Be part of The Great Song of the North

Tuesday 28 August, 2018

Great Northumberland, a summer of free events across the county, is coming to an end – and what better way to better way to wrap up proceedings than with some of Berwick and Northumberland's most-loved songs?

This summer has seen hundreds of events take place across the country to celebrate everything great about Northumberland. On Saturday 1st September at 4pm, the grand finale will take place in Berwick-upon-Tweed, starting with a procession from Marygate to the Guildhall before a concert at The Maltings Theatre & Cinema where The Great Song of the North will be heard for the very first time.

The festival procession of 300 people will travel through the streets of Berwick, concluding with a specially-commissioned celebratory fanfare performed on the newly-restored ceremonial Fanfare Trumpets of the King's Own Scottish Borderers. The trumpets have been out of use for twenty-five years, so the fanfare is not to be missed!

And if you want to be part of the celebrations, community groups, families and individuals are all being invited to take part in the procession to show their support and love for the county. Register to be part of the procession and receive a complimentary Cream Tea at The Maltings, which follows the fanfare and procession, before the beginning of the concert, The Great Song of the North, at 5:30pm.

A musical ode to Northumberland, the concert will consist of a performance of the newly-commissioned song suite, *The Great Song of the North*, performed by the community choir and Music Co-OPERAtive Scotland (McOpera), formed of players from The Orchestra of Scottish Opera. The song suite has been commissioned by Northumberland County Council and has been composed by Dominique Le Gendre, and with vocals from local mezzo-soprano, Tamsin Davidson*, The Great Song of the North* will be a real treat for the ears.

Dominique Le Gendre has described her inspiration for the piece as being the landscape, people and the communities and towns which make-up Northumberland, "Northumberland affects me in a way that no other part of England does," said Le Gendre earlier in the year as she embarked upon the project. Having composed music extensively over the past 28 years for theatre, film, dance, radio-drama, television and art installations, this year Le Gendre has created The Great Song of the North specifically to be performed by community choirs and orchestras. The composition comprises strings, woodwind and brass and each element of the piece is inspired by different aspects of Northumberland, including the coast, the rural hinterland and the industrial heritage of the county. Plus, there a special section to be performed by a children's choir which will convey the spirit of Northumberland.

As well as *The Great Song of the North*, audience members will be treated to contemporary settings of much-loved Northumbrian songs, including Bonny at Morn, Whittingham Fair and Blow the Wind Southerly. The second half of the programme will celebrate the Northumbrian pipes and will feature the wonderful melodies of The Mayor of Berwick's official piper, Alice Robinson.

Peter Jackson, leader of Northumberland County Council, says:

"We want people to be part of this event by joining the festival procession through the town or coming along to the free concert at The Maltings. The event will bring together the sounds of Northumberland as well as showcasing for the first time The Song of the North, a specially commissioned suite of music inspired by our county.

Great Northumberland has celebrated the wealth of art, culture and heritage on offer in all corners of the county. It has not only brought together people who live here, but also visitors who have chosen to discover the sights and sounds of our outstanding county."

This event is free but requires a ticket – see here for more details.

Contact: boxoffice@maltingsberwick.co.uk and 01289 330 999

Part of the Great Exhibition of the North 'Inspired By' programme and designed specifically to get visitors to the region to explore the country's most northerly county, Great Northumberland offers a

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Crystallised

T. 0191 691 1370
E. hi@crystallised.co.uk
W. https://www.crystallised.co.uk

Additional Contact(s):
Jane Imrie | jane@crystallised.co.uk

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