



Thursday 14 to Sunday 31 January 2016

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CELTIC CONNECTIONS 2016 PROGRAMME ANNOUNCED

The programme for **Celtic Connections 2016** has been announced today (Tuesday 20 October) by **Artistic Director, Donald Shaw**.

From **Thursday 14 to Sunday 31 January, 2,500 musicians** from around the world will gather in **Glasgow** for **18** days of concerts, ceilidhs, talks, art exhibitions, workshops, free events, late night sessions and a host of special one-off musical collaborations.

Stars of world, folk and roots music, who will perform on **26 stages at venues across the city**, include **Rickie Lee Jones, The Chieftains, Lau, The Unthanks, Béla Fleck, Moving Hearts, Robert Plant, Lucinda Williams, Admiral Fallow, Toumani Diabaté, Karine Polwart, Boys of the Lough, and Larry Carlton**.

With artists from **Inner Mongolia to Armagh, Senegal to Italy, and Brittany to the Outer Hebrides to Southern Manitoba** performing at the festival in 2016 Celtic Connections remains a hotbed of musical talent from cultures and countries from across the globe.

The **Opening Concert** will be celebrating **50 years** of the **Traditional Music & Song Association of Scotland** with musical director **Siobhan Miller** at the helm.

Family Ties will also be at the fore of this years' festival, through shows including concerts by **The Wainwright Sisters**, and **They Might be Giants** performing a special matinee performance for children.

Jason Isbell, Sturgill Simpson and John Grant are among the stars of **New Americana** who will take to the stage during the festival.

Pilgrimage will be explored through a series of performances, including the reimagining of **Joni Mitchell's** 1976 album ***Hejira*** - which explores themes of the constant journey we are all on in life - by **James Robertson**.

While ***Drift*** is inspired by the true story of Betty Mouat, a crofter from Shetland, who spent eight days drifting alone in the North Sea.

Celtic Connections takes pride in looking to the future as well as celebrating the past. **Matthew Welch's Blarvuster**, the **Aidan O'Rourke Trio** and **Soumik Datta & Bernhard Schimpelsberger: Circle of Sound** are among those who will step into the spotlight at a new venue for the festival **Drygate Brewery** to represent a new strand, **The Shape of Folk to Come**.

A series of major **anniversaries** will be marked, with celebrations of **Aly Bain at 70** in a show entitled ***Le Grande Anniversaire*** where he will be joined by his long standing cohort **Phil Cunningham** to celebrate 30 years of performing together.

Bwani Junction will be performing ***Graceland*** 30 years after Paul Simon's classic album was released. Four of the original members of the recording will be performing on this very special occasion.

A series of concerts **In the Tradition** will celebrate **piping** and **Gaelic music**. Nights dedicated to **Gordon Duncan** and the **Armagh Pipers** and a concert recalling the legendary **Live in Ireland 78** will put the swirl and power of the pipes centre stage. A special **30th anniversary concert for Fèis Ros**, music from **Anne Lorne Gillies**, and a show entitled **Gàidhlig meets Gaelic Americana** which brings together **Gillebride MacMillan** and **Kyle Carey** will be music to the ears of lovers of these two traditions, which remain as fresh, vital and entertaining as ever.

The **Auld Alliance** between Scotland and France will be centre stage at this year's **Showcase Scotland** as the festival **celebrates France as the partner country for 2016** and the 10th anniversary of the twinning of Glasgow and Marseille.

To celebrate the twinning with France, the festival is delighted to announce that **Drygate Brewery** is again creating a brand new craft beer with French hops, which will be available at festival venues.

Showcase Scotland is delegate based and hosted in the city of Glasgow over four days during Celtic Connections. Musical directors and programmers of leading festivals and venues from around the world attend the event where around 60 songwriters, bands and musicians are showcased. A Trade Fair is held to provide an additional platform for promoters to meet with artists and their representatives to discuss potential booking possibilities.

