

GEORGIA / CÉCILE

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL
JAZZ ORCHESTRA
DIRECTED BY TOMMY SMITH

THIS IS A COMMUNION

Music by Georgia Cécile and Euan Stevenson

February 2023



THIS IS A COMMUNION

The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra (SNJO) and Georgia Cécile invite you to share communion with them in an evening of harmony, understanding, and exceptional jazz. 'This is a Communion' is a thoughtful concept that presents original music as a shared experience and cultivated songwriting as a healing process.

Georgia Cécile is a gifted singer for our times, and Euan Stevenson is considered one of Scotland's leading contemporary composers. Their creative partnership is based on the mutual sharing of thoughts, ideas, and feelings, all of which are the salient features of great orchestral jazz.

Georgia Cécile and Euan Stevenson stretch their music across a large canvas, but all of their songs' spiritual, hymnal and melodic elements will be richly preserved. These are the perfect conditions for improvisational flourishes and outstanding performances, the best of which occur when there is communion between the artists and the audience.

Let's be Friends

If you enjoyed tonight's concert, please do consider becoming a "Friend of the SNJO" and help support the future of our orchestras and that of jazz in Scotland. We welcome new friends at any time.

If you would like to know more about our memberships, please contact Catherine Gillespie:
phone +44 7446 286412
email cg@snjo.co.uk

Sponsors

We would like to extend special thanks to our main sponsors, **Creative Scotland** and the **Royal Conservatoire of Scotland** for their continued support of the orchestras.



We would also like to encourage everyone to please sign up for our email updates at snjo.co.uk/news

PROGRAMME NOTES

The concerts on this latest Scottish National Jazz Orchestra tour continue two relationships. There's The concerts on this latest Scottish National Jazz Orchestra tour continue two relationships. The connection formed briefly when Georgia Cécile joined the orchestra onstage for *A Christmas Festival of Jazz* in 2021. There's also the partnership that Georgia has developed with the pianist, composer and arranger Euan Stevenson over the past ten years.

Georgia was already an award-winning singer when she sang with the SNJO at the Queen's Hall that December night. Her debut album, 'Only The Lover Sings', which she co-wrote with and was arranged and orchestrated by Euan, had not only won the Album Of The Year title at the Scottish Jazz Awards that year, it had also topped the UK Jazz & Blues Album Chart.

Further accolades have followed. The American singing star Gregory Porter invited Georgia to open his sold-out four-night run at the Royal Albert Hall in London. Last October at the Jazz FM 2022 Awards, Georgia won the 'UK Jazz Act Of The Year' and the 'Vocalist Of The Year' titles. She has now also made herself at home at one of the world's top jazz clubs, Ronnie Scott's, where she recently sold out two unique Valentine's Day shows.

Born in Glasgow, Georgia grew up in a jazz-loving family. Her grandfather was a jazz pianist, and she listened mainly to Nina Simone, Duke Ellington, and Stevie Wonder. On leaving school, she studied law but dropped out after a year to pursue a career in music. She made the correct decision, and as well as the Royal Albert Hall and Ronnie Scott's, Georgia appeared at London, Cheltenham, and Limerick Jazz Festivals and SXSW in Austin, Texas.

In creating the music for these concerts, presented under the title of 'This Is A Communion', Georgia and Euan have reached back into the history of jazz for inspiration as well as producing items of a contemporary hue and breathing new life into some of the songs from 'Only The Lover Sings'. The song 'Communion' draws on the influence of the great gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, one of the most influential vocalists of the twentieth century whose work with Duke Ellington, in particular, has inspired Georgia. "It's a song with a gospel-soul flavour," she says. *"We wanted to create something uplifting, give people something optimistic."*

Georgia certainly has reason to feel optimistic. "She is," says SNJO director Tommy Smith, *"a gifted singer for our times, and we're very excited to be working with Georgia and Euan on a series of full concerts. Their creative partnership is based on the mutual sharing of thoughts, ideas, and feelings, all of which are the salient features of great orchestral jazz."*

Best known in jazz circles for co-leading the band New Focus with our star saxophonist, Konrad Wiszniewski, Euan is a classically trained pianist with a degree in composition. He has had choral and orchestral works premiered on both sides of the Atlantic. His recent commissions include an arrangement of the Ukrainian National Anthem for the internationally respected violin virtuoso Pinchas Zukerman and the English Chamber Orchestra. In addition, his jazz CV includes piano duets with David Newton, touring with guitarist Jim Mullen and an experience that makes him especially suitable as Georgia's musical partner, accompanying the late singer Tina May, who described working with Euan's resourcefulness and creativity as *"a joy."*

