

## The Unthanks

### Praise for Last by The Unthanks

*"The Unthanks seem to regard folk music the same way Miles Davis regarded jazz: as a launchpad for exploring the wider possibilities.. a bleakly beautiful record" \*\*\*\* Uncut*

*"This is a big album in every way" \*\*\*\* Mojo*

*"their fourth and best album.. bewitching and hugely ambitious" \*\*\*\* Q*

*"gorgeously unhurried, utterly mesmerising masterpiece." \*\*\*\*\* Sunday Express*

*"deeply-felt, austerely beautiful music with deep roots and an appetite for something new. Last is folk music that doesn't want to live in isolation." \*\*\*\* The Mail*

*"quietly subverting English folk music.. proves the mix of Rachel and Becky's voices to be one of the true wonders of 21st-century music" 8/10 NME*

*"Just beautiful" Lauren Laverne*

*"sparse, intensely focussed production and some stunningly imaginative, minimalist-style arrangements..the strings have an icy, autumnal countenance about them, and it's against their chilled and often foreboding presence that the voices of Rachel and Becky radiate warmth and compassion... their ability to pare back extraneous matter and to stare unflinchingly into the very soul of a song makes Last such a spellbinding experience" BBC Music*

*The Independent Record of Week 12.03.11*

*6 Music Album of the Day 31.03.11*

### About the Unthanks

Known for their timeless, unsentimental and quietly subversive tales of loss, fear, booze, brawls, abuse and sorrow, siblings Rachel and Becky Unthank are honest, young storytellers outside of time, forging links between folk worlds old, new and other. It's hard to imagine a British folk band with fans like Radiohead, Portishead, Robert Wyatt, Ben Folds, Elvis Costello, Rosanne Cash, Ewan McGregor and Nick Hornby, but The Unthanks occupy a unique place in music. Influenced as much by the minimalist eccentricity of Steve Reich, Antony & The Johnsons, Robert Wyatt and Miles Davis, as they are by their Geordie native North East England, back home The Unthanks have established themselves as the most innovative and critically acclaimed British folk band in modern history.

Using a kaleidoscope of unlikely instruments, their unique approach to storytelling straddles the complex relationship between modernism and learning from the past. Staunch traditionalism and sonic adventure ought to be polar opposites, yet they are easy bedfellows in the gentle hands of The Unthanks; the British

counterpart to the leftfield folk leanings of Sufjan Stevens, Bonnie Prince Billy and Tom Waits. The Unthanks don't sound like any of these acts but belong to a growing number of artists definable only by their restless, peerless eccentricity. The Unthanks are less interested in notions of modernising folk music for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and more focused on finding the beauty that was there in an old song all along. While many pop acts and songwriters are adopting the vernacular of folk music in a search for an authentic and honest sound and look, The Unthanks are interested in the content of folk music, not the style. Prepared to break all the rules to communicate a story to a wider audience, The Unthanks see folk music as an unwritten people's history, not a style of music; a history that gives us some perspective on our own time.

Formerly known as Rachel Unthank & The Winterset, their second album *The Bairns* (2007) was nominated for the Mercury Music Prize and appeared in *The Best Albums of the Decade* in both *Uncut* and *The Guardian*. *Here's The Tender Coming* (2009) was both BBC and Mojo Magazine Folk Album of the Year and featured in almost every UK music mag and broadsheet Albums of the Year poll.'

### **Awards and Nominations**

- Best Albums of The Decade in *Uncut* and *The Observer* (*The Guardian*) for *The Bairns*
- Nationwide Mercury Award Nominees 2008 for *The Bairns*
- *Uncut* Inaugural Music Award 2008 Nominees (Fleet Foxes won)
- BBC Folk Award Horizon Award Winners 2008 and Nominees for Best Group, Best Live Act and Best Album
- BBC Folk Award 2010 Nominated for Best Group, Best Album and Best Song (results pending)
- Mojo Magazine Folk Album of the Year for *Here's The Tender Coming*
- *Uncut* Top 50 Albums of the Year for *Here's The Tender Coming*
- *Guardian* Top 50 Albums of the Year for *Here's The Tender Coming*

*"Music as tough as it is gentle, as ancient as it is modern, and as coldly desolate as it is achingly intimate.. a sensationally graceful sound that can be epic and subdued, dreamy and specific, as well as supernaturally ancient and defiantly modern". Paul Morley, Observer Music Magazine (Britain's leading music journalist)*

*'Intimate, epic, overflowing with feeling and musical intelligence'* **The Independent**

*"once in a blue moon type of every now and again, you hear music that is so complete, so wonderful, unique and yet familiar that it stops you in your tracks. They have that blue moon magic about them, and they have it in spades"* **BBC Music**

*"They are like the morning dew that hasn't steamed off yet, they are fresh and new and I really don't think they know how good they are"* **Robert Wyatt**

[www.the-unthanks.com](http://www.the-unthanks.com)

[www.myspace.com/rachelunthank](http://www.myspace.com/rachelunthank)

[www.twitter.com/TheUnthanks](http://www.twitter.com/TheUnthanks)