

# The Ballad Of Shirley Collins



Directors: Rob Curry & Tim Plester

FIRE FILMS. C/DVD

**The renaissance and legacy of the legendary folk singer.**



This film is refreshingly free from celebrity endorsements. Instead, the directors build up a finely nuanced character portrait. Articulate and engaging, Shirley talks to friends including Current 93's David Tibet, folk singer Elle Osborne and Stewart Lee about her wartime childhood, her love of English folk music, her late sister and musical partner Dolly, and losing her voice to dysphonia in the 1980s. Her remarkable return following a 30-year retirement culminates in footage of her recording her 2016 comeback album *Lodestar* at home in Hastings. But the most compelling stories are of her song-collecting trip with Alan Lomax to the US in 1959 to record the likes of Texas Gladden and Almeda Riddle, which remind us how culturally vital it is for folk tradition to be preserved.

Mike Barnes