

# ADAM HOLMES: HEIRS AND GRACES

Debut Album From Award-Winning Scottish Singer-Songwriter

**Adam Holmes**

Produced by **JOHN WOOD**

CD Launch @ Celtic Connections, Glasgow, 17 January 2014



**John Wood:** "It's seldom that an album I record is such a pleasure to work on as Adam's *Heirs and Graces*. One could well be surprised that this is the work of a 23-year-old making his first album, such is the assuredness of his performance and the timeless quality of the material."

One of the brightest rising stars on today's world-renowned Scottish folk scene, 23-year-old **Adam Holmes** is a singer and songwriter of rare and timeless potency, drawing on influences from either side of the Atlantic.

Holmes's eagerly-awaited debut album *Heirs and Graces* was produced by the legendary **John Wood**, whose signature balance of space, perspective, clarity and warmth - as heard on seminal recordings by **John Martyn, Nick Drake, Pink Floyd, Fairport Convention** and many more - supplies the perfect complement to Holmes's stripped-down yet richly sensuous sound. Digitally released in September 2013, *Heirs and Graces* reached **No. 12 in the iTunes chart**, and saw Holmes nominated as **Up and Coming Artist of the Year** in the **2013 Scots Trad Music Awards** (winners announced 7 Dec). He launches the CD version with a show at Glasgow's illustrious **Celtic Connections** festival in January, backed by his regular live band The Embers.

After starting out on fiddle, Edinburgh-born Holmes switched to guitar at 14, and began writing songs a year or so later. *Heirs and Graces*' gorgeously rueful **I Can't Be Right** was the first he ever completed. Leaving school at 15, he worked on building sites and as an outdoor activities instructor before deciding, on his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, to pursue music full-time. Having already been a finalist in the 2009 **Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year** competition, he also reached the finals of the following year's UK-wide **BBC Young Folk Award**. He was then recruited by young traditional firebrands **Rura**, who themselves won **Up and Coming Act of the Year** at the 2011 Scots Trad Music Awards - a status affirmed by their subsequent nomination for the **Radio 2 Folk Awards Horizon prize 2013**.

All the while, Holmes was crafting and burnishing the songs now featured on *Heirs and Graces*, at gigs ranging from tiny folk clubs to major festival stages, including **Cambridge Folk Festival** and the **Hebridean Celtic Festival**. His sound draws at least as heavily on Americana as on Scottish influences - though with lyrics and vocals very much shaped by his own accent.

Other concerns explored on *Heirs and Graces* include confronting mortality (the haunting, heart-stricken **Oh My God**), the bitterness of disillusionment (the intimately understated, starkly clear-eyed **Shadows**) and the rocky road to acceptance (modern-day spiritual **Aviemore**, featuring guest singer **Hannah Beaton**'s piquant harmony vocals). Among the album's rich crop of love-songs are its deliciously mellow, gladsome opener, **Monday Morning**, the incantatory, nakedly heartfelt **Common Ground**, adorned with dreamy swirls of **Alan Train**'s pedal steel, and a vividly-recalled paean to a fleeting but intense encounter, **Fire in the Sun**. Singer/guitarist **Kris Drever**, of **Lau**, is another notable guest,

Front and centre, though, is Holmes' uniquely distinctive, seductively compelling voice - both fervently tender and huskily careworn. Allied with the equally startling maturity of his songcraft, it makes *Heirs and Graces* an album which, while standing on the shoulders of giants, is unmistakably Holmes's own, quietly triumphant achievement.

**For more press information, interviews, hi res photos, CDs, press tickets etc, please call Morag Neil on 0771 288 0965 (email [scarybiscuits1@hotmail.com](mailto:scarybiscuits1@hotmail.com))**

## LISTINGS

5 Dec	Stereo, Glasgow	Scottish Trad Music Awards Warm-up gig
6 Dec	The Tunnels, Aberdeen	Scottish Trad Music Awards Warm-up gig
7 Dec	Aberdeen Music Hall	Scottish Trad Music Awards
17 Jan	Oran Mor, Glasgow	Heirs and Graces CD launch at Celtic Connections

**Web site** [www.adamholmesandtheembers.com](http://www.adamholmesandtheembers.com)    **Twitter** [www.twitter.com/AdamHolmesBand](http://www.twitter.com/AdamHolmesBand)

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