

**A Conversation with Aoife O'Donovan**  
**by Frank Goodman (12/2006, Puremusic.com)**

When we talked recently with Happy Traum of Homespun Tapes, he turned us on to the incredible nouveau old time outfit called Crooked Still. It features the very dynamic cellist Rushad Eggleston, bassist Corey DiMario, banjo innovator Dr. Gregory Liszt (Biology, MIT, can you dig it), and the greatest new singer on the acoustic scene, Aoife O'Donovan. New to us, anyway--she's been knockin 'em dead in Boston and around the country for some time.

Hands down, this is the most exciting outfit of this kind that has appeared in this decade. You can't touch them, they're just too good. Dr. Liszt is just getting off tour with Springsteen. They have other great bands going on in their circle as well, Rushad does one with Aoife and others called Wild Band of Snee, when he's not out with Fiddler's 4 or Darol Anger's Republic Of Strings.

This is the new breed, scary talent and high IQ. Berklee and New England Conservatory grads, scientists and the like. But they party with the best of them, and they kick ass on stage. Check them out on YouTube. And they're not shy--Aoife's got a great trio with Ruth Ungar Merenda of The Mammals and Kristin Andreasson of Uncle Earl called Sometyes Why, with a very deservedly X-rated song featured. We love it.

We spoke recently with the captivating Aoife ("ee-fa") O'Donovan, she's the new one to watch. Well, don't just watch--get Crooked Still's *Shaken By A Low Sound*, it's the best thing we've heard in ages. They are not merely pushing the envelope--they set a match to it.

**Puremusic:** It's my pleasure to speak with you today. I first got turned on to your music through Crooked Still. But I know that you just came off the road with your all-girl trio, Sometyes Why.

**Aoife O'Donovan:** Yeah. We were out doing some dates with Chris Thile, actually. [Probably the greatest young mandolinist out there; he's known best for his work with Nickel Creek, but he's also recorded a number of great solo records.]

**PM:** Since that's the freshest thing in your mind, let's talk about Sometyes Why, first, shall we?

**AO:** Okay, that'd be great.

**PM:** Love them.

**AO:** Thank you.

**PM:** Luckily, my publicist buddy, Angie Carlson, zipped me out a copy for this interview--

**AO:** Oh! I just got a message from her, too. That was one of my other missed calls.

[laughter]

**PM:** So we're on the same wavelength.

**AO:** Yes.

**PM:** So do you know her personally?

**AO:** No, I don't. But we just started with her, and I have to say I have nothing but good things to say about her.

**PM:** She's fantastic--she'll never tell you, but there was a very important band around the outbreak of R.E.M. called Let's Active, and she was in that band with her husband of the time, Mitch Easter, who is and was a very important person in that sphere and time, the whole DBs/R.E.M./Let's Active scene. Yeah, that never surfaces, but she's also a very good musician and a major chick in general.

**AO:** Cool, very interesting.

**PM:** So how did Sometyes Why come together?

**AO:** Well, Ruth Ungar Merenda, is how she's called now--she married her bandmate in the Mammals, whose name is Michael Merenda, so her name is now Ruth Unger Merenda. Ruth and I, anyway, had gotten together about seven and a half years ago at the Philadelphia Folk Festival, where both of us were singing with the Wayfaring Strangers, which is another band that I used to be in.

**PM:** Right. And we're going to get to them for sure.

**AO:** So that's how Ruth and I met. And we were sort of drawn together at that festival--never met, and Matt [Glaser] said, "You guys are going to go on stage and sing this duet." And the Philly Folk Festival is really big.

**PM:** Oh, yeah, I grew up going to that every year.

**AO:** So it's really, really a pretty big festival, and it was kind of nerve wracking. I was only eighteen at the time.

**PM:** Damn. And what were you going to sing?

**AO:** We were going to sing "When the Golden Leaves Begin to Fall"; there's a duet of us singing it on the Wayfaring Strangers album, *This Train*.

**PM:** Okay.

**AO:** Anyway, so we did it, it was just almost perfect. We kind of rehearsed it once, and then got on stage, and it was gorgeous.

