# CAPERCAILLE AT THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

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**Category:** Observations

There are some people who don't think that Karen Matheson is the greatest female singer in the world; they aren't bad people, they just haven't heard her yet.

But Capercaille are not simply a backing band for their wonderful vocalist. Indeed, last night at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Ms Matheson often sat quietly at the back of the stage, clapping her hands, as the rest of the band reeled, jigged and strathspeyed our socks off. The only problem was that this was a 'no dancing' venue. Even someone as terpsichorally challenged as me wanted to get off my seat and twirl around. They were simply stunning. Seven musicians at the top of their game.

However, it was the vocal numbers that really made the show. At its best, music gives a sense of 'place'; it takes you to the place where it comes from. Listening to Karen Matheson singing, was as near to being on the West Coast of Scotland as it is possible to be while being in the South East of England. There were ballads, waulking songs and those clever Gaellic songs where the words tumble faster than the water over a waterfall. However, the highlight was Â the almostÂ *a cappella* version ofÂ Fear a' BhÃ ta which they used as an encore. It sent tingles down my spine and into my feet. It went something like this:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5muVg_ZWek&noredirect=1