At the core of the festival is the award winning **Education Programme**, which sees thousands of children attend free morning concerts, experiencing live music from Scotland and further afield. Up to **11,400 children** will take part in Celtic Connections Education Programme for schools during the 2016 festival, with opportunities including **five free morning concerts**.

Celtic Connections also continues to play a vital role in fostering new and young talent. Since 1999 in Glasgow alone the Celtic Connections Education Programme has delivered projects to over **80 per cent** of Glasgow schools, with **over 90 per cent** of that figure being in primary schools, and a total of over **90,000** children and young people benefiting from the programme. Nationally, that figure rises to over **185,000** children and young people from all over Scotland.

In addition to the school workshops, there will be over **60** public workshops for all ages and abilities from dawn until dusk over each of the three weekends. Highlights include the **Ukulele School** hosted by **Finlay Allison** and **The Fiddle Village** hosted by **Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas**.

We also welcome back the **Royal Scottish National Orchestra**, and the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra**.

The final day of Celtic Connections, **Sunday 31 January**, includes a show at the **Old Fruitmarket** in aid of the **Bert Jansch Foundation**, whose charitable aim is to support the next generation of acoustic musicians. **Robert Plant**, **Bernard Butler**, **Archie Fisher**, and **Jacqui McShee** will perform along with more special guests to be announced in ***Bert Inspired: A Concert for Bert Jansch***.

Donald Shaw, Artistic Director of Celtic Connections, said: "Celtic Connections is rooted in a love of traditional, folk and world music. Since our earliest days the passion, the skill,

and the excitement that you find at a live concert at Celtic Connections has inspired us to put together the programme each year.

“For 2016, we are bringing superstars and cult heroes, new talent, and artists who were legends long before the first Celtic Connections was staged.

“This year we weave stories of pilgrimage, of crossing continents, we celebrate anniversaries and the Auld Alliance. We have a lot of amazing concerts to pack into 18 days, join us when Celtic Connections returns next January.”

Councillor Archie Graham, Chair of Glasgow Life, said: “Glasgow is a welcoming city which is proud of its heritage and embraces diversity. Each January we host a festival which in many ways mirrors our home city.

“Celtic Connections brings together musicians from across the world for a celebration of musical traditions, the best of contemporary folk and world music, and the ways in which different musical cultures interweave and inspire and, always, entertain.

“The expertise and skill that drives Celtic Connections also shines through in a education programme that benefits thousands of children across Glasgow and Scotland. Invaluable opportunities enrich lives and offer chances to learn, to enjoy, to be part of the always unique, always brilliant musical happening which is Celtic Connections.”

Ian Smith, Portfolio Manager for Music, Creative Scotland, said: “Celtic Connections is one of the world’s great music festivals and to have established such a global presence in a comparatively short time underlines its place as one of Scotland’s creative treasures.

“Every January we gather in Glasgow in mid-winter to be thrilled and inspired by great music from around the world, but with its roots and traditions firmly in Scotland. We will see this as the TMSA celebrates 50 years in the opening concert. With Showcase Scotland at its core, Celtic Connections represents all that is great about Scotland’s cultural identity expressed so brilliantly through its music.”

Anniversaries

A series of major **anniversaries** are marked at Celtic Connections 2016 with a series of special performances.

Since 1965, the **Traditional Music & Song Association of Scotland** (TMSA) has been helping to foster and support the country's unique musical talents. Celtic Connections pays tribute when this year's **Opening Concert, *The Carrying Stream* celebrates the 50th anniversary** of the TMSA. With musical director **Siobhan Miller** at the helm, a host of Scottish music stars will join in this very special night, in the **Main Auditorium of Glasgow Royal Concert Hall** on **Thursday 14 January**.