**PM:** Wow.

**AO:** And that sort of began our musical relationship. And then I think I met Kristin Andreassen a couple months previous. I met Kristin before I met Ruth. But I didn't really start hanging out with her until the following summer. And we kind of all met individually. Anyway, Sometyes Why started the December 2004 or January of 2005, so almost two years ago. We just got together to do a couple songs at the Sidewalk Cafe in New York.

**PM:** Where's that, the Sidewalk Cafe?

**AO:** East 6th and Avenue A.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** And it worked out really well. We kind of traded songs. We got together in a Brooklyn living room where Kristin was living, and played all these songs. Went to the Sidewalk, did it. Did it again a month later. And then in May, went up to just sort of hang out at Ruth's house in West Hurley, New York, and put up a microphone, and that's all the album.

**PM:** "Put up a microphone"?

**AO:** Two.

**PM:** Two.

**AO:** We put up one right in front of us, and sort of one really up high in the room to get ambient sounds [laughs] from literally--

**PM:** And who was recording it, on what?

**AO:** We were recording it onto somebody's laptop, it was all Digital.

**PM:** Holy jeez! Two mics into a laptop and it sounded like that record?

**AO:** Yeah, that *is* that record.

**PM:** That *is* the record. Yeah. Wow. Nice mics, like an old Neumann or something like that?

**AO:** They were Audio Technicas.

**PM:** Good mics, yeah.

**AO:** And then people just really responded to it. And as you know, it does have that one X-rated song. ["Too Repressed"--yeah, you'd have to call that X-rated.] But I think the album sort of stands apart from other albums out there. It's really different. And our live show is also really different. We sit down. It's sort of a day in somebody's dining/living room. That's kind of what we do, we try to take the living room vibe with us. We sit down around one mic, and it's a really cool--it's such a contrast to my other life in Crooked Still, because it's very quiet, and it's really feminine.

**PM:** Right. And I haven't seen Crooked Still, but I know it must really kickass live.

**AO:** Have you watched us on YouTube yet?

**PM:** No. [I have since, naturally; they Rock.]

**AO:** Oh, my God, you've got to--

**PM:** Why didn't I think of that?

**AO:** There's actually a professionally recorded thing, it's called "Come On In My Kitchen." It's professionally recorded, so that's the best quality.

**PM:** Oh, okay.

**AO:** And then there's a bunch of others, low quality stuff.

**PM:** So of course in the setup to this interview, I'll refer everybody to those YouTube videos so everybody can get the vibe like I should have.

**AO:** Yeah, you should definitely go do it, because Crooked Still--not to just jump right over--but one of Crooked Still's main things is, I think, our live show, both visually, and whatever we do musically.

**PM:** It's such an ass kicking enterprise right from jump street. But, so's not to gloss over that excellent X-rated song, I was listening very quietly this morning, because people were sleeping. And the first X-rated line went by, and I thought, "Wait a minute, did she say what I thought she said?"

**AO:** [laughs]

**PM:** And I had to turn my player up, and heard, "I want to f\*\*k you." I said, "Omigod! I can't believe what I'm hearing!" [laughs] And yet, it was sung so sweetly, so musically--

and I was telling a young hippie friend of mine later about it. I said, "I'm not talking about a passing reference, Dave--this is a six-minute song!"

[laughter]

**AO:** I know.

**PM:** It's so out there. I thought, "Damn, these old-time ambient chicks are off the hook." It's just beautiful.

**AO:** Oh, thank you. It's funny. Actually that song started as a jam between myself and Ruth's husband, Mike.

**PM:** [laughs]

**AO:** We were all at Merlefest, just kind of jamming on guitar. And Mike sort of came up with that riff, that da, da, da, deeyoo, deeyoo, deeyoo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo.

**PM:** [laughs]

**AO:** And then I made up all the words and sort of the rest of the song. But--

**PM:** Did you start singing those words on the spot when you and he were jamming?

**AO:** Oh, yeah. That was on the spot. We were at this cabin in the woods in North Carolina, and we'd just come back from Merlefest, and we were partying.

