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KIERAN HALPIN

**The devil and his dealing**

SOS Records SOS 021

11 tracks

Ardee born Kieran Halpin has craved his career very much outside the mainstream of late- having done the record company thing in the 80s and 90s he has taken a self-determined route releasing albums semi regularly on his own SOS imprint. He has also fashioned a personalised style musically mixing folk and rock delivered in a powerful searing honest lyricism and a passionate vocal style. The Devil and his Dealing his 20th album cut in Banbury at Blue Moon Studios gathers another collection of original songs both confessionals and confrontational at once. Politics and love seem to go hand in hand in the Halpin vocabulary with equal busts of social comment and romantic gestures. The plaintive Real Life and the wistful Its all up to you contrast the social comment based title track and the ragged passionate You don’t know me with Halpin’s vocals at their raucous naked gravel tones.

The Devil and his Dealing occupies a lush warm sonic soundscape that highlights both Kieran Halpin and his supporting musicians. Halpin has assembled a team of players that embellish his strident passionate songs with a glove like consistency. However the star turn is accordionist Manfred Leuchter who lights up the proceedings wherever his box appears. From Gallic Musete strains to romantic flourishes on tracks like Long lost Friends, New Year’s Day and October Moon he colours the sound and provides a melodic foil for Halpin not heard since his duet with fiddler Tom McConville. His contributions lift the bar to where Kieran Halpin has to deliver vocally and he does. The Devil’s in the Dealing is one of the best of Kieran Halpin albums so far and deserves a wider audience than just the folk and acoustic circuits that will welcome it.

[www.kieranhalpin.com](http://www.kieranhalpin.com).

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