At the **City Halls** on **Wednesday 20 January**, Celtic Connections pays tribute to **Aly Bain at 70** when ***La Grande Anniversaire*** will see the legendary performer join once more with his long standing cohort **Phil Cunningham** to **celebrate 30 years of performing together**.

After their recent success at the Edinburgh Fringe, Scottish quartet **Bwani Junction** will perform the whole of **Paul Simon's** classic album ***Graceland***. They will be joined on the stage of the **Old Fruitmarket** on **Saturday 23 January** by four of the musicians who played on the original recording.

Family Ties

Family Ties take many forms. It can be taking your children to their first concert or growing up and living life listening to music together. Music is also in the shared DNA of many of the artists at Celtic Connections 2016. Literally, for two of our guest musicians.

Sisters **Martha Wainwright** and **Lucy Wainwright Roche** grew up separately but both in families steeped in songwriting. They are now performing together, with their debut album ***Songs in the Dark*** released this November. The music the **Wainwright Sisters** will perform at **City Halls** on **Monday 25 January** includes songs that shaped their childhoods, made famous by the likes of Woody Guthrie and Jimmie Rogers, along with music by their mothers, Kate McGarrigle and Suzzy Roche, and their father, Loudon Wainwright III.

Brooklyn Alt Rock legends **They Might Be Giants** are very much "friendly giants" when they present a **special matinee show for all the family** on **Sunday 31 January** at the **O2 ABC**. Even the smallest of music fans and their families can enjoy a fun show packed with fabulous tunes and special effects that will be remembered forever.

The members of the nine-piece band **Anda Union** from Inner Mongolia, several of whom still live in the traditional Mongolian way, where music was at the heart of family life. The band

came together at music college in Hohhot, their capital city. There they were able to integrate traditional forms - like the now-famous throat singing - into creating a sound uniquely and mysteriously Mongolian but with a strong appeal to a western sensibility that can be heard at Celtic Connections on **Friday 29 January** at the **Mackintosh Church**.

New Americana

Some of the most exciting **New Americana** talent will light up Celtic Connections in 2016, artists for who country, bluegrass and folk are a stepping stone for music that is blazingly original and individual.

Artists include **Jason Isbell**, whose most recent album ***Something More Than Free***, debuted at number one on Billboard's country, rock and folk charts this summer. He brings his honest reflections about southern identity and working-class life to the festival on **Sunday 24 January** at the **O2 ABC**. Alabama-born Isbell's songwriting has been described as being its most poetic when its most plainspoken.

Sturgill Simpson creates murky, multi-textured soundscapes that incorporate elements of classic country, bluegrass, rock, and even a bit of Electronica. His second album, 2014's ***Metamodern Sounds in Country Music***, was cut live to tape in four consecutive days with a budget of \$4,000, with inspirations ranging from religious texts both ancient and modern, recent studies about discoveries in quantum physics and string theory, and publications by Carl Sagan and Terence McKenna. A very different Friday night out, on **15 January** at the **O2 ABC**.

An artist whose award winning commercial and critical success has been hard fought will electrify audiences at the **Main Auditorium** of **Glasgow Royal Concert Hall** on **26 January**. **John Grant**, a native of Buchanan, Michigan, later raised in Parker, Colorado, has been based in the Icelandic capital Reykjavik since 2013. His latest album ***Grey Tickles, Black Pressure***, is a veritable tour de force that further refines and entwines his two principal strands of musical DNA, the sumptuous tempered ballad and the taut, fizzing electronic pop song.

Pilgrimage

With Robert Johnston and Woody Guthrie two legendary examples, the wandering troubadour, along with incredible journeys have been classic mainstays of country music.

These themes are explored afresh at Celtic Connections 2016 with a series of performances exploring **Pilgrimage**.

A reimagining of **Joni Mitchell's** 1976 album *Hejira* by **James Robertson** entitled *Pilgrimer* will receive its **world premiere** performance on **Saturday 16 January** at the **Mitchell Library**.

