

Aoife O'Donovan – at the Queen's Hall

Grammy Award-winning artist Aoife O'Donovan operates in a thrilling musical world beyond genre. She will appear at Queen's Hall on 3 June with support act Rory Butler.

Deemed “a vocalist of unerring instinct” by *The New York Times*, she has released three critically-acclaimed and boundary-blurring solo albums including her most recent record, 2022's boldly orchestrated and literarily crafted *Age Of Apathy*. Recorded and written over the course of Winter and Spring 2021 with acclaimed producer Joe Henry, *Age Of Apathy* is “stunning” (*Rolling Stone*) and “taps into the propulsion of prime Joni Mitchell” (*Pitchfork*). *Age of Apathy* received three nominations at the 2023 GRAMMY Awards including one for Best Folk Album and the song “B61” from the album was Folk Alliance International's 2022 song of the year.

A savvy and generous collaborator, Aoife is one third of the group I'm With Her with bandmates Sara Watkins and Sarah Jarosz. The trio's debut album, *See You Around*, was hailed as “wilfully open-hearted” by *NPR Music*. I'm With Her earned an Americana Music Association Award in 2019 for Duo/Group of the Year, and a GRAMMY Award in 2020 for Best American Roots Song.

O'Donovan spent the preceding decade as co-founder and front woman of the string band, Crooked Still and is the featured vocalist on *The Goat Rodeo Sessions* – the group with Yo-Yo Ma, Stuart Duncan, Edgar Meyer, and Chris Thile. She has appeared as a featured vocalist with over a dozen symphonies including

the National Symphony Orchestra, written for Alison Krauss, performed with jazz trumpeter Dave Douglas, and spent a decade as a regular contributor to the radio variety shows “Live From Here” and “A Prairie Home Companion.”

‘O’Donovan’s songs are rooted in folk tradition but full of musical surprises: daring melodic leaps, unexpected chord progressions, subtle rhythmic shifts. “I’ve always just been drawn to melodies and chordal structures that were unexpected,” she said. “They’re just more fun. When you have the whole arsenal of the tone row in your head, you can just have a lot more freedom to mess around with it.”

Her voice is at once open and mysterious, compelling in its understatement. Where another singer might head for a showy, dramatic peak, O’Donovan often eases back, letting her phrases evaporate like mist. “Sometimes I feel like, ‘In order to be heard, do I have to be the loudest person in the room?’ But I think I’ve come to the realization that I don’t, and I don’t want to be,” she said. “The goal is to create a listening environment for people with your words or with your sounds, or with the song itself, where they want to be right there with you, and they’re willing to go along with everything you’re saying.”

The mandolinist Chris Thile, who welcomed O’Donovan as a regular performer on his public radio show “Live From Here,” said, “She’s not selling us anything. She’s telling us secrets – kind of a secret about the magic in the world that she’s finding.”

Rory Butler

Rory Butler is a British folk singer-songwriter based in Edinburgh. He released his debut album *Window Shopping* in July 2020 and has been described as “The most exciting Scottish talent to emerge in recent times” (BBC Scotland’s Roddy Hart). Rory Butler signed with Vertical Records in 2019. He

has played with a number of groups, including The Southern Tenant Folk Union. His headline gig at Celtic Connections 2023 sold out, and he has opened for the likes of John Paul White (The Civil Wars), folk legend Richard Thompson, Paul Weller, Lucy Rose, Eric Bibb, Blue Rose Code and Robert Plant. His first single 'Black and Blue' was included on Apple Music's Best of the Week and Spotify's New Music Friday playlists.

The track peaked at #6 on the Spotify 'Viral' chart and made it onto key 'New Music' playlists in Brazil, Germany, Portugal and Sweden, bolstering total world-wide streaming figures to over 800,000.

www.thequeenshall.net Tickets 0131 668 2019.