**PM:** [laughs] Right. Did he start laughing when you started singing those words?

**AO:** Oh, God, the guys were cracking up.

**PM:** Falling out!

**AO:** We were going for it. But the thing is that in so much music right now, in so much pop music and so much hip-hop, there's so much sex going on.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** And there's a lot of sex going on in old-time music, too, but it's really subtle, and it's really under the surface, and it's usually a song from a guy's point of view.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** Like "Going on up on a mountain, give my horn a blow, every girl in this old town says yonder comes my beau." And those references are definitely made.

**PM:** Yeah, all the way back.

**AO:** So it's never from a woman's perspective, ever. [laughs] I just felt like we had to come up there and say, "We're humans, we're women, and this is how we feel at this moment."

**PM:** I just think it's fantastic. And to hear a woman singing those words, it's really powerful. It's liberating, even to guys, I think. That's how it hit me.

**AO:** Cool.

**PM:** And so do you perform that song live?

**AO:** We do it in New York City.

**PM:** [laughs] Oh, that's a funny qualification. "We do it in New York City."

**AO:** We didn't want to do it on the Thile tour because we're opening. It's the kind of song where you really have to feel out a room. And it totally isn't appropriate for little girls to hear that song, I don't think.

**PM:** Absolutely not, right.

**AO:** So we were at a show in Asheville the other night, and we were thinking we might do it, because it was Asheville, and it seemed like that kind of crowd. And then there was this beautiful little six-year-old girl in the audience, and we were just like, no way am I going to chance traumatizing anybody--she probably wouldn't even know what we were talking about--but just, whatever, it was not the vibe.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** So we feel it out when it's all adults that just seem like they can handle it, then we do it. And I'm sure that one of these days I'll get a really angry e-mail. But it's art, and it's what it is.

**PM:** Have you taken largely no flak for that song?

**AO:** I don't know. I feel like people have wanted to e-mail me and say, "I hate you for doing this." But I haven't gotten any e-mails about it yet.

**PM:** That's amazing.

**AO:** But the record has been out for over a year. I'm actually shocked. I do warn people--and it says on the back of the CD, "This song contains explicit lyrics."

**PM:** Yeah.

**AO:** So it's kind of like you don't pick up a rap album without knowing what you're getting into.

**PM:** Absolutely.

**AO:** It's kind of the same thing

**PM:** And even though the lead vocals get shared between the three principals on the *Sometymes Why* record, you really get a lot of the essential Aoife O'Donovan from that record, since the tunes are original, and the story--I mean, when you're doing traditional tunes, sure, you can reinterpret the living hell out of them. But when you're playing your own songs, you get a lot more of the essential person.

**AO:** Exactly. And I think that's part of the reason I really like doing both, because with *Crooked Still*, though I didn't write those songs, I can really just kind of put myself in them, and really feel like I can do whatever I want with them. They don't want to fit the mold. So it's a lot more about me getting up there and not playing an instrument and just singing all night, like two full sets of me singing. And in *Sometymes Why*, the moments where I'm singing lead are so deeply personal. You know what I mean?

**PM:** I do.

**AO:** It's this really serious contrast for what I do on stage.

**PM:** It's amazing. Before we get off the subject, I'd love to hear something about Ruth and Kristin, what are they like?

**AO:** Well, Ruth and Kristin are two of my dearest friends in the world. And it's really special to be in a band with two people that you're really that close with. And recently we got asked in an interview to talk about songs. I remember Kristin telling me that she wrote "Middle," which is the first song on the record, because she was there in the story. And it was kind of like all of us are in all those songs. Even if they're from a different part of our lives, since we're such close friends, we're kind of there in the song with them. You know what I mean?

**PM:** Sure.

**AO:** Which is a really cool experience to just be listening to somebody spill their heart in this song and really feel like you know what they're talking about, and feel like your harmony part, or your piano part, or your guitar part is just a part of the song. You're not adding to it, it's a part of it. It's kind of a part of the body of the song. It's something that can only come when you know somebody really well.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** And we have such a good time on the road. It's really fun. We were touring, actually, this past five days in Kristin's Toyota Matrix. And we were squished in so tight in this vehicle.