Mitchell said of *Hejira*: "I wrote the album while travelling cross-country by myself and there is this restless feeling throughout it, the sweet loneliness of solitary travel."

Over the years since Robertson first heard an album that got under his skin and stayed there, songs from it became transformed in his imagination into new works, some in Scots language. Over time, part as homage, part reflecting the constant life-journey *Hejira* represents, *Pilgrimer* was born.

In the 1880s, a crofter from Shetland **Betty Mouat** was accidentally cast adrift at sea and spent eight days alone before washing up on the shores of Norway. She returned safely home and her remarkable journey made her a celebrity for the rest of her life. A work inspired this incredible true story, *Drift*, will be performed in the **Tron Theatre** on **Wednesday 20 January**, Artistic Director, **Symon Macintyre** uses soundscape and installations to recreate the feelings of being adrift and alone at sea.

The Shape of Folk to Come

What's left after the cobwebs have been blown away by the rest of the festival programme, will be swept away by a series of concerts at the **Drygate Brewery** featuring some of the best, boldest, and most vivacious new musical talent to be found anywhere in the world today as we celebrate **The Shape of Folk to Come**.

Acts include **Matthew Welch's Blarvuster**, a chamber ensemble/rock band hybrid. In the infectiously ecstatic fervor of Blarvuster's music, Scottish bagpipes, Balinese gamelan, minimalism, improvisation and rock converge in a labyrinthine, multi-textural sound. Put yourself at the heart of the action on **Friday 22 January**.

The concert by the **Aidan O'Rourke Trio** on **Saturday 16 January** provides a rare chance to see the internationally acclaimed multi award winning Scottish fiddler, composer and producer **Aidan O'Rourke**. Also known for his work with **Lau** and **winner of the BBC Folk**

Musician of the Year 2014, the trio will perform O'Rourke' solo works including, the first live performance of music from his new Reveal Records release *Imprint (EP 2.0)*.

Circle of Sound is a powerful collaboration between **Soumik Datta** on the 19-stringed sarod and drummer **Bernhard Schimpelsberger**. Creator of the first electro acoustic sarod, Soumik combines guitar riffs with Indian melody, electronica and drum n bass to create a hybrid sound world distinctively his own along with Schimpelsberger in this unmissable concert on **Sunday 31 January**.

In the Tradition

The traditions of piping and Gaelic Music are at the heart of Celtic Connections 2016.

January 2016 marks just over a decade since piper **Gordon Duncan's** tragic passing, but his inspirational influence still reverberates throughout the Celtic world. The commemorative and celebratory line-up for this tribute concert ***Just for Gordon – Celebrating a National Treasure*** on **Sunday 24 January** in the **Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Main Auditorium**, anchored by Duncan's very first teacher on the chanter, elder brother Ian, and son Gordon Jr.

A club that has educated and instilled a love of traditional music in thousands of young people over the last fifty years is celebrated in a concert at the Old **Fruitmarket** on **Wednesday 20 January**. The ***Armagh Pipers Night*** will showcase some of the most acclaimed members of the club and some of the bands they perform with all over the world including **Cillian Vallely** with **Lúnasa**, **Brian Finnegan** with **Flook** and **Niall** and **Caoimhín Vallely** with **Buille**. The pipes will be strongly represented by founder member **Brian Vallely** as well as **Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn**, piper and singer **Barry Kerr** and Glasgow resident **Jarlath Henderson**.

Gaelic music has travelled far and wide and influenced, and been influenced by, many cultures – none more so than that of North America. ***Gàidhlig meets Gaelic Americana*** brings two of the finest singers from each tradition, **Gillebrìde MacMillan** and **Kyle Carey**, together for their very own Transatlantic Session at the **Tron Theatre** on Sunday 24 January.