© Rob Adams

PROGRAMME

Music by Georgia Cécile and Euan Stevenson

Arranged by Euan Stevenson

ALWAYS BE RIGHT FOR ME
HARPOON
YOU DON'T NOTICE
MONTH OF MAY
BITTERSWEET

HE KNEW HOW TO LOVE
BE NEAR ME ALWAYS
COMMUNION
COME SUMMERTIME
THIS IS LOVE

THE ORCHESTRA

Reeds

Martin Kershaw

Helena Kay

Tommy Smith

Konrad Wiszniewski

Bill Fleming

Trumpets

James Davison

Sean Gibbs

Tom MacNiven

Lorne Cowieson

Trombones

Kieran McLeod

Liam Shortall

Anoushka Nanguy

Michael Owers

Rhythm

Peter Johnstone

Calum Gourlay

Alyn Cosker

GEORGIA CÉCILE

Georgia Cécile is a Scottish singer/songwriter and vocalist who, in recent years, has established herself as an assured performer and an original new voice in UK jazz. Born in Glasgow into a musical family, she heard jazz from an early age. Her grandfather, Gerry Smith, was an in-demand jazz pianist in the 1950s and 60s, while her aunt Ann was a noted singer of jazz standards.

Immersed in jazz though she was, Georgia was also influenced by contemporary songwriters and began composing her own songs in her late teens. As a result, she not only developed as a versatile singer, but also evolved as a writer who learned her craft from a wide variety of musical sources.



Georgia received her musical education at Napier College in Edinburgh, graduating with a BA Hons in Popular Music. Nevertheless, the young singer found the pull of jazz equal to the appeal of popular music and readily incorporated both into her singing style. These opposing stars aligned when she began collaborating with pianist, composer, and arranger Euan Stevenson, and formed a ten-year partnership that continues to this day.

Initially, their creativity gave notice that Georgia Cécile was an original voice and an accomplished performer. They have since fulfilled that early promise on Georgia's debut album, 'Only the Lover Sings', a deserving winner of 'Album Of The Year' at the 2021 Jazz Scottish Jazz Awards.

Wider recognition followed with awards for 'UK Jazz Act of the Year' and 'Vocalist of the Year' at the 2022 Jazz FM awards, but the accolades from her peers are even more telling. Following a critically acclaimed debut at the London Jazz Festival, she opened for Gregory Porter over four nights at the Albert Hall and headlined sold-out shows at Ronnie Scott's.

Other notable appearances include performances at the South by Southwest in Austin, Texas; a televised performance with the BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Guy Barker; a live session filmed at BBC Scotland's Pacific Quay; and a showcase concert at Celtic Connections.

Georgia Cécile and Euan Stevenson's project with the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra is another new turn in the road for this outstanding singer and her songwriting partner. 'This is a Communion' is certainly a bold and imaginative concept, but it's also an affirmation that jazz from Scotland is perennially creative and thoughtful. It looks set to prosper with artists like Georgia Cécile who is a bright light in jazz song and an ambassador for thoroughly modern music.

EUAN STEVENSON

Euan Stevenson is a successful Scottish composer, pianist, songwriter and arranger who works across multiple genres including jazz, classical and contemporary pop. He has written for solo piano, chamber ensembles, and composed large-scale sacred and secular works.



As a performer, he has appeared and/or recorded with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the BBC Concert Orchestra, the BBC Big Band, the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the London Bach Choir, and the Guy Barker Orchestra. Euan's personal recorded output is also tremendously varied and wide-ranging. Many of his projects, such as those with his New Focus ensembles and Earthtones trio, seamlessly blend elements of classical, jazz and world folk to create assertively modern chamber music. His solo

piano works are equally eclectic in nature and include 'Rzeszow - Solo Piano Nocturnes', and 'Mikrovisations', a series of improvised miniature études.

As a composer and arranger, his imaginative arrangements of much-loved Christmas carols and choral works such as 'Missa Brevis', 'Cloths of Heaven', and 'Songs of Longing and Exile' have sealed his reputation as an eminently versatile musician. In April 2022, the Earthtones Trio premiered a specially commissioned suite of nine original compositions by Stevenson entitled 'Sound Tracks'. The work celebrates Euan's home town of Falkirk in the form of a musical love letter and is described by the composer as "cinematic and autobiographical".

