

# Danny Kyle Open Stage Hosted at Celtic Connections

## Outline of 'how it works'

Danny Kyle ran an Open Stage and the 'Gees a Break Club' for over 30 years at various festivals throughout Scotland. He invited anyone who wanted to perform for a short slot – they were always encouraged by Danny and if they were ready to perform on a 'full slot' he would recommend them to other festivals / folk clubs and event organisers. He only ran it at Celtic Connections for one full festival the year of his passing in 1998. The festival requested Liz Clark and Gibb Todd to run the DKOS in his memory. Liz Clark now leads on this. Six finalists are then offered supporting slots at the following year's festival.

### **Dates of Event**

Every day throughout the festival from 5pm – 7pm in the Exhibition Hall. Entry is free and non-ticketed.

### **Who can enter?**

Any musician who would like to.

### **How / when do they enter?**

Via the application form on the Celtic Connections website – sending in along with a demo CD – First entries are usually received during Celtic Connections for the following year's competition and there is no closing date.

### **What happens to the entries when they are received?**

They are logged and date stamped by Liz Clark.

### **How /who is chosen /who goes on?**

For the past 10 years Liz has listened to all the applications and decides a programme of performers, which can be between 5 – 6 acts per event. The list is whittled down to date first for the first 60 acts.

### **How are people informed of who is going on when ?**

Liz will list them in Bands/ Trios/ Duo's / Singer Songwriters – and start getting in touch with those who are furthest away first – ie. USA/Canada/Italy/Europe and beyond/ Those from the Scottish Islands / rest of the UK & Ireland - and firstly any groups of Children (under 16's who need chaperones / perform at weekends etc)

Once the above have been programmed Liz then contacts more 'local' people– this is usually left till just before the festival –reason for this is :-

January – flu/ bugs/ weather conditions/ students timetables/ shift work/prior commitments / group broken up /etc. (from past experience this has always worked well – give the majority too much time and that is where the biggest cancellations / no shows happen)

### **On the day?**

The five acts are asked to be at the Exhibition Hall for 4pm for sound checks – running order given after everyone is sound checked. Every night DKOS is broadcast live on CMR (Celtic Music Radio)- an added bonus for the competitors'!

The 5 acts perform between 5-7pm each day during the festival (with exception of day 1 when the previous years finalists perform and the last Sunday – where the new 6 finalists perform)

### **Judging of the event?**

There are 3-4 judges every day – volunteers from Celtic Friends – Artists/ Promoters/ Festival Organisers – people from the industry - who Liz asks and schedules in - Listen to all the acts and fill in the Adjudication sheet. After the performance if available they retire to the VIP area to give an overview of how they all considered the performers

had performed on the day – if not available to stay they hand their form to Liz.  
The marks are added up and the review of who came where on the day.

*NB the ongoing adjudication ensures that this would be a very informed decision can be made in time to get all the performers (if in this country) back for the final concert*

### **Finalists ?**

Liz then phones all the finalists and gets those who it is physically possible to get back to the hall for the Sunday Concert – no remuneration for the artists – but expenses are covered.

After the Awards there is usually a reception where the finalists can get introduced to the Celtic Connections Team + any promoters/record companies/ festival organisers etc who wish to come and meet them.

Liz keeps in touch with the finalists throughout the year and is informed from the Production Office who they will be supporting at the following years festival.

Previous finalists include: Julie Fowlis, Breabach, Karine Polwart, Rory Butler, Lucy Pringle & Chris Wright, Malinky and Phamie Gow who are all now professional musicians.