

Paul O'Kelly on individuality in folk music

Sue: Well I thought that was a very interesting point, that music was for- kind of, for yourself.

Paul: Oh yeah, singing in the bath is wonderful. That's what it's- It's a therapy. Play that thing to me, that thing is- With the Chieftains on, of course, you can... But it's a therapy. So in the same way that we listen to music, I suppose in the seventeenth century people sang. But then of course I suppose that some people hadn't- wouldn't even know how to sing- they would never have heard music perhaps. I mean that's out for investigation isn't it. But, oh, there's a lot of that. So the people that have compiled all these songs, like the Coppers, who've done that, and have given them to us, have done- That's terrific. But you feel it when they sing those songs, you can feel that what they're singing is pure individual enjoyment, for your own self. And you feel that. I think that's why, sometimes in folk clubs I'd sooner be on my own listening to some folk music, just on my own. Because it's very personal, and stuff. Although it's nice to be in a folk club because the atmosphere is there, of course.

Read more about the interview on Essex Archives Online: [SA 30/7/1/18/1](#)