

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 20th 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)

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 Twitter www.twitter.com/AdamHolmesBand

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