

PRESS RELEASE

‘THIS SOUND’ marks 21 years of **LOCHABER MUSIC SCHOOL**

An exciting new musical work, commissioned by Lochaber Music School to mark its 21st Anniversary, will shortly receive its première performance in St. Mary’s Primary School Hall, Fort William.

Lochaber Music School, founded by Audrey Scott of Spean Bridge, has become renowned throughout Scotland for the quality of its musical education. Primarily serving string players of all abilities throughout the Lochaber region, the Music School also provides weekly **‘Sound Start’** classes for tiny tots and **Choral Outreach** programmes for Primary and Secondary aged children.

Recently, the Music School inaugurated the **Lochaber Youth Orchestra** and the **Lochaber Youth Choir**. At its home in Camaghael Hostel, ten highly qualified and experienced tutors, under the direction of composer and pianist **Peter Rose**, now cater weekly for well over one hundred youngsters, all keen to further their musical experience.

To celebrate its 21st Anniversary, the Music School is holding a *Celebration Weekend Workshop* on February 7th and 8th. This will be directed by **Steve King**, viola player from **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** who has been a popular leader of LMS workshops for many years.

A particularly exciting element of this workshop, however, will be the **Première Performance of ‘THIS SOUND’**, written by **Duncan Strachan** (of Upper Inverroy) for treble voices, string quartet and string orchestra.

Born in 1987, Duncan began learning the cello at the age of 5 with Audrey Scott at the Music School. From 2001 to 2005, he studied at Scotland’s specialist music school, **St. Mary’s Music School**, in Edinburgh. He has performed all over Britain with his string quartet and piano trio and as a soloist, and was a finalist in the 2004 St. Mary’s Director’s Recital Prize. Duncan is now studying Music at Oxford University, where he holds both a Leask Music Scholarship and an Academic Scholarship. He is currently principle cello of Ensemble ISIS (Oxford’s contemporary music ensemble) and a member of the Kellas Quartet.

Duncan is also a much applauded young composer. His new work, **‘THIS SOUND’**, features the poetry of **Alice MacDonnell of Keppoch** (c1895) with the addition of several of Duncan’s own lines. Set for soprano voices, Duncan’s mysterious, ethereal music captures vividly the remarkable spirit of Lochaber.

The **Celebration Workshop Weekend** is attracting many players, young and old, from a very wide area of Scotland and beyond. Two very special participants will be **Jennifer MacCallum** (studying Viola at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama) and **Megan Henderson** (studying violin at Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama), both ex-Music School students, who will join leader **Monica Das** (Lochaber Schools’ Violin tutor) and **Duncan Strachan** to form the string quartet for the new work. The quartet and orchestra will join forces with **Lochaber Youth Choir** to give the very first performance of Duncan’s new work.

There are still some vacancies available for places in both the junior and senior orchestras. The weekend is free for all those involved in full-time education. Any interested players are welcome to ring the LMS Music Director **Peter Rose** (01397-712-882) who will be delighted to give further details.

The concluding **CONCERT** will take place from **4.00pm to 5.00pm on Sunday, February 8th** in **St Mary’s Primary School Hall**. Admission is free; but donations towards Lochaber Music School funds will naturally be gratefully accepted!

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