[laughter]

**AO:** And it was great. We just really get to bond. And we're all sharing one hotel room. And it's really, really fun.

**PM:** Yeah, there's something about the way that girls bond that I think some guys find fascinating. Girls bond in their own unique way.

**AO:** I think the Thile band was bonding pretty hard on this trip, I will say. It was actually really fun to be on tour with a guy band who were also really psyched about each other, and really psyched about the music they were playing together. They had a van, and we had a little Matrix, and they would just totally go goof off in the van and have a great time. It was really cool to get to hang out with them, because they're all really good friends of ours. And the reason why we're even on the tour in the first place is because one night in the summer, actually after we had been to the Sidewalk Cafe hearing somebody else--with--it was the three girls, our friend Cassie Jenkins, who's a great photographer, she took our photos, and Chris Thile. And we all ended up going back to Chris Thile's apartment in the East Village, and we were there until 7:00 in the morning singing songs. And that's how the idea for us to go on the tour was even born.

**PM:** Wow! He's such an amazing dude, and an amazing musician.

**AO:** Totally, he's unbelievable.

**PM:** I was recently interviewing Happy Traum of Homespun Tapes. And he said he was going to do a video with this amazing cellist named--

**AO:** Rushad, yeah.

**PM:** --yeah, Rushad Eggleston of Crooked Still. And I didn't know anything about them. But I jumped on that, and quickly got up to speed on Crooked Still--I mean, you have to be some of the greatest interpreters of old-time music ever, anywhere. I mean, that's an unbelievable outfit.

**AO:** Thank you so much. It's really going well, the ball is rolling fast. [laughs] It's cool.

**PM:** Yeah, I mean, it's unbelievable to me. So tell me a little, please, about Rushad. What kind of a cat is he--

**AO:** [laughs] That's always the first--every time I do an interview for Crooked Still, the first question is, "Tell me what Rushad is like." That's funny.

[laughter]

**PM:** Well, it's an outrageous presence.

**AO:** He is. He really is. He's so brilliant.

**PM:** And then he makes those crazy mugs when he takes photos, too.

**AO:** Yes, he does. This is why you have to watch the YouTube thing right when you hang up the phone with me.

**PM:** Okay.

**AO:** Talk about crazy mugs.

**PM:** [laughs]

**AO:** Rushad was unbelievable. He's such a dedicated instrumentalist, first and foremost. The first and foremost, I think. When I first met him five, six years ago, he was just so into the cello, and into taking it to a new level, and reinventing cello. And it's really cool that he has come this far, even in the last six years. He's totally a pioneer, and he's just fucking insane. The amount of stuff that he can do on the cello that nobody else can do. People can do the chops, people can improvise on the cello. But Rushad *is* his instrument. You know?

**PM:** Oh, yeah. He owns that thing.

**AO:** It's such an extension of himself. He owns it. And it's amazing. And then his whole sort of creative input as a person, his whole kind of Wild Band of Snee, his whole kind of extraneous personality, that is totally like Dr. Seuss meets Roald Dahl, meets Frank Zappa--

**PM:** [laughs]

**AO:** --really come across in his music also. So it's really a treat to be his presence all the time.

**PM:** He's got to be a hugely brainy dude as well.

**AO:** He is. He's extremely smart, and he's extremely thoughtful. And it's funny, when he was in college, he was at Berklee, and I was at NEC, he would practice all day. He really did. And this was before we were really touring a lot. And he would just practice the cello. He'd work. He'd play the cello, he'd write songs for like fifteen hours a day in his bedroom.

**PM:** Wow. That's what the great people do.

**AO:** I know. It really is. So he was definitely in that vibe for a long time.

**PM:** Oh, so he was writing songs all the while, too, that's part of his thing.

**AO:** Have you heard the Wild Band of Snee?

**PM:** No.

**AO:** The Wild Band of Snee is Rushad's other band of all his original music, that I'm in also.

**PM:** Wow. The Wild Band of Snee.

**AO:** Now, go to [myspace.com/thewildbandofsnee](http://myspace.com/thewildbandofsnee) or [myspace.com/wildbandofsnee](http://myspace.com/wildbandofsnee).

