

Ewan McLennan at Edinburgh Folk Club next month



Award winning Edinburgh folk singer Ewan McLennan is returning to the capital on 19 March to play the Edinburgh Folk Club at the Pleasance, and he has kindly taken time out from his busy schedule to tell the Edinburgh Reporter what the audience can expect from the show although he wouldn't be drawn on his favourite song.

Ewan said: "For those who haven't seen me before, basically I'm a folk singer, songwriter and guitar player. On the night I'll be singing a whole load of different songs but with a strong emphasis on Scottish traditional song. But whether my own self-penned songs, traditional ballads or the odd arrangement of a Bob Dylan song I always tend towards songs that tell a story, songs that pull the listener in and weave a tale. There is a strong influence of the guitar in my music and the other thing that's worth mentioning is a heavy strand of political songs in my music.

"Ah I'm afraid to disappoint and cop-out but choosing a favourite song is far too hard to say! I guess it changes all the time, from month to month, year to year. I would say the traditional Irish ballad Craigie Hill is up there as is the song Victor Jara about the Chilean balladeer and revolutionary.

Ewan first emerged onto the UK folk scene with the release of his debut album 'Rags & Robes'. The recording gained much critical praise, described by Maverick as 'a collection of truly captivating songs', and featured in MOJO's top ten folk albums of 2010. After an appearance on the BBC Radio 2 Folk Show and a televised performance for the Celtic Connections

Festival at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, his debut was capped by winning the BBC Folk Award's Horizon award in 2011.

Ewan's music was immediately noted for its depth of feeling and sincerity, something which comes from his respect and passion for the music he plays. Whether singing haunting traditional Scottish ballads or weaving the powerful stories that make-up his own songs, Ewan's unique, moving and earthy voice is always compelling. Having performed with and been taught by a number of world-renowned guitarists, from Martin Simpson to Robin Hill and Gerry Douglas, his own guitar playing is recognised as outstanding and forms an essential part of his music.

Now living south of the border, Ewan is looking forward to appearing at the Folk Club, a venue that he knows well, and returning to his home town. He continued: "I have played here once before in what was a great gig, memorable...for me at least! So hoping for more of the same this time around. It's a really nice venue, a warm crowd and it's run by a great bunch of people.

"I grew up in Edinburgh and have spent most of my life there so for me the sights have all been done and dusted and I know the city well. But I must say that not living in Edinburgh anymore I'm always taken aback at what a beautiful city it is when I return."

His much-awaited second album, 'The Last Bird to Sing', was also greeted with glowing reviews and confirmed his prominence amongst the new generation of folk musicians. As well as continuing to plough the furrow of traditional song Ewan's self-penned songs on his second album were once again met with critical acclaim. His track 'Joe Glenton' was awarded a prestigious national award for political song-writing, reinforcing his reputation as a singer who does not shy away from stinging social commentary. The release of 'The Last Bird to Sing' gained Ewan several further awards, including the

Spiral Earth Award for Best Male Singer of 2013.

During these years Ewan has been touring constantly around the UK and overseas and has gained a reputation for intimate and moving performances.

The BBC TV broadcast Autumn (2013) of the new series of world-renowned Transatlantic Sessions saw Ewan performing together with the finest folk musicians from around the world.

The series had him collaborating with artists such as Aly Bain, Tim O'Brien, Cara Dillon and Mike McGoldrick and showcases both Ewan's unique interpretation of traditional song and his own self-penned songs.

Ewan continues to tour widely and is currently working on the new material for his third studio album. He continued: "Aside from the regular gigging, the project that is taking up most of my time at the moment is working on the material I've drawn together for my new album. This will be my third album and I'll be going into the studio to begin its recording in late April. That should take a couple of months and then it'll be released early in the autumn with a bit of luck. At this point I've written all the songs for it and collected all the traditional material I'll record on it and it's just a case of getting my head down and practicing it all till I'm completely happy with it – a difficult place to get to. But I'm really looking forward to getting all the songs down, hearing them develop and working with a number of brilliant musicians who'll be recording with me – it's an exciting few months ahead.

"Well this particular tour takes me from Carlisle up to Aberdeen, stopping off at Campbeltown and Aviemore on the way and then of course Edinburgh before Liverpool and Isle of Man bring the wee tour to an end. So I think I'll be getting my feet up after all that for a day or two. But the next few months bring lots more gigging and of course starting to

record for the new album.”

Ewan's 2014 Tour Dates

31/01/14 Bodmin Folk Club, Cornwall www.bodminfolk.co.uk

10/02/14 Chesham Folk Club. <http://www.tudorfolkclub.org.uk/>

11/02/14 St Neots Folk Club. <http://www.stneotsfolkclub.co.uk/>

21/02/14 The David Hall, South Petherton, Somerset.
<http://www.thedavidhall.org.uk/catalogue/>

23/02/14 Folk on the Moor, Ivybridge, Devon.
<http://www.moorfolk.co.uk/>

07/03/14 Kings Place, London. <http://www.kingsplace.co.uk/>

14/03/14 Folk and Blues Club, Carlisle.
<http://www.carlislefolkandbluesclub.com/>

15/03/14 Ceol, Campbeltown. <http://www.ceolcampbeltown.com/>

16/03/14 The Old Bridge Inn, Aviemore.
<http://www.oldbridgeinn.co.uk/>

17/03/14 The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen.
<http://www.aberdeenperformingarts.com/venues/the-lemon-tree>

19/03/14 [Edinburgh Folk Club](#), The Pleasance.

21/03/14 Unity Theatre, Liverpool.
<http://www.unitytheatreliverpool.co.uk/>

22/03/14 TBC

23/03/14 Jabberwocky, Isle of Man.
<http://www.jonnopromotions.com/>