His forays into film composition include an avant-garde solo piano score for the award-winning feature film, 'Voyageuse', and an orchestral score for the enchanting children's animation 'Yoyo and The Little Auk', which was broadcast on BBC ALBA TV. Euan has been shortlisted for The Scottish Album of the Year Award, The Paul Hamlyn Award for Composition and, most recently, 'Best Instrumentalist' at the 2021 Scottish Jazz Awards. He also enjoyed credit for co-writing and arranging on Georgia Cécile's award-winning debut album 'Only The Lover Sings', which reached number 3 in the UK official Jazz Charts.

His work with Georgia Cécile as co-writer, musical director and piano accompanist has further consolidated his credentials as one of Scotland's most prolific and accomplished musicians. Four memorable performances supporting Gregory Porter at The Royal Albert Hall were followed by a sold-out debut at Ronnie Scott's. They also appeared together at SXSW Festival in Texas, Cheltenham Jazz Festival, and the Love Supreme Jazz Festival in Sussex.

Euan Stevenson is a part-time lecturer at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and a highly regarded teacher of next-generation jazz musicians nurtured in Scotland. His music is broadcast regularly across BBC Radio, Classic FM and Jazz FM, and is performed at festivals, clubs, theatres, and concert halls throughout the UK and abroad.

THE ORCHESTRA

The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra (SNJO) is considered by many to be one of Europe's foremost contemporary big bands.

Founder/Director Tommy Smith established the SNJO in 1995 as a not-for-profit organisation with a crystal-clear artistic vision and core values of versatility, discipline and expression. The SNJO is dedicated to promoting jazz as a pre-eminent art form through performances, original compositions, recordings, and educational outreach programmes. This commitment extends to the task of developing promising young jazz musicians through the ranks of The Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra.

The SNJO repertoire has included re-imaginings of works by the great, the good and the gigantic, including Weather Report, Herman, Rich, Carter, Strayhorn, Goodman, Kenton, Basie, Gillespie, Mingus, Jaco, Corea, Monk, Metheny, Shorter, Miles and Coltrane. They have also recorded vivid interpretations of Mozart, Prokofiev, Piazzolla, Gershwin and Ellington to rave reviews, alongside a remarkable re-reading of Miles Ahead, an ECM-tinted set on Celebration and Tommy Smith's suites, World of the Gods, Torah, and Beauty & the Beast. The SNJO has built a growing library of original compositions underpinned by a deep understanding and appreciation of improvisation.



PATRONS AND SUPPORTERS

To all our Friends and Supporters listed below and to those who have chosen to donate anonymously – your help has been invaluable and we thank you sincerely.

PATRONS

Gary Burton, Kurt Elling, Dame Cleo Laine, David Liebman, Joe Lovano

FRIENDS

Duke Ellington

Michael Connarty, Colin McIntyre, Ian Wilson

Dizzy Gillespie

Aileen Wilson, Carl Bow, Dr Ella Taylor Smith, Frederick Hay, Ian Smith, James Brown, John Neath, Margaret Doran, Mark McKergow, Mr & Mrs Andrew McLeod, Stephen Duffy, Lindsay Robertson, Ian and Susan Shaw, Ann Mclean, Tom Bowden, David and Judith Halkerston, Robert and Sylvia Fleming

Gil Evans

Alan Lawson, Albert Clowes, Andrew Mitchell, David Fenton, George Duncan, George Harrington, Ian Rankin, Jack Hunter, John Simpson, Jules Riley, Larry Foster, Patrick Hadfield, Peter Wilson, Gordon Drummond, Robin McClure, Ruth Allen, Simon Lewin, Frank Carey

Stan Kenton

Prof Simon Best, Dr Alec Mason

Count Basie

Charles Humphries, Colin Cheyne, James Rooney, Jane Griffiths, Martin Eckersall, Tony Smith

Ella Fitzgerald

Alan Barclay, Allan Murray, David & Maureen Lightbody, Dr. P Baylis & Dr. W Kay, Geoff and Ellice Cackett, Gerard Mehigan, Gordon Evans, Graham Henderson, Graham Jackson, Grant McLeman, Guy and Ms Sallyann Jubb, Henry Fullerton, Jane George, Jenne McClure (McIntyre), John Percival, Katherine Campbell, Martin Denman, Mike Rymaruk & Jan McLardy, Moira Pate, Mr R Steele, Mrs A Quigg, Nadja von Massow, Paul Sloan, Pauline Black, Prof J Eilbeck & Frederike van Wijck, Ray Thomas, Robin Bennie, Sara Mullock, Stuart Rae, Venetia Menzies

In Memory Of...

We are filled with great sorrow and heavy hearts upon learning of the sudden passing of lifelong Friend Robin McClure.

Our sincere and heartfelt condolences are with Robin's dear friends and family at this time.

