

Jake Morley can certainly claim all the right credentials of a singer-songwriter. White male with a beard - check. Lucy Rose booked him and Ed Sheeran to play to 25 people upstairs in a pub - check.

Whilst they seem ten-a-penny, this only helps us highlight those that really speak to us.

A loyal following put Morley firmly in this category. Debut album *Many Fish To Fry* (2012) brought to mind Paul Simon and Newton Faulkner with its refreshingly unpretentious lyrics, hooky melodies and implausible guitar playing.

The richly-layered production of follow-up *The Manual* (2016) leaned more on Elbow or Gotye, while a stripped back third album goes deeper into the singer-songwriter space of Anais Mitchell and John Martyn.

Morley has earned a reputation for fearless live shows, particularly as one of the best lap-style guitar players in the world. Combining guitar, piano and drums into one instrument with seemingly impossible dexterity, he is an artist to be seen as well as heard.

But it was his incisive songwriting that initially led to a residency at London's Ronnie Scott's, where he built his audience, and gained exposure on Radio 2, 6Music and Radio X, before releasing a critically-acclaimed debut album.

Hundreds of worldwide stages and shows have been clocked up since then, empty to buzzing, Aberystwyth to Zurich, with sellout shows at London's Bush Hall, Canada's biggest festivals, and support slots at the Hammersmith Apollo.

The years since the release of first album *Many Fish To Fry* have taught him many lessons, evident in the introspective maturity of second album *The Manual*.

In it, Morley explores his relationship to the world around him, and to his own mind - even inviting the listener to glimpse a duet with his subconscious. There are still the playful melodies reminiscent of his debut, but with richly-layered arrangements, hidden depth and a vulnerability to that captures audiences of all ages.

Currently recording material for a third album, and touring widely, Morley is one of the UK's most distinctive and interesting songwriters at the top of his game.