

# Award-winning young pianist to play Leith concert

Fergus McCreadie, the widely acclaimed pianist from Dollar in Clackmannanshire, plays the final concert in the current Jazz at St James series in Leith with his trio on 17 November 2018.

The twenty-one year old Royal Conservatoire of Scotland graduate, who has just been announced as a BBC Young Jazz Musician 2018 finalist, has been making audiences and competition judges sit up and take notice since he won the Young Scottish Jazz Musician Award (Under 17s) at the age of fifteen in 2013. He went on to win the title again the following year and has since won the Instrumentalist of the Year title at this year's Scottish Jazz Awards and been shortlisted as Best Newcomer in the recent Parliamentary Jazz Awards, the UK's most prestigious jazz prizes.

McCreadie graduated from the Conservatoire in June and embarked on his professional career by appearing at Glasgow, Edinburgh and Oslo jazz festivals in quick succession. His style, which blends jazz improvisation with the rhythms and phrasing of Scottish traditional music, has earned enthusiastic reviews. The Scotsman awarded five stars to his debut album, Turas, which he released earlier this year. The Times described his playing as showing "real personality, fire and virtuosity" and leading jazz magazine Jazzwise has twice picked McCreadie's trio as highlights in festival reviews in recent months.

His Scottish influence, he says, is a combination of growing up with folk music – he began learning the bagpipes at the age of twelve but didn't persevere with them – and being around the music scene in Glasgow, where there's a strong folk session scene, as a student.

“I never became very good on the pipes but I always liked bagpipe music,” he says. “Then I neglected that music while I studied jazz piano. But when I went to the Conservatoire, the more I heard folk music, the more I rediscovered my love for it and eventually it came forward in my compositions.”

Turas is Gaelic for “journey” and many of the compositions on the album are inspired by places McCreadie has been, whether by himself or with his trio.

“The idea was that people listening to the whole album got taken on a small virtual tour of these different places and it’s the same with live audiences,” says McCreadie. “We want people to come with us all the way but if they can connect with even just one image, memory or landscape, then I would be achieving what I set out to achieve.”