



Media Release

10am, Tuesday 10th October 2023

Celtic Connections 2024 set for expansive programme of unmissable music

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World-renowned Glasgow festival **Celtic Connections** will once again light up stages, venues and dark winter nights from **Thursday 18 January to Sunday 4 February 2024**, for what will be one of its biggest-ever capacity festivals.

Proudly known as Europe's premier folk, roots and world music festival, and the home of spectacular musical showcases and one-off collaborations, **Celtic Connections** has continued to expand into a multitude of genres over its 30-year history. This year will see the festival stage another ambitious programme of incredible performances spanning acoustic, traditional, indie, Americana, Jazz, blues, orchestral, experimental and more.

Glasgow's status as a **UNESCO City of Music** will be well and truly on display as more than 300 events bring 25 venues across the city to life, welcoming a host of unmissable music across its 18 days.

Much-loved venues, such as the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and Barrowland Ballroom, as well as The Pavilion Theatre and Barony Hall, will be providing audiences with a warm Glaswegian welcome, and organisers are encouraging anyone who has never attended what is the biggest winter festival of its kind, to come and experience its magic for themselves.

Celtic Connections boasts a diverse line-up that caters to a wide range of musical tastes. From the high-energy rhythms of bands fusing contemporary sounds with traditional music, to intimate and soulful settings of acoustic performances, this festival offers something to satisfy every musical palette.

Like the anticipated 110,000 attendees, musicians will descend on Glasgow from near and far. From just along the road to all corners of the globe, including North America, West Africa, India, Australia,



Ukraine, Norway, Sweden, France and Ireland, international artists of the highest calibre are once again lining up to play a sought-after **Celtic Connections** slot.

General tickets for the festival go on sale at **10am, Wednesday 11th October** at www.celticconnections.com.

Celtic Connections 2024 programme highlights include:

- Famed for its expansive and genre-defying cultural spectacle, the **Celtic Connections Opening Concert** will have Glasgow Royal Concert Hall audiences marvelling once again as it stages the European premiere of **ATTENTION!** The remarkable new symphonic work from American Grammy winner **Chris Thile** - referred to by Billboard Magazine as “the best mandolin player in the world” - will also welcome the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra**
- Another world-leading instrumentalist in the form of American double bassist and composer **Edgar Meyer** will also cross the Atlantic for another live European premier alongside the trailblazing string group the **Scottish Ensemble**. Hailed as “the most remarkable virtuoso in the relatively un-chronicled history of his instrument” (The New Yorker), Meyer will perform his Concertino for strings and double bass
- 100 years on since the death of Scottish schoolteacher and iconic revolutionary socialist John MacLean, a centenary concert will see a glittering cast come together to recognise the significance of the Red Clydeside era. Music, poetry and reflections on John’s life, his legacy and the movement that he stood for will be led by the likes of **Karine Polwart, Eddi Reader, Billy Bragg** and **Siobhan Miller**
- As part of the festival’s continued hosting of world music stars **Angélique Kidjo** - a four-time Grammy Award winner, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and one of the greatest artists in international music today - will celebrate 40 years of wowing audiences by bringing her undeniable creative force and irresistible mix of West African roots and Afro-beat grooves to the Celtic Connections stage
- Award-winning Kyiv world music quartet **DakhaBrakha**, which translates to give/take in old Ukrainian, will bring their astonishing trans-national sound rooted in Ukrainian culture to

Scotland when they play The Pavilion Theatre

- Scotland burgeoning traditional music scene is again celebrated throughout the festival with opportunities to see exciting familiar profile acts like **Dallahan, RANT, Breabach, Mec Lir, Heisk, Session A9** and **The Canny Band** alongside emerging artists like **Beth Malcolm, TRIP, Lauren Collier, Tarran** and **Amy Laurenson**
- Another special international collaboration will come in the form of **Citadels of the Sun**. Presented in tandem with Jodhpur Rajasthan International Folk Festival, Irish and Rajasthani musicians will come together at Barony Hall to share common themes and stories that connect the cultures of the two regions. The show will feature **Martin Coyle, Paul Cutliffe, Sarah E Cullen, Asin Khan Langa** and **Sawai Khan Manganiyar**
- The wealth of transatlantic talent featuring at the 2024 festival also includes country royalty with **Carlene Carter** (daughter of June Carter Cash), 15-time Grammy Award winner and banjo virtuoso **Béla Fleck**, beloved singer-songwriter and virtuoso pianist **Bruce Hornsby**, and Celtic Connections favourites **Sarah Jarosz, Teddy Thompson, The Milk Carton Kids, Tommy Emmanuel, Darlingside** and bluegrass star **Tim O'Brien**, who will revisit his seminal album *The Crossing* alongside **Michael McGoldrick, John McCusker** and **John Doyle**
- Orcadian folk quartet **FARA** will be joined on stage by a multitude of talent including artists from the Caribbean, Middle East, Mali and Quebec for a very special international showcase accompanied by new arrangements written especially for the occasion and played by Scotland's brand-new string ensemble **Thirteen North**
- On what will be the 50th anniversary since the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** formed, they will grace the Celtic Connections stage with unique arrangements with guest performances from Scotland's much loved **Paul Buchanan** (The Blue Nile), American singer **Aoife O'Donovan** (performing her new work "America, Come" exploring the women's suffrage movement and passing of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution), visionary Scots folk band **Lau** and harpist and composer **Maeve Gilchrist**
- Beloved Scottish singer-songwriter **Dougie MacLean** will mark five decades of extraordinary



