

Media Release

Thursday 14 November 2024

## Celtic Connections line up blossoms with more magic this winter

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**Celtic Connections** in partnership with **Innis & Gunn** has added more than 40 shows to its ever-expanding 2025 programme, with many artists using their platform at the festival to shine a light on the natural world.

Delivered by **Glasgow Life** and taking place from **Thursday 16 January to Sunday 2 February**, the world's premier celebration of roots, world and folk music will welcome around 1,200 musicians and artists from 20 countries for 300 events in 25 venues across Glasgow, a **UNESCO City of Music**.

The line up continues to blossom with new and established talent, and performances which delve into preserving and protecting the environment are among those set to take centre stage this winter.

In a co-presentation with the Glasgow Film Festival, Celtic Connections will present a live orchestral performance of the film ***When Fish Begin to Crawl***, which celebrates the Flow Country's recognition as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This immersive cinematic experience will feature the **Royal Scottish National Orchestra** performing **Jim Sutherland's** acclaimed score against three large screens showing the international award-winning film by Sutherland and BAFTA winner **Morag McKinnon**.

Two musical forces of the Scottish folk and roots scene, mandolin player and singer **Laura-Beth Salter** and piper, guitarist and whistle player **Ali Hutton**, will present the premiere live performance of their Scottish soundscaping masterpiece ***From the Ground***. Cinematic, contemporary and captivating, ***From the Ground*** is an ode to Mother Nature and her infinite power to heal. The duo will perform live, incorporating sonic samples of the whistling winds from Skye, crashing waves from Harris, and the forest floor on the outskirts of Glasgow for an audience at Òran Mór.

In a rare live performance, composer and arranger **John Metcalfe** will perform material from his innovative and inspiring album ***Tree***, out on Peter Gabriel's Real World Records, at Tramway. Coupled with stunning visuals from artist **Jony Easterby**, the music reflects an imagined 24-hour cycle in the life of a tree, experienced by observing the ever-shifting interplay of light, colour and sound.

Prominent singer-songwriter **Hayden Thorpe** will perform ***NESS*** – his acclaimed third album which, made in collaboration with best-selling nature writer **Robert Macfarlane**, reflects the natural environment of his home in Cumbria. Hayden will be joined by the daring cross-genre group of multi-instrumentalists **Propellor Ensemble** at City Halls' Recital Room for what is set to be a sonically spectacular and transformational live show.

**Hannah Read**, an award-winning multi-instrumentalist and composer who was recently described as "one of the finest singers of the day" (MOJO Magazine), joins the bill at Drygate to perform *The Fungi Sessions Vol. 1* – a newly commissioned suite of fungi-inspired music played alongside captivating projected visuals.

The newest additions to the bill reflect the festival's wide-reaching appeal, with everything from acoustic and folk music to world, jazz and blues joining the renowned impressive list of confirmed acts that will warm dark winter nights in Glasgow come January.

Another new collaboration for 2025 sees Celtic Connections team up with **We Are Here Scotland** – an organisation which aims to amplify the voices of black people and people of colour (BPOC) in creative spaces. A showcase of **Scottish Musicians of Colour** at the City Halls' Recital Room will feature artists including Iranian musician **Aref Ghorbani**, cellist and poet **Simone Seales** and musician and artist **Miwa Nagato-Apthorp**. Glasgow multi-instrumentalist and songwriter **Ray Aggs** (Sacred Paws) will also run a free **POC Trad Session** during the festival.

Also joining the 2025 line up is renowned musician, string arranger and composer **David Grubb**, known for his masterful ability to blend a multitude of musical genres. David will present music from

his new instrumental album ***Circadia*** which, inspired by the universality of sleeping, dreaming and subconscious thoughts, leads listeners on a sonic journey through a typical sleep cycle.

The spirit and fire of East African music will be on display when **The Zawose Queens** play Òran Mór. **Pendo and Leah Zawose**, daughter and granddaughter of Tanzanian musician Hukwe **Zawose**, showcase the fluid polyrhythms and rapturous polyphonic singing of the Gogo (aka Wagogo) people of the Dodoma region of central Tanzania. Incorporating traditional instruments including the *chizeze* fiddle, *illimba* thumb piano and *ngoma* drums, the show will weave from the stripped-back and traditional-sounding to the upbeat and electronic-influenced.

