

The Night Afore – Edinburgh's Hogmanay gets off to a glittering start

The entertainment on the first night of the three day Hogmanay festival provided by Clare Grogan fronting Altered Images, and headlined by queen of the lockdown disco, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, was glittering and designed to get the standing crowd dancing.

After heavy rain had threatened to stop play earlier on Friday, the night was dry, and a positively balmy six degrees. Organisers UniqueAssembly were heaving sighs of relief and the audience was ready for a party.

The crowd was ready to party after Boogie from Radio Forth whipped them up into disco diva mode. The new all family event was held in West Princes Street Gardens on a super-sized Ross Bandstand stage. With plenty of security staff on hand, portaloos and two bars the crowd was kept entertained by Grogan who “just about pulled it off” with her version of Abba's Dancing Queen and of course ending the set with the best known Altered Images track, Happy Birthday.

Both Grogan and Ellis-Bextor may be stars who began their careers a few decades back, but they are great entertainers, and worthy of the opening night slot at Edinburgh's Hogmanay,

which is back with a bang after three years. The best advice if you are headed to the sell out Hogmanay events is to wrap up warm with lots of layers, and forgo fashion in favour of comfort.



Claire Grogan, Altered Images. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam
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The entertainment at the Night Afore Party in Princes Street Gardens was provided by Clare Grogan (above) and Altered

Images followed by Sophie Ellis-Bextor PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter



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Sophie Ellis-Bextor. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam
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followed by Sophie Ellis-Bextor (above) PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

Sophie Ellis-Bextor shot to fame as a vocalist on Spiller's huge number one single, 'Groovejet' and her worldwide smash hit, 'Murder on the Dancefloor'. Her debut solo album, 'Read My Lips', was released in 2001 and sold more than 2 million copies worldwide. Her subsequent albums provided further critical and commercial success, and in 2020, her Kitchen Discos, performed at home during lockdown with her five sons and recorded by her husband, musician Richard Jones, were watched and enjoyed by 40 million around the world.

Altered Images had worldwide success, selling millions of records, topping the charts in several countries. They recorded 3 x UK Top 10 Albums and had 6 x UK TOP 40 hits. In 1981, they were voted Best New Group at the NME awards the same year they were invited to play at The Royal Command Performance. Still fronted by iconic vocalist/songwriter Clare Grogan, Altered Images will be performing material from the incredible new LP *Mascara Streakz* along with classics such as *Happy Birthday*, *I Could Be Happy*, *Don't Talk To Me About Love*, *See Those Eyes*, *Dead Pop Stars* and more. Back with their first new music in 39 years.



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