

Forthcoming Album by Edinburgh Youth Gaitherin'



Young musicians have been spending a year investigating and responding creatively to recordings and photos found in the School of Scottish Studies Archives at the University of Edinburgh. The seven participants are now raising money to record an album of the music they have developed.

This archive project is a collaboration between the School and *Edinburgh Youth Gaitherin*, and is supported by Creative Scotland. The aim is to inspire new people to use the Archives and break down barriers young people and the wider community might have with visiting or using them.

The School of Scottish Studies, established in 1951, houses a treasure trove of fieldwork recordings including traditional songs, music, folklore and stories. The resource is an important asset to Scottish heritage.

Cathlin Macaulay, Archives curator at the School of Scottish Studies said:-“We are keen to bring new users into the Archives, especially young people, and welcome the opportunity to collaborate with Edinburgh Youth Gaitherin.”

Whilst taking part in the project, the participants have been learning about what is involved in being musicians: developing skills such as writing music; playing in a group; teaching; promotion; recording and learning how distribution works. They have also been seeking to take an innovative approach to heritage, whilst also developing a meaningful understanding of the content of the Archives and the context of the recordings.

This approach has taken several diverse forms from creating big arrangements for younger musicians to play; writing songs

inspired by anecdotes and recollections of the way people used to live; to experimenting with traditional singing styles and writing new versions of these using words from Gaelic stories.

Participant Paduig Morrison, 16, who studies at St Mary's Music School in Edinburgh, and plays accordion and piano said:- "I have been playing a lot of traditional music and was very interested in learning lots of older stuff as well as newer stuff, and this project gave me the ability to access it".

He added: "This project is inspiring as younger musicians understand where our music and traditional music comes from and [because] the oral tradition doesn't exist to the same extent [...] and it's important as these were related to the songs of our forefathers".

He believes the project is an excellent way of passing on the traditions. That through composing new material which is inspired by the old stories, melodies and recordings, ensures it evolves, keeps it and alive, and promotes an understanding of culture.



As traditional music is all about transmission, part of this project has involved transmitting music discovered in the Archives. This has been achieved by teaching it to younger musicians, EYG's Big Band. The album being recording will involve a track performed by the Big Band.

As part of the transmission process the participants have also been keeping [a blog](#) about what they have been doing. They hope their journey will inspire others.

The album is being recorded in collaboration with acclaimed musicians and producers Mike Vass and Matheu Watson. They still have money to raise in order to bring quality of recording to the album they feel it deserves. Therefore they

have embarked upon a [crowdfunding campaign](#), offering pre-orders of the album .

The album will be launched at the new arts complex at Summerhall on 29th September of this year. Tickets can be bought through their box office or [online](#).