

On song SNJO will bring authentic Ellington sound to Queen's Hall

The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra brings a new programme of jazz master Duke Ellington's music, In an Ellington Mood to the Queen's Hall on Sunday 10 December.

The music of Ellington and his co-writer, Billy Strayhorn has become one of the SNJO's specialisms and has earned the ensemble recognition internationally for faithful interpretations such as its enthusiastically received in-concert recording from 2012, In the Spirit of Duke.

In a break from the orchestra's previous Ellington concerts, this latest celebration of Ellington's genius will see the orchestra joined for part of each concert by the exceptional young vocalist Lucy-Anne Daniels.

Still in her early twenties, Leeds-born Daniels has already appeared at prestigious jazz venues including Ronnie Scott's in London and Dizzy's Jazz Club in New York and her background in gospel music is a particularly apt asset for singing Ellington's songs.

"Duke Ellington has been a key figure in jazz for almost a hundred years," says SNJO musical director, saxophonist Tommy Smith. "His music has been an inspiration across numerous eras, from providing the rhythm for dancers in the 1920s and popularising jazz during the swing era to playing with the

then younger generation including Charles Mingus and John Coltrane in the 1960s and beyond. He continues to challenge and reward the young musicians who are emerging today.”

To deliver the authentic Ellington experience for its audience, the SNJO will again apply meticulous attention to period detail. This includes recreating the Ellington Orchestra stage set-up, showing the same sartorial elegance, using specially sourced period brass mutes and playing musical scores specially transcribed from Ellington concerts.

“We want to involve people in as close as possible to a genuine Ellington performance,” says Smith. “There are obvious differences in personnel, of course, but the intention is to make the music come alive similar to the way it blossomed whenever the Duke Ellington Orchestra rolled into town.”

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