We dedicate the 2022 - 23 Concert Season to his memory.

BECOME A FRIEND OF THE **SCOTTISH** NATIONAL **JAZZ** ORCHESTRA

Our Friends' scheme enables you to enjoy a closer relationship with the orchestra that will enhance your enjoyment of our concerts and maximize your jazz experience.

Support from individuals underpins much of our ability to bring exciting projects to our audiences. Every contribution plays an important role in the future of the

orchestra allowing them to produce new jazz works, original recordings, education projects and exhilarating concerts.

Further details of benefits can be found at snjo.co.uk/friends where you can register online. Alternatively complete the short form below and send it to our orchestra manager. **Thank you.**

title & full name

address

town

postcode

phone

email

I would like to remain anonymous. ☐

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can help the SNJO further by allowing us to treat this and all future donations, to the SNJO as Gift Aid Donations.

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer. ☐

STANDARD FRIEND

single: £60 per year / £5 per month

joint £85 per year / £7 per month

SUITE FRIEND

single: £120 per year / £10 per month

joint: £150 per year / £12.50 per month

MAJOR FRIEND

single: £300 per year / £25 per month

joint: £450 per year / £37.50 per month

Please send this form either with a cheque payable to SNJO Ltd to
The Orchestra Manager, SNJO Ltd, 43/12 Albert Street, Edinburgh, EH7 5LN

OR

register online [by clicking here.](http://snjo.co.uk/friends)

THE SNJO is a registered Charity recognised by the Inland Revenue. Charity No: SC028653

TOMMY SMITH YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA

It is 20 years since the inception of the TSYJO, and in that time, the orchestra has been a platform for some of the most exciting young jazz musicians in the UK.

Enjoy a fantastic afternoon as these young players showcase endless talent, improvisational skills, exuberance and verve in an extraordinary concert of outstanding music.

22 APR 2023

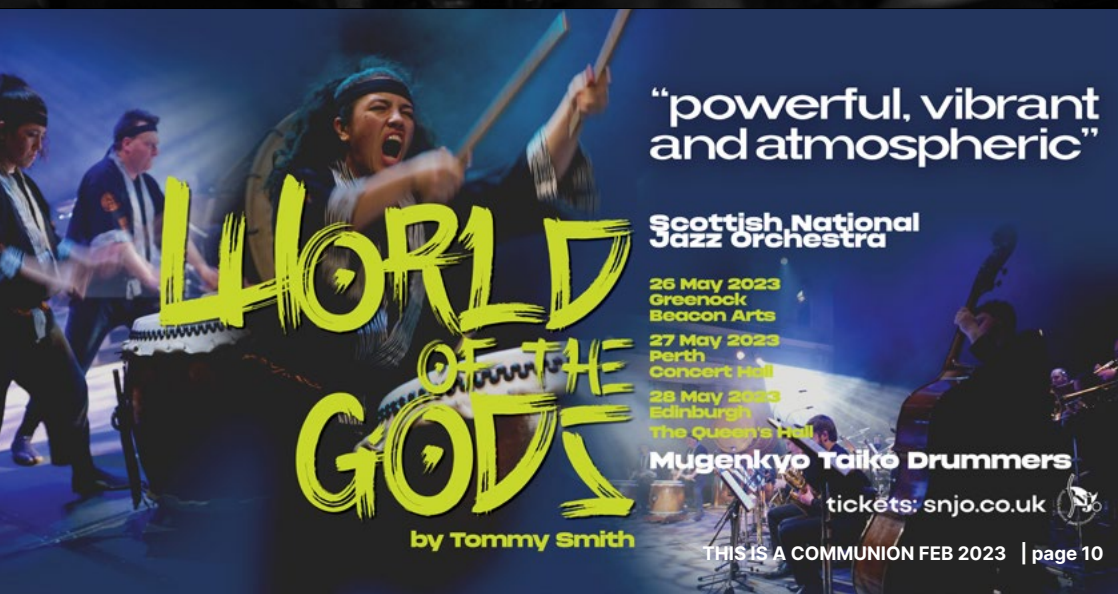
Venue to be annouced

23 APR 2023

St Andrews

Laidlaw Music Centre

Visit snjo.co.uk to book



**“powerful, vibrant
and atmospheric”**

**Scottish National
Jazz Orchestra**

26 May 2023
Greenock
Beacon Arts

27 May 2023
Perth
Concert Hall

28 May 2023
Edinburgh
The Queen's Hall

Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers

tickets: snjo.co.uk

**WORLD
OF THE
GODS**

by Tommy Smith

THIS IS A COMMUNION FEB 2023 | page 10