**PM:** Okay.

**AO:** That's how you'll find us.

**PM:** I'm going to get on that for sure.

**AO:** Okay.

**PM:** And Greg Liszt on the banjo, fabulous.

**AO:** Greg's awesome on the banjo, yeah. And we've been touring a lot this fall with Noam Pikelnny on the banjo.

**PM:** Oh, right. I saw that on the website, yeah.

**AO:** But Greg is the member of the band, and Noam is just filling in. But we haven't seen Greg except for two shows in the past like couple months.

**PM:** Oh, really, because he's been out with Springsteen?

**AO:** Been out with Springsteen. And he's a pretty unbelievable guy, and an amazing banjo player, and really, again, a total pioneer of his instrument, and really does something different than anybody else does.

**PM:** So his stand-in, Pikelnny, must be really amazing, too. Those are big shoes to fill.

**AO:** Yeah, Noam is unbelievable. It's really cool, since we're sort of on the road so much this fall, to sort of be able to have a change every couple of weeks. That was really cool to sort of get to have a new face, a new ingredient to the soup. It really changes it. So it was really cool.

**PM:** And what's Corey DiMario like, the bass player?

**AO:** Well, Corey is one of my dearest friends, also. Corey is my guy friend who's practically a girlfriend. [laughs] Corey and I were friends before I was friends with any of those guys, because we were in college together at New England Conservatory. We met in the klezmer band. And he and I were just like immediate best friends. We're both from Massachusetts, and we always got along so well. Corey and I were friends from NEC and Greg and Rushad were friends from another scene. And we kind of all came together, and that's when our band started, with two and two, in a way.

**PM:** Wow. So were you personally exposed to old-time stuff and other music through your folks? Is that the right story?

**AO:** Yes, definitely, my dad--well, both of my parents are amazing musicians, my mom especially is the real musician. And my dad is sort of a music person. He's kind of in the music business. And he does a radio show Boston. And I grew up spending all my summers in Ireland with his family, who were very musical, and singing songs. And his radio show is traditional Irish music, but he was always sort of playing lots of that, as well as lots of other kinds of folk music--not necessarily old-time music, though. I don't think I really got into old-time music until I got to college, until I kind of met Rushad and Greg and all those people in Boston.

**PM:** Ah, you found that with them, yeah.

**AO:** Yeah. But it was definitely the similar songs. Like I knew those songs from Joan Baez, or I knew those songs from Irish traditional music, where the songs are the same, except they're from County Cork instead of Louisville, or something.

**PM:** Exactly.

**AO:** So it was definitely familiar to me.

**PM:** So although your vocals define their sound as much as anything does, you don't get to play too much on *Shaken By A Low Sound*. Is that one of the reasons for forming Sometyms Why, as well as being an outlet for your own songs?

**AO:** Definitely not. I think instrumentally, but I'm a singer. When somebody asks me what I do, I say I'm a singer.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** That's what I studied in college, that's my craft, that's my instrument, is singing, my voice. And I have this degree in voice, that's what I studied the way the people study the piano.

**PM:** Right. So if you were at NEC, and you were studying voice, does that mean you went whole aria route, and studied opera?

**AO:** No, I didn't do classical. I was in the Improvisation Department. At NEC, there's this whole Jazz and Improvisation Department.

**PM:** Ah.

**AO:** So that was what I was studying there. And I did take voice lessons all through college. I studied classical voice in high school. So I do really feel like I've been able to use my voice in ways that people are able to use their instruments, knowing where to go and what to do.

**PM:** I think you're one of the most important new vocalists out there, no question, a just really, really important new voice.

**AO:** Thank you.

**PM:** So how did Crooked Still meet and get together with (producer) Lee Townsend? [Puremusic readers may recall this name in connection with Bill Frisell, Kelly Joe Phelps, etc. you can use our search engine.]

