

Phil's Xmas Songbook will be like the last page of the Broon's book says Eddi Reader



If this year's Phil Cunningham's Christmas Songbook is only half as good as Eddi Reader promises, then get your tickets now as you are in for something special.

The show is on in the capital for only two nights and in addition to the incomparable Eddi, Phil will be joined by regular collaborators including Karen Matheson from Capercaillie, accomplished folk musician and fiddle player John McCusker, contemporary folk musician and songwriter Kris Drever, Jazz musician and composer Ian Carr, and singer/songwriter Kevin McGuire accompanied by the Songbook Brass Ensemble.

This is the seventh successive year of the show and as always promises to be a great fun night of festive music.

In fact, Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Santa, turkey, mince pies, mulled wine crackers and the Phil Cunningham Songbook.

Eddi kindly took time out from her hectic schedule to tell the Edinburgh Reporter what the audience can expect.

Eddi said: "The show will be a mixture of romance and the traditions of Christmas with the jokey atmosphere that we all recognise from Scottish Hogmanay parties from the sixties when the question is who will sing next; in fact it will be just like the last page in the Broon's Book.

"Phil will be playing traditional Scottish reels and I will sing songs from the American songbook whilst Kate will sing

Christmas carols in Gaelic and the brass band will help to make it a magical night for those of us who still believe in Santa. We are all playing music that we love and it will be a unique experience for the audience.

“I really enjoy working with Phil and still find it amazing that I get to hang out with him. I lived in London for 28 years and Phil was like a distant character, but I was introduced to him by Ally Bain at The Big Day in Glasgow around 1994. We had a massive session afterwards and I was trying to hold my own with these stars from the folk scene. The banter between Phil and Ally was hilarious and I remember laughing the night away. It was a great night and they played anything I wanted to sing. I knew then that I was in the company of great people.

“I never think about Christmas until I start singing songs with Phil who calls the show his office party. When we started doing the show it was for one night at the Queens Hall, then it was two nights, then we thought we should add a night in Glasgow, then Perth then Inverness, but at least this year we are finishing on the 20th December instead of the 23rd as usual so at least we will have some time for Christmas shopping.

“After that I will be spending Christmas with my family which will be great. My husband will be fifty and my sister who is flying in from America will be celebrating her 20th wedding anniversary so it will be some day.”

Fans can see Eddi in action at the Usher Hall on 30 November where she will be singing songs from her latest album Vagabond which will be released on 3 February next year.

Phil Cunningham's Christmas Songbook is on at the Queens hall, 85-89 Clerk Street on 16/17 December at 7.30pm.