

## Chaos, Clocks, and Watermelons Pt 1

Milkweed - "Folklore 1979" released February 28th, 2024 on Broadside Hacks Recording. Video created in its entirety by Greg Butler of Oh Kestrel Films

Milkweed, an English duo, recently described their music as 'slack trad' in a *Quietus* interview with Patrick Clarke. The encounter came on the heels of their new cassette release *Folklore 1979* though they remained reticent about engaging with the machinery of media and would only provide their initials, G. and R., for publication.

*Folklore 1979* is 11 minutes in total. There is an additional 11 minutes on the cassette's B-side but it's not reproduced on their Bandcamp page or on any streaming service. The cassette is sold out. The spark for the album lies in an old issue of The Folklore Society's academic journal (*Folklore* Volume 90 1979 ii).

# Folklore • Volume 90—1979 ii

## Contents

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- 131 *The Sign-Language of Hungarian Graveyards* Tünde Zentai  
141 *A Hundred Years of Finnish Folklore Research: A Reappraisal*  
Lauri Honko  
153 *The Legend of the Pacing White Mustang* David L. Wilson  
167 *Mordred, King Arthur's Son* Amy Varin  
178 *Pigs in Noah's Ark: A Muslim Origin Myth from Southern Thailand*  
Angela Burr  
186 *Annual Report and Accounts for the Year 1978*  
193 *The Snake in Chinese Belief* Denise Chao  
204 *The Folktale in 'Heims Kringla'* Marlene Ciklamini  
217 *The Tree as a Kinship Symbol* Claire Russell  
235 *Tsonga Rain Songs* Thomas F. Johnston  
241 *Letters to the Editor* John Brunner; E. C. Cawte  
242 REVIEWS  
250 *Society Meetings*  
251 *Folklore Notes*  
252 *Book Chronicle*  
253 *Index*

Milkweed extracted lines from the various articles in the journal and composed songs around them. It's not hard to see why. The article titles alone are inspirational, evoking a of life where nature, animals and humans cross back and forth from the everyday to worlds of mystery. On their Bandcamp page for the album, the band reproduce the lines extracted, running them together in a dream-like stream of consciousness that conjures those worlds, the words shucked from their academic husks:

My father's sheep is dead honestly I swear by Dumazi father's sheep is dead honestly is a great mystery father's sheep they have no wool black sheep make rain clouds full black millipede, goat and ram I play my flute conjure lightning ... rain is falling we are going to eat watermelon rain is falling we are going to eat a pumpkin we've been longing for rain we are going to eat

sugarcane Ten thousand years ago Equus disappeared here in North America at the end of the Ice Age along with mammoths, mastodons, camels and other large herbivores .....

Half human half snake asleep inside of the egg waking in anger he broke the egg with hammer when his body died the sun pulled from his left eye right became the moon his teeth and bones turned to jewels breath became the storm and his voice became thunder Half human half snake crouched down and dug out of clay naked as they were many dolls to dance around her rope dripping with mud and taught to bear children stone laid on alter for the matchmaker snake tattoos snake skin twinning tails with the first sovereign Arthur dreamed that from his chest issued out a serpent all the babies born the first of May are put to sea with Mordred

These words, like reports from a possessed witness, are woven around sonic fragments, field recordings, snatches of static, picked banjo, shaky drum patterns and a haunting, atonal voice.

In a very good way this experience does not feel like 11 minutes. Time stretches, entrancement transpires and a quaint transmission shifts through space. The scholarship of *Folklore Volume 90, no.ii* dissipates and the mystery of the academic material is revealed.