

77TH SEASON OF

CONCERTS

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART | OCTOBER 7, 2018





Julie Fowlis, photo by Fowlis Photography

PROGRAM

Julie Fowlis, vocals, whistles, shruti

Éamon Doorley, guitar-bouzouki, backing vocals

Duncan Chisholm, fiddles, backing vocals

Tony Byrne, guitar, backing vocals

Music of the Scottish Isles

October 7, 2018 | 3:30

West Building, West Garden Court

Today's concert will be selected from the following repertoire and announced from the stage. The songs are traditional and will be sung in Scottish Gaelic, unless otherwise indicated.

“A ghaoil leig dhachaigh dham mhàthair mi” (O love, let me home to my mother)

“Camariñas”

“Seal Songs”

“Lon-Dubh” (Blackbird)

“Fear a’ bhrochain/Dòmhnall Binn” (The gruel man/sweet Donald)

“Go Your Way,” composed by Annie Briggs

“The Thatcher/Peter Byrne’s/The soup dragon/Isaac’s welcome to the world”
(four tunes)

“Cadal ciarach mo luran” (Sleep softly, my beloved)

“Ribinnean rìomhach” (Beautiful ribbons)

“Tha mo ghaol air àird a’ chuain” (My love is on the high seas)

“Smeòrach Chlann Dòmhnail” (The mavis [thrush] of Clan Donald)

“Fodar dha na gamhna beaga set” (Fodder for the small stirks [bull/cow])

“Aoidh, na dèan cadal idir” (Aoidh, don’t sleep at all)

“Danns’ a luideigin odhar” (Dance, dun-colored slattern)

“Biodh an deoch seo ’n làimh mo rùin” (This drink would be in the hand of my love)

THE MUSICIAN

Julie Fowlis is an award-winning Gaelic singer deeply influenced by her early upbringing on North Uist, an island in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. With a career spanning five studio albums and numerous high-profile collaborations, her “crystalline” and “intoxicating” vocals have enchanted audiences around the world.

Nominated as Folk Singer of the Year at the 2018 BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and as Best Artist at the Songlines Music Awards, Fowlis is a warm and engaging performer who has graced international stages. Recent performances include return appearances to the Festival of Voice in Cardiff, Wales, and the World Festival of Sacred Music in Fez, Morocco, collaborations with the BBC Concert Orchestra in the Royal Albert Hall for the Proms 2018, and support of the Scottish icons “Runrig” during their 2018 farewell concert weekend.

Fowlis sang live at the closing ceremony of the 2012 Ryder Cup in Chicago to a televised audience of 500 million, an event that was eclipsed by singing live at the opening ceremony of the 2014 Commonwealth Games, Glasgow, to a television audience of more than one billion. Since the release of her album *alterum* in 2017, she has toured with the renowned Transatlantic Sessions and is currently working on a new World War I commission with the celebrated Highland musician Duncan Chisholm, commemorating one hundred years since the tragic sinking of HMS *Iolairs*, carrying soldiers home. She is also about to embark on another exciting commission, *The Lost Words—Spell Songs*, with the award-winning author Robert MacFarlane and the acclaimed artist Jackie Morris.

Fowlis sang the theme songs to *Brave*, Disney Pixar’s award-winning animated film set in Scotland’s ancient Highlands. Over the years she has been nominated for, or won, several BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and Scottish Traditional Music Awards. In December 2014, she was the first Gaelic solo artist to win a Scottish Music Award.

Fowlis has collaborated, recorded, and performed with numerous artists, including violinist Nicola Benedetti and Grammy Award-winning James Taylor and Mary Chapin Carpenter. She has collaborated with the celebrated Québécois band Le Vent du Nord, the Galician singer Rosa Cedrón, the Welsh singer Julie Murphy, and the Irish singer and musician, Muireann Nic Amhlaobh.

PROGRAM NOTES

“A ghaoil leig dhachaigh dham mhàthair mi” (O love, let me home to my mother)

In this song, a young girl pleads with the water-horse to return her to her mother. She met this mythological creature, common in the Gaelic tradition, at the edge of the cattle fold. These words are from *The Songs of Gaelic Scotland*, by Anne Lorne Gillies, and the tune comes from Kate Nicolson (Ceit Phàdraig).

