

The Secret North coming to The Traverse next month



The 'Secret North', featuring: Donald Grant – Fiddle, Ailie Robertson – Harp, Sondre Meisfjord – Double Bass, Karen Tweed – Accordion, Jarlath Henderson – Whistle, Pipes, Marit Fält – Mandola will be appearing at the Soundhouse at The Traverse Theatre on the 18th June.

Bringing together six world-class musicians from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Scandinavia in a cross-cultural celebration of new music that bridges the divide between folk, classical, traditional and avant-garde in six new compositions.



As musical collaborations go, this promises to be an extraordinary music interchange. Individually, each member has carved out a reputation for not just mastering their chosen fields, but rising above, redefining and renewing the musical world they come from. In The Secret North, they come together to premiere six new compositions, written by each musician specifically for the ensemble, resulting in a concert of enthralling new music, grounded in tradition, but shot through with the adrenaline of contemporary influences. This is music that is both ancient and utterly new.

The Secret North was the brainchild of Ailie Robertson and Donald Grant who have been friends since they were teenagers. Both have played folk music all their lives, but are also heavily involved with the UK classical scene – Donald plays with The Elias Quartet, one Britain's leading ensembles, and Ailie is gaining a reputation as one of Scotland's brightest young composers, picking up the prize for 'Achievement for New

Music' in the inaugural New Music Scotland Awards earlier this year. They have worked together on several occasions, and indeed Ailie collaborated with The Elias Quartet on her recent single, 'Haven' which reached #2 in the iTunes Classical Charts last year.

Speaking about The Secret North, Ailie says, "we were both increasingly interested in investigating where the lines between classical and folk music were, what would happen if we tried to use much larger 'classical' structures but in a folk style." They decided to run what is essentially a musical experiment. "It's like the musician equivalent of the Big Brother house! We put 6 musicians who don't know each other into a house together for a week and see what comes out at the end!".

Inviting musicians from Scotland, Ireland and Norway to take part is one of the most important factors of the project – the meeting will be a sharing of culture, an opportunity to learn from the different experiences we all have, the different approaches to our traditional and classical music and how we see their roles. Donald says, "It was also very much like writing our musical 'wishlist' of who we wanted to work with – all the invited artists are people whose music we find exciting and inspiring, so we can't wait to create with them!"

Please see below Scotland tour dates.

June 18th – Edinburgh, Soundhouse at The Traverse

June 19th – Glasgow, Folkclub at The Admiral Bar

June 20th – Isle of Mull, An Tobar

June 21st – Isle of Skye, SEALL at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

June 22nd – Lyth, Lyth Arts Centre

June 23rd – Lochinver Village Hall

June 24th – Ardross Community Hall

June 25th – Inverness, Eden Court Theatre