

Folk and Beyond

Throughout my time teaching the cello, most of my students will find at least one tune that sparks joy and inspires enthusiasm when all else fails – that one exhausted tune they have overplayed while scales and studies are left fallow. Joanna Borrett's new compendium, *Folk and Beyond*, is full of those tunes.

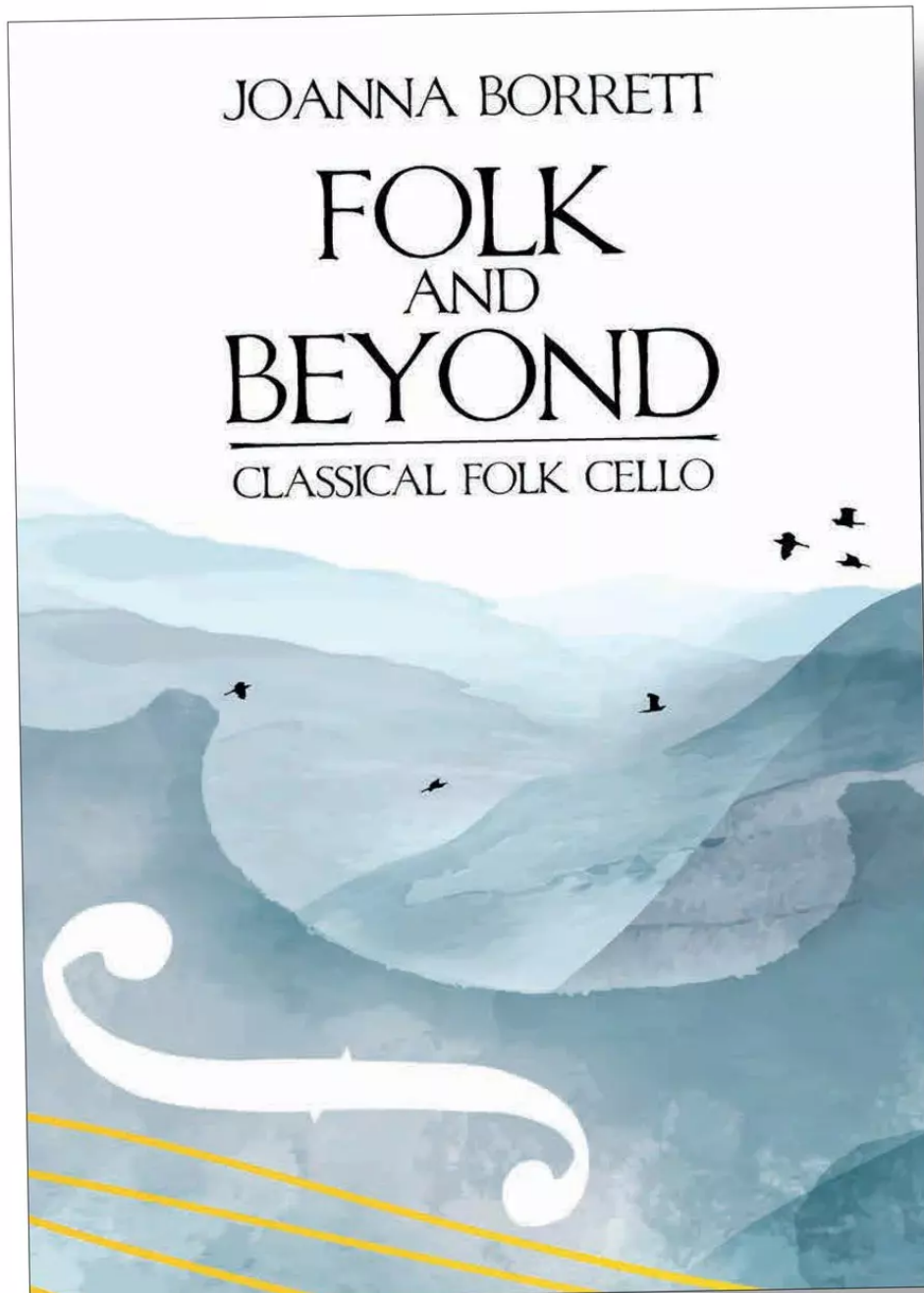
Published earlier this year by Kevin Mayhew, it is chock-a-block with 12 hearty pieces that cut straight to the marrow of a student's musical imagination. It starts strong with the old traditional, 'Over the Hills and Faraway'. After recently road testing this on my students, I have added it to my permanent toolbox of pieces to wipe away the acoustic cobwebs after a long holiday.

If you are looking for folk pieces with authentic traditional bowing and fiddler's phrasing, then you should look elsewhere. These are traditional and original pieces in a classical setting, suitable for students at a Grade 5 level and up. Nor is this a delicate collection of classical motifs. Its charm lies in unsubtle themes, unbashful melodies, so immediate in sentiment that they will get students emotionally involved with their instrument quickly and easily.

While some of the tunes are a little clunky, what they lack in elegance they make up for with pure gusto. The raw spirit of the tunes will appeal to the undiluted emotional landscape of a younger player. Intense yet attainable pieces such as 'Aventi' will give them the thrill of virtuosic playing. Some of the more lyrical originals have the flavour of Frank Bridge's *Miniatures*.

The book introduces glissando, tremolo and snap pizzicato in fun and imaginative ways, and performance directions include stamping, tapping, and clapping. Different playing techniques and complicated time signatures are presented in clear and manageable sections. While the pieces seem easy and quickly playable, they offer many opportunities for focused study on different technical hurdles. 'Morning Prelude' focuses on natural harmonics, while 'The Water is Wide' is the perfect piece for working on a student's bow control and development of even tone.

The wise adage 'the music will fix the technique' applies well here, as players will naturally be drawn to follow the correct bowing or work out how to master a certain



FOLK AND BEYOND: CLASSICAL FOLK CELLO

Joanna Borrett
Kevin Mayhew
£16.99

technique because the musical feel will demand it. This book is most likely to appeal to children and teenagers, and it would

have been useful to get a sense of that in the introduction. While technically easy pieces often still work nicely in an advanced recital setting, in my opinion that is not the case with this book. However, it is a brilliant teaching tool and perfect for student recitals and study pieces. This is a collection that is guaranteed to make the most reticent of students smile – and even practise. **MT**

NINA-MARIE PLAPP