“Camariñas”

Fowlis learned this traditional Galician song from the talented singer Rosa Cedrón when they collaborated on *Facing the Atlantic*, a project that explored the connections between Gaelic Scotland and Galicia. Fowlis performs this song in both Galician and Gaelic.

“Seal Songs”

Seals have a special place in Gaelic folklore and tradition, and North Uist, in particular, has stories and songs about “Clann rìgh fo gheasan”—children of a Scandinavian king who are under an evil spell that has turned them into sea creatures.

“Lon-Dubh” (Blackbird)

This version of “Blackbird” is Fowlis’s Scottish-Gaelic interpretation of the classic Lennon/McCartney song.

“Fear a’ bhrochain/Dòmhnall Binn “(The gruel man/sweet Donald)

These are two traditional pieces of mouth music, the second of which Fowlis learned from the singing of the Rev. William Matheson of North Uist and Edinburgh.

“Go Your Way,” composed by Annie Briggs

This is the first song Fowlis recorded in English on her albums.

“The Thatcher/Peter Byrne’s/The soup dragon/Isaac’s welcome to the world”

This lively set of instrumental tunes includes “Peter Byrne’s,” which Fowlis learned from the guitarist Arty McGlynn on his recording *McGlynn’s Fancy*. The third piece about a soup dragon is a Gordon Duncan favorite, and the last tune was composed by the band’s fiddler, Duncan Chisholm, after the birth of his son Isaac.

“Cadal ciarach mo luran” (Sleep softly, my beloved)

This simple and beautiful lullaby is from the Gaelic tradition. The mother sings to her child, reassuring him or her that she will always be there.

“Ribinnean rìomhach” (Beautiful ribbons)

These tunes represent Gaelic mouth music—two jigs, one at the beginning and one at the end, and a strathspey (a slower dance than a reel) in the middle. The final jig has some unusual rhythms and was learned from the singing of Seordag Murray from the northwestern village of Achiltibuie.

“Tha mo ghaol air àird a’ chuain” (My love is on the high seas)

This traditional Gaelic song was selected by Disney Pixar as the soundtrack for the trailer of their award-winning movie, *Brave*, in 2012.

“Smeòrach Chlann Dòmhnail” (The mavis [thrush] of Clan Donald)

This song’s words come from the acclaimed North Uist poet John MacCodrum (1693–1779), the last bard to the MacDonalds of Sleat. Fowles first learned this song in primary school and was later invited to perform it at the Opening Ceremony of the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

“Fodar dha na gamhna beaga set” (Fodder for the small stirks [bull/cow])

This set of mouth music was inspired by the previously mentioned “Ribinnean rìomhach,” and Fowles learned it from a recording of Mrs. Mary Lamont from Tiree. The chorus is made up entirely of vocables. She learned the second song in this set from the singing of her relative, Ruairidh MacDonald.

“Aoidh, na dèan cadal idir” (Aoidh, don’t sleep at all)

This traditional lullaby comes with a warning: All is not as it seems!

“Danns’ a luideigin odhar” (Dance, dun-colored slattern)

Fowles learned this humorous and lilting example of Gaelic mouth music from a 1950 recording by the legendary folklorist and scholar Dr. John Lorne Campbell, made for the National Trust for Scotland’s Canna Collection.

“Biodh an deoch seo ’n làimh mo rùin” (This drink would be in the hand of my love)

This song dates back to the 1600s and has survived in many forms across Gaelic-speaking areas of Scotland. It has a slightly gruesome edge and an elaborate backstory.

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Seventh Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin Concerts

Unless otherwise noted, concerts are held in the West Building, West Garden Court.

Curtis on Tour: Nigel Armstrong, violin, and Jason Vieaux, guitar

Music of Piazzolla, Giuliani, Jobim, and de Falla
October 14, 3:30

Vox Luminis

Funeral Music for a Prince and a Queen
October 21, 3:30

Trio Sefardi

Sound Sketches
October 26, 12:10
Location will be posted the day of the concert.

PUBLIQuartet

With Ian Rosenbaum
Celebrating Rachel Whiteread
MIND/THE/GAP
October 28, 3:30

Flophouse Crew

Celebrating *Gordon Parks: The New Tide, Early Work 1940–1950*
November 4, 4:00
East Building Auditorium

Tapestry

Lessons of Darkness: Armistice Day 1918
November 11, 3:30

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or circle@nga.gov for more information.

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