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Media Release

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Showcase Scotland celebrates shared cultural roots and cultivates creative collaboration at Celtic Connections

International music industry initiative shines the spotlight on standout talent from Scotland and Québec

Showcase Scotland – the long-established music industry programme that drives international cultural collaboration during Glasgow's world-famous Celtic Connections festival – is this year focusing on nurturing creative partnerships with Québec, Canada's largest nation.

Following the launch last week of the renowned festival's 33rd edition – which runs to 1 February and features an exceptional line-up of established and emerging home-grown and overseas talent – a five-day programme of events for industry delegates got underway on Wednesday 21 January.

In what is Scotland's largest annual gathering of the international music community, Showcase Scotland provides an invaluable platform for promoters, record labels, agents, and festival organisers to connect, network and plan joint ventures.

Celtic Connections annual Showcase Scotland programme was first piloted in 2000 by British Council Scotland and the Scottish Arts Council (Creative Scotland) to support Scottish-based artists by raising their international profile, and creating opportunities for them to perform and promote their work abroad.

The success Showcase Scotland has achieved in encouraging and enabling industry connection and collaboration has led to it becoming an important feature of the festival every year.

Over 26 years, the event has welcomed over 5,500 industry delegates from more than 30 nations across six continents, enabling them to experience and enjoy the best of our nation's talent.

More than 2,000 artists at all stages of their careers have been showcased to attending industry representatives at performances during Celtic Connections. As a result, many have gone on to establish successful international careers and creative collaborations with overseas artists.

Showcase Scotland partners with a different international destination every year. While driving connection, the initiative also celebrates the shared cultural roots of Scotland and the partner location.

In previous years these have included Norway, Wales, Brittany, New Zealand, India, and Australia and Ireland – enabling artists from these destinations to be showcased in Scotland.

With the spotlight shining on Québec as the international partner for this 26th edition of Showcase Scotland, some of Québec's very best traditional and contemporary music talent is being profiled at Celtic Connections.

Six Québécois acts are performing for audiences and music industry representatives during the festival:

- **Bon Débarras** – featuring multi-instrumentalists Véronique Plasse, Dominique Desrochers and Jean-François Dumas
- **Cécilia** – a trio comprising violinist Erin Leahy, accordionist Timy Turmel, and fiddle master Louis Schryer
- **La Déferlance** – a band at the forefront of Québec's flourishing trad revival whose members have backgrounds in classical jazz and folk
- **É.T.É** – an award-winning collective comprising fiddler Élisabeth Moquin, guitarist and bouzouki player Thierry Clouette and cellist Élisabeth Giroux,
- **Germaine** – an all-female group of singers, fiddlers, and *gigueuses*
- **Paruline** – the 'indie-folk-trad' debut project of classically-trained pianist Charles Labrèche

Showcase Scotland is produced by Active Events on behalf of Glasgow Life – which delivers Celtic Connections in partnership with Innis & Gunn, with support from the Scottish Government's Festivals EXPO Fund and Creative Scotland.

Showcase Scotland Executive Producer, Lisa Whytock of Active Events, said: "We are delighted to have Québec as our partner for this 26th edition of Showcase Scotland and to be profiling such a superb range of the Canadian nation's stand-out talent.

"We have delegates from 24 nations attending this year, including industry representatives from some of the world's leading music festivals and venues. Over five days they are seeing performances by standout artists from Scotland and Québec, attending daytime showcases and having an opportunity to network, make new connections, and plan ways to work collectively.

"Our international programme enables industry professionals from around the world to appreciate each other's cultures and collaborate on partnerships. For showcased artists there are direct benefits, and many who have made their debut at Celtic Connections have gone on to grace international stages around the world."

Geneviève Brisson, Agent-General of Québec in London, said: "We are proud to see Québec honoured as the Spotlight Nation at Showcase Scotland (Celtic Connections) — in Scotland, a nation close to our heart and with whom we share deep cultural, economic and diplomatic ties.

"These artists will bring Québec's energy, creativity and diversity to the heart of Glasgow. Their music speaks across borders — and this is exactly what international showcases are made for."

Culture Secretary Angus Robertson said: "At the heart of Celtic Connections is Showcase Scotland, promoting outstanding Scottish talent internationally, opening doors to the world's stages, and

building lasting international cultural bridges. International partnerships are at the heart of making our society diverse, vibrant and prosperous – and in these uncertain times, their value is all the more apparent.

“Creativity is critical in building these partnerships, and I am very grateful to everyone at Showcase Scotland for continuing to support that in delivering this year’s fantastic programme.”

Alan Morrison, Head of Music at Creative Scotland said: “Showcase Scotland offers a direct route for Scottish musicians to engage with industry delegates from across the world, while bringing the best artists from international countries into the heart of Celtic Connections.

“With its life-affirming music woven tightly into its cultural identity, Québec is the perfect partner for 2026. At a time when it could not be more important to celebrate and share different global cultures as a first-hand experience, Showcase Scotland continues to create music without borders.”

Bailie Annette Christie, Chair of Glasgow Life and City Convener for Culture, Sport and International Relations, said: “Showcase Scotland makes a significant impact by gathering together in Glasgow every year some of the world’s top promoters, record labels, agents, and festival organisers and enabling talented Scottish-based artists to connect with them.

“This wonderful initiative also encourages Celtic Connections audiences to experience and enjoy outstanding artists from partner nations, giving their artists a wonderful platform to showcase their talents at our world-renowned annual event.

“This year is no exception and audiences can expect some incredible entertainment from the six standout acts from Québec.”

Celtic Connections is the world’s leading folk, roots and world music festival. It runs until Sunday 1 February, and features a diverse programme of around 300 events at 25 music venues across Glasgow.

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For further information, images, or to request an interview, please contact:

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Notes to Editors

Celtic Connections began in 1994, with 66 events staged at one venue. Since then, the internationally-acclaimed festival has grown more adventurous, experimental and diverse each year. Now in its 33rd edition, it offers a packed programme of hundreds of events across Glasgow that span a wide range of musical genres, and feature an outstanding line-up of established and emerging Scottish and worldwide talent.

Celtic Connections is delivered with funding from Glasgow City Council through Glasgow Life. Creative Scotland and The Scottish Government Festivals Expo Fund continue to provide invaluable support to Celtic Connections.

Glasgow Life is a charity working for the benefit of the people of Glasgow. We believe everyone deserves a great Glasgow life and we find innovative ways to make this happen across the city's diverse communities.

Our programmes, experiences and events range from grassroots community activities to large-scale cultural, artistic and sporting events which present Glasgow on an international stage. Our work is designed to promote inclusion, happiness and health, as well as support the city's visitor economy, in order to enhance Glasgow's mental, physical and economic wellbeing.

For more information, see www.glasgowlife.org.uk

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports culture and creativity across all parts of Scotland, distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government and The National Lottery. Further information at creativescotland.com. Follow Creative Scotland on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).