**AO:** Well, we were in Northampton with our record label executive, Jim Olsen [Signature Sounds]. And we were trying to decide who was going to produce our record. We were really stuck. We couldn't think of who we wanted to produce it. And Jim had this suggestion of Lee Townsend. His name had maybe been tossed around before, but we really loved all his records, because he's amazing.

**PM:** He's really something, yeah.

**AO:** Unbelievable. And we were going out to California a couple weeks later, and we met him. He came to our show at the Freight & Salvage in Berkeley.

**PM:** You met him at the Freight & Salvage. That's amazing.

**AO:** Yeah. And we said, "We want you to produce our record." Just like that. [laughs]

**PM:** Wow. So what kind of a cat was he to work with as a producer?

**AO:** He's really chilled out, and he's really a very cool guy, and he's really mellow, which is really nice for Crooked Still to deal with somebody who's really kind of getting us in this mellow vibe, because we definitely have a tendency to play things too fast [laughs] as most bluegrass bands do.

**PM:** [laughs]

**AO:** So it was kind of all about slowing it down, and just really getting into the groove, which I think really comes across in *Shaken By A Low Sound*. And I love the sound of the bass on that record. It just does not sound like a folk record. It sounds like the bass is super super big.

**PM:** Yeah, God knows he's worked with a lot of great bass players.

**AO:** Exactly. I think that was very cool to get that bass sound. All of those sessions were pretty much live. It was very organic process in the studio. We were separated in four rooms, but we recorded everything pretty much--

**PM:** Could you see each other?

**AO:** We could see each other.

**PM:** Yeah. Isn't that what really matters?

**AO:** Yeah. We recorded everything pretty much live, including the vocals, which is really fun to do, to get to sing with the guys and interact with them. And people can hear that interaction, I think, especially between me and Rushad, on the record.

**PM:** Right. [laughs] Oh, I can't wait to see those YouTube videos now.

**AO:** Yeah.

**PM:** So let's talk about that other project, The Wayfaring Strangers. I don't know how you juggle all these great bands. But tell us something about that band.

**AO:** Well, Wayfaring Strangers is not really playing too much these days. But during its heyday, Wayfaring Strangers was a super fun project, because it's bluegrass--it's these old bluegrass songs, but the three-part vocals are just such a blast to go for, because you're singing loud, it was belting, it was really fun. And being on stage with all those great musicians, Tony Trischka, Matt Glaser and the jazz element added, with Laszlo Gardony on piano, and Jamey Haddad on the drums. I actually just talked to him on the phone the other day. But it was just really fun. And Ruth and myself and Tracy Bonham were the three singers for that project.

**PM:** Right.

**AO:** And we played Merlefest a couple years ago, and that was a blast.

**PM:** What are you reading at the moment?

**AO:** What am I reading? I'm reading a book called *The Brooklyn Follies* by Paul Auster. He wrote the *New York Trilogy*. He's a Brooklyn writer.

**PM:** Right, right.

**AO:** I just picked that up in the bookstore the other day, and it's amazing. It takes place right where I used to live, for a year. I'm halfway through at the moment.

**PM:** Anything special on the iPod?

**AO:** What I've been listening to nonstop to this Norwegian singer named Hanne Hukkelberg.

**PM:** And what does she do?

**AO:** She is this amazing Norwegian singer with lots of really cool sounds, and an amazing songwriter. And it sounds like you're listening to a Norwegian fairy princesses.

**PM:** Is she singing in Norwegian?

**AO:** English. It's sort of got this indie rock vibe.

**PM:** Oh, an indie rock vibe. And how did you find out about her?

**AO:** Through my friend from college, Justin Keller. He's always turning me on to new female singer/songwriters. And I'm also really into Emiliana Torrini, who's this Icelandic Italian chick who sings in English, and kind of sounds like Björk, and she's amazing. And I found out about her on *Grey's Anatomy*.

