

BIOGRAPHY-Phil Riley

Born in Gateshead, England and raised in York, Riley was involved in music from an early age. He started in bands at age 15 on the Northern Club circuit as a Pop guitarist then drummer, also playing concertina with folk bands.

Riley graduated with a degree in Biology/Biochemistry from Manchester before emigrating to New Zealand with wife Jane. He worked as a Brewer and Plant Chemist while playing in bands at night, completed graduate teaching qualification and taught in NZ secondary schools and part-time at Victoria University Music School. He loved the teaching but felt the pull of the music industry, leaving finally to go fully professional. He was an after school stay-at-home dad to daughter Lindsey in her early years and moved into the recording industry with the setting up of commercial studio LIFE OF RILEY in the mid 90's.

Riley got to know Grammy winner **Jon Mark** of White Cloud Records(Naxos) , and this led to his series of 6 Celtic and World music albums for the label, including The Blessing Tree, which reached #11 on the US radio play charts and stayed in the World Music top 50 for 7 months (nominated for 5 NZ Tui music awards). Riley has tracks on European and US albums alongside artists such as Dido, Sarah McLachlan, Sinead O'Connor, Brian Eno, Secret Garden, Ennio Morricone, Enya and Clannad. 'Celtic Journey' reached #1 on the American Billboard charts.

Like many writer/producers, Philip Riley is a multi-instrumentalist who now uses computer technology to write and record music. He's a wordsmith and consummate melodic songwriter with influences from the Beatles and Paul Simon to Coldplay. While his recording and live music background is mostly in Pop, Indie Folk and World Music, mixing genres and musical colours has always been a compulsion. Harmony and the human voice have been a constant feature of his releases, working alongside award-winning vocalist Jayne Elleson and Iraqi singer Huda Sabour to produce the warm multi-layered weaves of melody and emotion in albums such as The Blessing Tree, Rituals and Secret Egypt.

The art and craft of songwriting and the power of the written word have become a priority over the past few years, driving his recording and performing focus and moving his centre of gravity along a wide and varied musical continuum.

He's described his personality as "*An unusual blend of the romantic and the hopelessly sensible (probably the combination that allows me to start albums from a kernel of inspiration and go on to finish them 6 to 9 months later in a mass of practical, tightly arranged detail*"