

Media release

Thursday 20 November 2025

The Maclean Brothers row onto Celtic Connections bill as new wave of shows announced

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The Maclean Brothers are among a wave of exciting new names to join the world-renowned **Celtic Connections** bill, it has been announced.

The three Scottish brothers who set a new record for rowing across the Pacific Ocean unsupported will swap the seas for the stage when they host **The Maclean Brothers & Special Guests** at The Old Fruitmarket on **Wednesday 21 January**.

Lifelong trad music fans **Jamie, Ewan and Lachlan Maclean** won hearts around the world when they took on the ultimate test of endurance. Music played an important part in their miraculous journey, and this is set to be celebrated at **Celtic Connections 2026**, with tickets on sale now.

Iconic scenes of Jamie playing the pipes in all conditions were witnessed by millions. This included playing to Ewan McGregor during an episode of their podcast, streaming live into Comic Con to join the All-American Rejects during their hit song *Swing Swing* and of course, as they rowed into Cairns, Australia after 139 days on the Pacific Ocean.

Now, the pipe-playing rower will be shaking off the salt water to perform on home soil alongside siblings Lachlan on accordion and Ewan on guitar. The multi-talented trio from Edinburgh, who now live in Assynt, will welcome a host of Scottish trad talent who soundtracked their epic voyage for this special show.

Ross Ainslie and **Duncan Chisholm**, who released a charity single to aid the brothers' efforts, will perform, alongside the likes of high-octane outfit **Valtos**, and **RURA**, who are known for their epic, inspirational instrumentation. Stunning vocalist **Siobhan Miller** and Mull duo **Sorren Maclean** and **Hannah Fisher** will also make appearances across the night.

A Q&A session will kick things off, giving audiences the chance to hear first-hand about the brothers' adventure and quest to raise £1 million for clean water projects in Madagascar.

The night is one of a raft of new shows that have been added to the jam-packed programme for **Celtic Connections 2026** – the leading winter festival of its kind delivered by **Glasgow Life** in partnership with **Innis & Gunn**.

Taking place from **Thursday 15 January to Sunday 1 February 2026** the award-winning festival will bring over 300 events involving over 1,200 artists to more than 25 venues across the city.

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The festival will also welcome a unique celebration of Mexican and Scottish folk entitled [Celtic Fandango](#). Supported by the British Council and fresh from the world premiere at El Cervantino, one of Mexico's largest music festivals, the extraordinary collaboration will take place at the Old Fruitmarket on Tuesday 27 January.

Ties between Scotland and South America will also be the focus of the new [São Paulo: Tràigh Mhòr](#) show. This world premiere brings together the folk traditions of Brazil and Scotland into one intoxicating collaboration.

[Rhyme & Reels](#) will see the sphere of music and poetry collide as pairs of wordsmiths and instrumentalists team up to share the stage. Expect collaborations from **Liz Lochhead** and **Duncan Chisholm**, **Esther Swift** and **Jackie Kay**, and **Brìghde Chaimbeul** and **Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul** at The Mackintosh Church in January.

Traditions from Scotland, Sweden, Ireland and Iraq will come together at Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery courtesy of a cross-cultural collaboration between musicians [Laura Jane Wilkie](#), [Ian Carr](#), [Macalla](#) and [Woodlands Bäckafall](#).

Celtic Connections will also take over The Tron theatre for the first time in 10 years with **Julie Fowles** and **Duncan Chisholm**'s remarkable [An Treas Suail](#) (The Third Wave), remembering the tragic sinking of the HMY Iolaire at the entrance to Stornoway Harbour which was carrying more than 200 servicemen home from the First World War.

Elsewhere, boundary-breaking Scottish band [Inyal](#) will have trad fans on their feet at SWG3, Drygate will welcome a host of indie and Americana talent for a string of captivating gigs, and **Amal Kaawash** will share [Songs from the Palestinian Tradition](#) at City Halls.

[The Friel Sisters](#) will honour their Donegal roots with a one-off night of Irish traditional and folk music with some of Ireland's most renowned singers and musicians including Grammy award winning singer **Moya Brennan** and renowned internationally renowned harpist **Cormac De Barra**, Donegal sisters **Maighread and Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill** and Connemara siblings **Séamus and Caoimhe Uí Fhlatharta**.

Country music hall royalty [Emmylou Harris](#) will be the first artist to play a seated show at the Emirates Arena on Friday 16 January in what is a rare Scottish appearance for the 14-time Grammy Award winner as she celebrates 50 years of music-making.

Celtic Connections Creative Producer, Donald Shaw, said: "The Maclean Brothers have got so much in common with Celtic Connections – they think on a global scale, have incredible ambition and an unwavering passion for great music, so it's just brilliant to have them on board! As we chart our way towards January, the festival bill continues to expand and I'm really excited to share such a wealth of new shows. The 2026 festival is bringing the world to Glasgow – there's music of all styles and

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cultures to be heard and the chance to see incredible new collaborations and performances. There's no better way to start the year."

Youngest brother Lachlan said: "One of the most memorable moments of the row was when we first heard the song Ross and Duncan made in tribute to us. We were lucky to speak to loads of celebrities while at sea, but that was probably the moment I felt most star-struck.

"We were absolutely blown away - and this show gives us a similar feeling.

"Music is such a huge part of our lives, and having spent so many nights in the crowd watching incredible artists at Celtic Connections over the years, the idea of being part of the show is pretty surreal. Once we get over the overwhelming feelings of imposter syndrome, we'll be over the moon!"

Celtic Connections 2026 takes place from **Thursday 15 January to Sunday 1 February 2026**. The full programme and tickets are available at www.celticconnections.com.

Ends.

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

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Media accreditation is open now and [you can apply here](#).

Follow the conversation at @ccfest.

Notes to Editors

Celtic Connections began in 1994, when it offered 66 events at one venue. It has since grown more diverse, adventurous and experimental each year, offering hundreds of events in locations across Glasgow.

Renowned internationally, and Europe's biggest winter music festival, it has an unwavering ambition to showcase the very best traditional folk, roots, Americana, jazz, soul, indie and world music and nurture unique local, national and international cultural partnerships.

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.



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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](#).

Innis & Gunn, since its establishment in 2003, has been determined to do things differently in the world of brewing. Starting with innovative oak cask maturation for award-winning flagship beer 'The Original', Innis & Gunn has gone on to create a whole line up of boundary-pushing beers, including distinctive, limited edition and rare beers, and the Innis & Gunn Lager Beer which recently won gold at the World Beer Awards for the second year running.

Innis & Gunn is now one of the UK's most successful beer brewers. Still pioneering, still innovating and still doing things differently, to excite and intrigue beer lovers all over the world. Innis & Gunn is the official beer sponsor of many iconic events including The Edinburgh Fringe, Royal Highland Show, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Celtic Connections and Belladrum Music Festival.

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