

ALEXANDER TUCKER

PORTAL

(ATP)



Weaving together twin strains of Anglo-American folk and drone-based psychedelia, Alexander Tucker properly found his own distinctive voice with

Furrowed Brow, his second full-length for ATP. Forgoing traditional storytelling conventions most commonly associated with the one-man-and-a-guitar folk music set-up, Tucker instead marries less terrestrially-tethered narratives to looping layers of serpentine string work and wavering choir-boy tones, creating something every bit as vibrant and alive as the heart of an English forest. Blending the haunted, half-seen worlds of Arthur Machen and the Brothers Grimm with the open-string drones and spider web picking of John Fahey, this hypnotic form of sonorous psych-folk carries with it hints of stone circle ceremonies, wicker men and goat-legged country gods. 'Poltergeists Grazing', for instance, spins a spell to conjure spirits from thin air, 'Omnibaron' stalks an insistent rock riff like a stormcloud, and 'Here' binds ringing bells to twilight chanting with lattice-fine guitar threads. While *Portal* doesn't really stretch too far beyond the territory Tucker has already staked out it's still a wholly absorbing and intriguing journey down less travelled trails.

ANDREW CARDEN