

Wonderdust

Lizzie Flynn & The Runaway Trains

Review by Ian Dearden, February 2026

Without wanting to sound too parochial – this is a wonderful time to be living in Brisbane if you're into roots and acoustic music. There is a wealth of talent in our overgrown country town capital – and a number of the current shining stars are showcased on this fabulous album.

Lizzie Flynn, the primary songwriter (the album also has covers of songs by Gordon Lightfoot and Darrell Scott) and voice of this album is front and centre with her sumptuous voice and delightful songs. Drawing on eternal themes including love and longing, dreaming and nostalgia, Lizzie's vocals are beautifully framed by the members of The Runaway Trains. Gareth Mewes (violin) and Benja King (double bass) bring their deep background in jazz, while Sam De Santi (guitar and mandolin) contributes a folk/roots perspective. Meanwhile, Lisa Brennan's backing vocals are thoughtfully sprinkled like magic stardust right across all of the songs.

Stand out tracks for me include the title track, 'Wonderdust', with its infectious mix of fiddle, Lizzie's intimate and gorgeous vocals (superbly recorded and mixed upfront) and those delicious harmony vocals from Lisa, which blend perfectly with the lead vocal; "Two" with the delightful interplay of fiddle and mandolin weaving in and out of the vocal line; 'Detours to Dusk', with its longing for something better in life; and 'Stop the Clocks', which reminds us all how time shapes all that we feel in life.

With this extraordinary array of instrumental talent, it would be a shame not to hear what the boys in the band can do on their own – and they don't miss the opportunity!! The coda to 'New Memories' ('Leave With The Sun'), and the final album track, 'Aurora to the South' are both instrumentals composed by Sam De Santi and Gareth Mewes, and each tune gives the band the opportunity to stretch out and demonstrate the superb chops each of them bring to the party.

It would be remiss of me also not to mention how superbly Benja King holds down the bottom end on double bass – his playing throughout, on the songs and the instrumentals, is just sumptuous, delightful and restrained, providing the perfect pillow for the instrumentalists and vocals.

The album was recorded and mixed by Michael Fix, an extraordinary guitar player in his own right, but also (as this album clearly demonstrates), a fabulous engineer, at his Brisbane studio, Parklands, with mastering by Sam Proctor in Sheffield, UK.

The recording quality is exceptional and serves the songs, the singers and the instrumentalists superbly. You should not miss the opportunity to add this album to your collection.

To find out more, go to www.lizzieflynn.com.

Available from Bandcamp: <https://lizzieflynn.bandcamp.com>

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