

# Flautist Tom Oakes creates solo album out of adversity

Edinburgh-based multi-instrumentalist Tom Oakes releases a new album with a launch concert at the Storytelling Centre on Monday 7 December ■

Entitled Water Street and recorded entirely solo, the album was recorded in the 17th century former merchant's house in Leith where Oakes and his family were living at the time.

Having played what turned out to be his last gig for 18 months in Switzerland, where his main instrument, a prized Grinter flute shattered onstage, Oakes decided to lift what had become the gloom of lockdown by recording music on flutes of varying qualities.

Working mostly at night and using different rooms to take advantage of the acoustic properties of wood and stone, he added harmony using a Greek bouzouki. With his other hat on as a sound designer, he added modified flute parts, samples and textures of weather to thicken the real sounds coming from the open windows in the summer months.

Known for his work with Shetland fiddler Ross Couper, genre-bending pan Finnish act The Auvo Quartet and new Scottish powerhouse OBT, Oakes also has experience of a wide range of musical and theatrical settings and gigs with fellow musicians including Tim Edey, Chris Stout, Jackie Oates, Kevin Henderson, Adam Sutherland, Allan MacDonald, Cathal McConnell.

"With my main instrument out of action and no chance of a repair until restrictions were lifted, I tried all sorts of flutes, getting them from auctions and having them worked on, and finding out about rarities through friends," he says. "It's been a fascinating and at times terrifying process and I can't wait to share the results."



Tom Oakes