**The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices** – a world-famous 70-year-old all-female choral folk group known for their rich polyphonic style – will fly in from Sofia especially for a one-off performance of their *Voices and Strings* programme. Presented in collaboration with the esteemed composer and director **Georgi Andreev** and musicians from Bulgarian ensemble **Quarto Quartet**, the show will feature both brand new songs composed by Andreev as well as well-known tracks from the choir's repertoire rearranged by maestro Andreev.

Saint Luke's will host **Song Club**, where some of the UK's most exciting emerging singer-songwriters will collide for an evening of raw talent, unique collaborations and fresh energy. **Nell Mescal, Katie Gregson-MacLeod, Elanor Moss, Matthew Herd** (Seafarers), and **Hector Shaw**, plus special guests, take to the stage, bringing a new generation of voices to the festival and pushing the boundaries of folk, indie and acoustic music.

Also new for 2025 is **The Blues Hour** which will showcase the talents of **Jon Muq**, a singer-songwriter born in Uganda and now living in Austin, Texas. Muq's experiences as a child in Uganda and as a man in America give him a unique perspective on the world he's addressing which will be explored at the City Hall's Recital Room in January.

Four decades of the much-loved Isle of Lewis cultural hub An Lanntair will be celebrated with a special show **An Lanntair @ 40** in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall's Strathclyde Suite. A host of

Hebridean talent including **Norrie MacIver, Anna Murray, Jane Hepburn** and **Ceitlin Smith** will grace the stage to honour the impact and importance of the Stornoway arts venue.

This year's **In the Tradition** show, which aims to breathe new life into traditional music, will paint a vivid musical tapestry, showcasing the best of Scotland's traditional music talent, with musical director **Anna Massie** and house band. Artists taking to the stage include the spirited **Madeleine Stewart Trio**, Islay Gaelic singer **Mairi McGillivray**, fiddle-accordion duo **Roo & Neil**, the unstoppable **Ross Couper and Tom Oakes**, Irish and Shetland influenced **LÉDA**, the exceptional **Alana MacInnes Trio**, vocalist **Ellie Beaton** and celebrated musicians **Eryn Rae** and **Michael Biggins**.

**Donald Shaw, Creative Producer for Celtic Connections, said:** "Celtic Connections provides artists with an important platform for creative expression and we are always eager to present shows that explore contemporary themes that move and delight audiences, and make them think. The diverse 2025 programme continues to expand, welcoming more musicians all the time to the bill to debut unique pieces of work and share their music with our appreciative Glasgow audiences. It's shaping up to be an outstanding festival and I would encourage music fans of any genre to come and explore the huge wealth of experiences on offer."

**Bailie Annette Christie, Chair of Glasgow Life, said:** "The latest additions to the Celtic Connections programme serve as a reminder of how it continues to attract incredible musicians from home and abroad. The growing bill for 2025 also showcases the wide range of musical genres on offer, which Celtic Connections is renowned for. Audiences are in for a treat, with this year's festival promising more vibrant performances and unique experiences across many of Glasgow's iconic music venues.

"Celtic Connections is a highlight of Glasgow and Scotland's cultural calendar, and there is no better place to be come January. I would encourage anyone to experience the world's leading folk, roots and world music festival and discover why Glasgow is a UNESCO City of Music."

**Celtic Connections** first began in 1994 and has grown in size and ambition ever since, building an international reputation for world-renowned music, exciting new performances, unique showcases and one-off collaborations.



**Celtic Connections 2025** in partnership with **Innis & Gunn** will take place from **Thursday 16 January to Sunday 2 February**. The programme can be viewed in full and tickets purchased at [www.celticconnections.com](http://www.celticconnections.com).

**ENDS**

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

The festival will run from Thursday 16 January to Sunday 2 February 2025. 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](mailto:corrie@innesandcampbell.co.uk), 07900 981 073.

### **Notes to Editors**

**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**. The festival receives invaluable support from **Creative Scotland, The Scottish Government Festivals Expo Fund** and **CalMac**.

**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](http://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](http://creativescotland.com). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#). Learn more about the value of art and creativity in Scotland and join in at [www.ourcreativevoice.scot](http://www.ourcreativevoice.scot)



**Innis & Gunn:** Since the company was founded in 2003, Innis & Gunn has been determined to do things differently in the world of brewing. Starting with innovative oak cask maturation for our flagship beer, 'The Original', we have 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.

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 Royal Highland Show, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Celtic Connections and Belladrum music festival in Inverness.