A very special concert at the **Mackintosh Church** on **Friday 22 January**, hosted by Glasgow's Gaelic Arts Organisation **An Lòchran**, will celebrate the glittering musical career

of **Anne Lorne Gillies**, one of Scotland's foremost entertainers. On the 10th Anniversary of her pioneering book ***Songs of Gaelic Scotland***, and also celebrating her 70th birthday, join Anne and a fantastic cast of her friends and family for an extensive selection from her magnificent repertoire of Gaelic songs, as well as an array of anecdotes of special occasions and people with whom she has performed over the years.

The Auld Alliance

The traditional connections between Scotland and France are to the fore this year with a series of concerts taking place as part of Showcase Scotland celebrating the Auld Alliance and helping promote musical links between Scottish music and the music and musicians of France.

Audiences at the **Theatre Royal** on **27 January** and **28 January** will be taken on a journey through the streets of Paris in the 1950's. A show that tells the amazing story of the life and career of **Edith Piaf**. ***La Vie en Rose*** brings Piaf's tale to the stage through classic French music and unique audio-visual presentations that include never seen before photos and images of the iconic French cabaret singer, songwriter and actress. The exciting young actress and singer **Anne Carrere** takes the lead for a show that has been an international sensation in 2015, the 100th anniversary year of Piaf's birth.

Two of France's new jazz stars **Vincent Peirani & Emile Parisien** have joined forces to create a multifaceted chamber-jazz duo that pays tribute to the grand jazz and folk music history of their home country while very much transporting it into the here and now. Here how, and revel on **Wednesday 25 January** at **St Andrews on the Square**.

Funders and Supporters

For every pound invested in Celtic Connections by Glasgow City Council there is return of £57 benefitting the City of Glasgow.

A 2014 Economic Impact Survey by Culture Republic reported that when advance impact' multipliers - measures of impact on business sales generated by an event - are applied, Celtic Connections generated £10.7million for Glasgow.

Investment from **Glasgow City Council** and **Creative Scotland** supports the positive impact Celtic Connections has on the social, cultural and economic climate of Glasgow and Scotland.

Culture Ireland, the agency responsible for the promotion of Irish arts worldwide, is supporting the participation of some of the best emerging alongside established Irish artists at this year's festival.

Media Partners the **Sunday Herald**, **Evening Times**, **The Herald** and **HeraldScotland.com** continue to provide in-depth preview and review coverage of the festival. The titles provide valuable support to up-and-coming talent performing at Celtic Connections, with the Sunday Herald supporting the festival's **New Voices** commissioning strand, and the Evening Times supporting **the Danny Kyle Open Stage**.

ScotRail has supported Celtic Connections from the beginning, bringing artists and audiences from all over Scotland to Glasgow for the festival. **We are delighted to announce our new travel sponsor partnership with Caledonian MacBrayne, Hebrides and Clyde Ferries.**

The **BBC** has supported Celtic Connections since its very first year and the festival is pleased to collaborate once again with **BBC Radio Scotland**, **BBC Radio 2** and **BBC Radio 3** who will all be broadcasting live throughout the festival.

Sharon Mair, Editor Radio Music, Events and Partnerships, BBC Scotland, said: "We are delighted to be part of Celtic Connections again and, this year, will be back at the CCA in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, in the heart of the city. We will bring the biggest programme of events from the BBC across 3 Radio networks, Radio Scotland, Radio 2 and Radio 3, and BBC Scotland television and online.

"You can enjoy great Celtic Connections coverage right across the BBC on Radio, Television, i-player and on line at bbc.co.uk/celticconnections."

Tickets for all the following BBC events will be free and released on Monday 4th January 2016 on the BBC Shows and Tours website – to register for updates go to

www.bbc.co.uk/showsandtours/tickets/<http://www.bbc.co.uk/showsandtours/tickets/>

Ends

For further information, images, or to request an interview with any of the acts performing at Celtic Connections 2016, please contact:

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<http://www.celticconnections.com/press-area/Pages/Online-Accreditation.aspx>

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