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music making with a special show entitled **Songmaker 2024 - Celebrating 50 Years of Music**

- Roddy Hart's **Roaming Roots Revue** is back for its 12th year to present **Songs of Modern Scotland**. This epic concert celebrating will, for the first time in its history, celebrate the great Scottish Songbook, revisiting and reinventing modern classics with the help of the **Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Symphony Orchestra**, featuring fourth year students and conducted by **John Logan**, and a who's who of Scottish talent including Biffy Clyro's **Simon Neil**, Idlewild's **Roddy Woomble** and **Rod Jones**, Del Amitri's **Justin Currie**, and many more
- Contemporary Scottish Celtic outfits will be out in force, with both **RURA** and **Talisk** headlining shows at the iconic Barrowland Ballroom, whilst BBC Radio 2 playlist regulars **Skerryvore** bring their expansive and captivating sound, epitomised in their recent UK top 40 album *Tempus*, back to Celtic Connections and powerhouse **Skipinnish** celebrate 25 years of musical voyage with friends who have played with them along the way
- One of Scotland's most renowned folk groups **Blazin' Fiddles** will also celebrate their 25th year on road at The Pavilion Theatre, **Kinnaris Quintet** will play their biggest Celtic Connections headline show to date at The Old Fruitmarket with special guests including **Julie Fowlis** and **Karine Polwart**, and Skye's own electro-trad duo **Valtos** will bring a star-studded line up of musical friends celebrating Gaelic song and beats to their show at SWG3
- The festival's New Voices strand, which each year allows a trio of emerging Scottish artists to embark on a new musical commission, will this year champion the young voices of celebrated cellist **Alice Allen**, whistle and bagpiper **Ali Levack** (Project Smok and BBC Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2022), and talented young fiddler **Charlie Grey** (Westward the Light)
- **Showcase Scotland** - a part of the festival which facilitates international collaboration - will this year partner with the country of **Norway** to showcase Scandinavian talent, while other festival favourites including **Transatlantic Sessions** will return



Festival-goers can also look forward to the usual mix of screenings, workshops, dementia-friendly concerts, late night sessions and pop-up performances at the Festival Club, as well as a thriving education programme that will benefit thousands of children across Glasgow.

Donald Shaw, Creative Producer for Celtic Connections, said: “It’s that time of year where we lift the lid on the incredible shows and events we have in the works for Celtic Connections. Celebration and collaboration are at the heart of the festival and once again we will bring the world’s music to Glasgow audiences this winter. I’m very excited that our 2024 edition will welcome a huge portion of international talent back to our stages, particularly our transatlantic cousins in America, and that we will be back to staging one of our biggest ever capacity festivals. We would encourage audiences old and new with a love of music to discover all that this diverse programme has to offer and spend the dark winter nights with us.”

Glasgow Life Chair, Bailie Annette Christie, said: “Celtic Connections is renowned internationally as an outstanding festival which brings together exceptional musicians from all over the world to celebrate a broad variety of music genres. This hugely successful event is much loved by local, national and international audiences, attracting thousands of visitors to Glasgow every year to experience and enjoy vibrant live performances in the city’s wonderful venues. Over three decades, the festival has made an incredibly important contribution to Glasgow, and enhanced its global reputation as a UNESCO City of Music and a superb destination for cultural events.

“This year’s exciting and extensive programme features a superb, diverse line-up of established and emerging talent. It promises unmissable performances, from intimate gigs to large-scale shows and something to suit all musical tastes, so we look forward to the curtain rising on Celtic Connections 2024, and to welcoming performers and audiences for what will be a truly special start to the new year.”

Creative Scotland Head of Music, Alan Morrison said: “The 2024 Celtic Connections programme puts Scotland at the heart of a musical map of the world. This is arguably the festival’s strongest-ever international line-up, opening our ears to the inspirational sounds of artists from so many different countries and cultures. Running through it all, of course, is Scotland’s own musical



lifeblood, the traditional tunes and contemporary twists that continue to thrill audiences and brighten up our winter days and nights.”

Culture Secretary Angus Robertson said: “I’m greatly looking forward to this year’s Celtic Connections and the warmth it always brings to the colder months with leading Scottish and international musicians across a variety of genres set to descend on Glasgow for what looks to be another fantastic showcase of talent.

“In addition to engaging audiences, Celtic Connections gives artists from near and far an important platform to stage their music and perform, providing significant value to the industry and our economy. The Scottish Government is therefore proud to support Celtic Connections with £101,000 this year through our EXPO fund, which seeks to raise the international profile of Scottish artists and help maximise opportunities for them at home and abroad.”

Celtic Connections began in 1994 when it offered 66 events at one venue. It has since grown more adventurous, experimental and diverse each year, with 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 2024 will take place from **Thursday 18th January to Sunday 4th February**.

General tickets go on sale **10am, Wednesday 11th October 2023**, with advance tickets on sale now for Celtic Rovers festival supporters.

The programme can be viewed in full and tickets purchased at www.celticconnections.com.

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

The festival will run from Thursday 18 January to Sunday 4 February 2024. Follow the conversation at @ccfest.

For further information, images, or to request an interview, please contact: Corrie Campbell, Innes and Campbell Communications, corrie@innesandcampbell.co.uk, 07900 981 073.

Notes to Editors



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Celtic Connections began in 1994, when it offered 66 events at one venue. Since then it's grown more adventurous, experimental and diverse each year and now offers thousands of events in locations across Glasgow.

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

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