[laughter]

**PM:** Do they list the musical credits at the end of *Grey's Anatomy*?

**AO:** No, but you can search--first of all, *Grey's Anatomy* plays amazing music.

**PM:** They do, yeah. Yeah, a couple of my friends landed tunes on that, and a couple of them paid really well.

**AO:** Sure, well, because it's the best show ever. But I think Sometimes Why needs to get on *Grey's Anatomy*, because I think that that's very *Grey's Anatomy* music. But... [laughs] Anyway, I searched the song on like their website or something. That's how I found out about it. The amount of people that watch *Grey's Anatomy*, that's millions and millions of people.

**PM:** Yeah, it's insane.

**AO:** Because that's like the most popular show on TV. HBO, *The Sopranos* is really popular, still you have to be a subscriber to watch it.

**PM:** Right, yeah, it's not ABC.

**AO:** Yeah.

**PM:** Speaking of which, that really sucks that *Lost* isn't on until February.

**AO:** Don't tell me, because I still have to catch up on the first--I only watched the first two episodes. It's on my computer. I haven't had time to watch it.

**PM:** Really? Oh, it's really good. You'll dig it. Would you call yourself a spiritual person?

**AO:** Not really--in a way. I mean, no--kind of.

**PM:** Not really.

**AO:** I definitely can be sometimes, and I am a spiritual person in that I believe in the power of my family and my friends and music, and maybe in nature, but not necessarily from spirits.

**PM:** Yeah, or a higher power, or stuff?

**AO:** Yeah.

**PM:** Some people come to that spiritual place through family, through people.

**AO:** Yeah. And really, all my spirituality, I think comes from my family, who are--I'm obsessed with my family. I live two miles away from my family, my parents. And I have two brothers and a sister, and I'm the oldest. So that's my spirituality right there.

**PM:** I hear that. Is Crooked Still getting Triple A airplay?

**AO:** I think so. I'm really out of the business loop right now--

**PM:** Because they certainly could, if they worked it correctly. It's blown up enough--I don't know what I'm trying to say. It's explosive enough to certainly get more than acoustic music may get, or bluegrass music may get, or any of that stuff. I mean, it should be getting Triple A airplay. It's explosive.

**AO:** Right. Well, hopefully it will.

**PM:** Will the next record be traditional tunes for reinvention, or will it include any original stuff? What's the play there?

**AO:** Well, Crooked Still is a traditional band. We do original songs, like "Mountain Jumper," if they fit in the vibe our band. So I think that the next record we do will

probably be more kind of even taking it further, taking the traditional music and the kind of really old songs, taking it even further, because we're having such a good time with it, and people are really responding to it. And our last couple tours have just been so amazing. And we're having a great time.

**PM:** Is there a DVD in the works?

**AO:** The only thing I've seen is what's on YouTube, so go check that out, "Come On In My Kitchen." And if the rest of the songs turn out like that, I think that we will definitely do a DVD.

**PM:** Oh, because that was the idea, that's why that guy was filming it professionally to hopefully do a DVD.

**AO:** Yeah. That was what we definitely wanted to do, for release next summer.

**PM:** That's beautiful. You're a really super open-ended artist. Are there projects in your sights that you've not attempted?

**AO:** Well, I think later this month I'm going to go to New York. And I have a bunch of guy friends, great musicians. I'm going to record some more of my own songs with sort of a kickass band backing me up. So we'll see where that goes, see if it's good enough to release an EP, or make it a demo and shop it around to labels, because Crooked Still, I think it's the kind of band that we'll do for a long time, but I don't see it being a band that I'm going to do until I die.

**PM:** Yeah, right. I don't think that you can be contained by any single band that you've been in so far. I think you're just beginning to take off, as a person, as an artist, and as a singer. I mean, you're outlandishly good for how young you are. I certainly look forward to following your musical exploits and speaking like this again with you in the future.

**AO:** Well, thank you so much. I just had my birthday on Saturday. So that was a really fun time, at the Thile show in Charlotte. We had a big cake, and it was really a blast.

**PM:** Well, when I get out to one of these shows, I'll come up and introduce myself. And it was wonderful talking with you. You're a really, really nice person.

**AO:** Great. Thank you so much, Frank.

**PM:** Not at all, Aoife. And regards to your compadres, the men and the women.

**AO:** I will pass those regards along. And thank you for talking. Happy Thanksgiving.