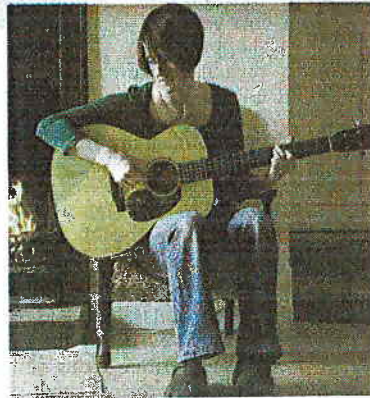
The best of 2010

FOLK & JAZZ/JIM GILCHRIST

AS USUAL, January will be dominated by Glasgow's **Celtic Connections** (14-31 January), which hits us with a bewilderingly wide-ranging programme just as we're recovering from our New Year hangovers, with headline concerts as diverse as Jim Sutherland's **True North Orchestra**, Nordic saxophone virtuoso **Jan Garbarek** re-united with Indian percussion wizard **Trilok Gurtu**, the **Imagined Village**, with its intriguing blend of English tradition with modern multiculturalism, or the **Scottish Songbook** concert with **Karine Polwart**, pictured, **Session A9**, **McIntosh Ross** and others reprising classics and neglected treasures of the past century.

The festival also offers much Americana, from bluegrass fiddler **Darol Anger** to **Rounder Records'** 40th anniversary bash featuring **Blue Highway** and **Alicia Nugent**, and the transatlantic connections continue with March/April bringing the first Scottish tour of North Carolina's engagingly zany **Woody Pines**, with a repertoire that ranges through old time to Dylanesque or vaudeville.

In February, a Scottish Arts Council **Tune-Up** tour combining the twin-Highland pipes and fiddle outfit **Breabach** with the popular Québécois band **Vent Du Nord** should blow away any new year cobwebs.



There are some worthwhile jazz gigs coming up, too – notably legendary drummer **Billy Hart** with his trio at Edinburgh's Jazz Bar on 17 February (to be recorded for broadcasting by Radio 3) and, at the same venue on 12-13 March, New York pianist **Rachel Z** with another formidable drummer, **Omar Hakim**.

Meanwhile, the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra cruises on, featuring the powerful guitarist and one time Miles Davis collaborator **John Scofield** playing "loud jazz and electric Miles" in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Stirling in March, then enlisting the **Mugenkyo Taiko** drummers in April ... is there no stopping them?