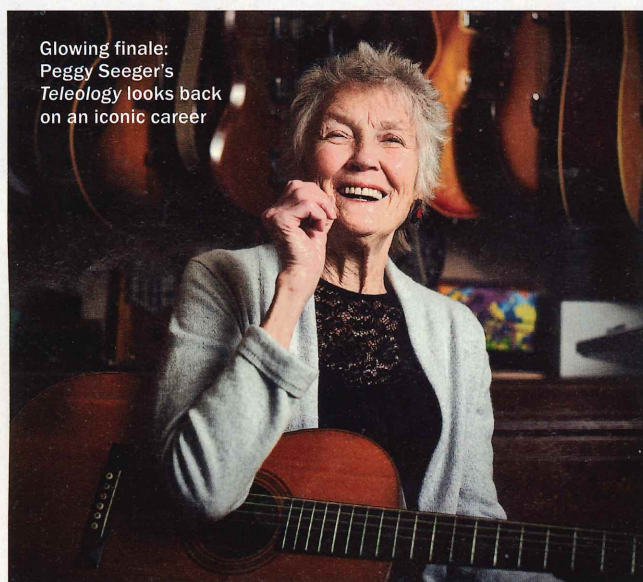


Musical cultures and techniques collide in *Jon Lusk's* latest World Music series

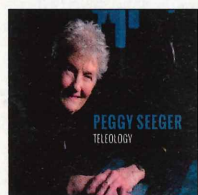
WORLD CHOICE

A triumphant farewell

A warm, witty and bold album from a folk legend still singing powerful truths aged 90



Glowing finale: Peggy Seeger's *Teleology* looks back on an iconic career



Teleology

Peggy Seeger
Red Grape Music RGPSCD5

A true grande dame of Anglo-American folk music, and a veteran of seven decades as a singer, songwriter, feminist and political activist, the amazing Peggy Seeger released

her 25th and final solo album *Teleology* just a month before her 90th birthday. During a recent interview with Jools Holland on his *Later...* TV show, Seeger attributed her phenomenal artistic longevity to the love of her family and, fittingly, her twin sons Neill and Calum plus daughter-in-law Kate St John can be heard on *Teleology*. The record is actually the third album in the closing hat-trick of discs that have concluded her recording career; this began with *Everything Changes* (2013), continued in style with *First Farewell*, which appeared in this column for November 2021.

This recent and most likely final farewell features nine new songs, such as the rousing opener 'Sing About These Hard Times'. There are also two reworked older songs, including a dignified reclamation of 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face', written in Seeger's honour by her lover Ewan MacColl, and made into a global hit by the late, great singer Roberta Flack. And then, 'Sit Down' jauntily combines humour and politics with the inimitable line: 'When the NHS is up for sale... And the government's spouting fairytales,' after which 'Driftwood' honours refugees everywhere and 'No Place Like Home' addresses the homelessness pandemic. Happy birthday, Ms Seeger, and many happy returns! ★★★★★

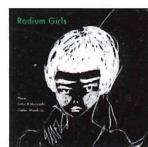
GETTY

December round-up



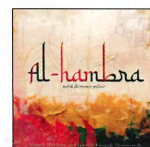
Although he's been writing and performing for many years, **Donald WG Lindsay** might come across as a bold new Scottish talent on *Two Boats Under the Moon*, his excellent two-disc debut – the first of eloquent originals, and the other of traditional, arranged material, both in agreeable and leisurely tempos. Lindsay sings and plays small pipes and baritone guitar while Roo Geddes offers marvellous accompaniment on the violin and piano, which have the warmth of a pair of arms fondly embracing the singer's brae bonnie brogue. Romance? Aye... by the boatload! (Donald WG Lindsay DL001) ★★★★★

Radium Girls by **Phew, Erika Kobayashi** and **Dieter Moebius** is a unique Japanese/German fusion album of treated vocals, spoken word and electronica that took root in response to the Fukushima nuclear power station disaster of 2011. The record has been reissued



and released on CD (and vinyl) in the year that has seen the 80th anniversary/commemoration of the victims of the USA's use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end the Second World War. We hear the deadpan voice of Tokyo-based novelist, comic and visual artist Erika Kobayashi, who elides engagingly between English and Japanese over often unsettling electronic effects by Dieter Moebius – one of Germany's leading protagonists of avant-garde electronica who passed away in 2015. Moebius's work is complemented by that of Phew, a pioneer of Japan's underground music scene. The title is dedicated to US female factory workers who suffered radiation poisoning due to their work painting watch dials with radioactive luminous paint. Not a feel-good record, at all. (Tapete Records/Bureau B BB485-CD) ★★★★★

Al-Hambra is a warmly swinging instrumental dialogue inspired by a visit to the Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain. This



vibrant recording pairs Iraqi oudist **Ahmed Mukhtar** with Argentinian/Italian guitarist **Ignacio Lusardi**

Monteverde to trace the influence of Middle Eastern oud on flamenco guitar. Exploring shared structures such as maqam and flamenco scales, they are joined by percussionist **Demi Garcia Sabat**. This record is a culmination of an artistic partnership that began in London in 2017, after which they toured in Bahrain, India and Iraq. (ARC Music EUCD2972) ★★★★★

There's more oud from Tunisian maestro **Anouar Brahem** on *After the Last Sky*, in which he leads an



adventurous quartet with cellist Anja Lechner alongside Django Bates (piano) and

Dave Holland on double bass. It's a remarkably inclusive work that merges the Arabic maqams that are essential to Brahem's musical identity with modal harmonic approaches of jazz and influences of European classical music. (ECM ECM 2838) ★★★★★

Guitari Baro is a trio of virtuoso



Guinean and Malian Mande griots, whose name means 'guitar conversations'.

These take place between Gaoussou Kouyate and Kerfala Diabate on acoustic and electric guitars alongside the tonkling, woody tones of the balafon (West African xylophone with a 1000-year heritage) of Lassana Diabaté, while referencing Congolese rumba, rock and roll, Cuban music and Guinean dance bands. They first met in Dakar in November 2024 and are here produced by Mande music authority Lucy Durán, Dudu Sarr and Pape Armand Boye. (Chrysalis Global CRC2220) ★★★★★