

AG07: Agallamh le Crisdean Dòmhnallach: Ceòl

Interview with Christopher MacDonald: Music

Presenter: Sarah Cruickshank



SARAH:

Cuide rium a-nis tha Crisdean Dòmhnallach à Uibhist a Deas, a tha a-nis a' fuireach san Eilean Sgitheanach. Tha Crisdean comasach air iomadh ionnsramaid ciùil a chluiche, ach tha e a' dol a dh'innse dhuinn mun a' bhogsa-ciùil. Fàilte, a Chrisdein. Nise, inns dhuinn, cuin a thòisich d' ùidh ann an ceòl, agus dè gu sònraichte a bu toigh leat?

CRISDEAN:

Uill, bha ùidh agams' ann an ceòl aig aois gu math òg, mu naoi no deich, agus thòisich mi air a' phìob. B' àbhaist mo mhàthair a bhith a' cluich a' phìob, agus m' uncaill cuideachd, agus nuair a bhiodh sinn a' dol sìos a choimhead air ann an Inbhir Nis, bhiodh, mar a chanadh iad, "electric chanter" aige, so bha mise an còmhnaidh ga thogail suas 's an uairsin a' tòiseachadh ga chluich, (you know?) Bha esan a' teagasg mise na "scales", agus ... dìreach airson toiseach tòiseachaidh. Thòisich mi an uairsin ag ionnsachadh aig a' bhun-sgoil, còmhla ri Niall Stiùbhart, dìreach ann am bun-sgoil Shlèite. Agus an uairsin, bha thu a' faighinn na leabhraichean a bha sineach, agus bha e glè mhath ann a shineach, ach an uairsin, nuair a thòisich mi a' dol gu fèisean, b' fheudar dhut trì clasaichean a thaghadh. Cha b' urrainn dhomh dìreach dèanamh trì clasaichean de feadan, so rinn mi a' phìob, accordion agus an uairsin, ma dh'fhaodte, percussion. So, sin ... An uairsin, thòisich mi air a' bhogsa, agus sin agad e.

SARAH:

Nam bitheadh cuideigin airson am bogsa a chluich, no ionnsachadh mar a chluicheadh iad am bogsa, ciamar a tha thu a' moladh gun tòisicheadh iad?

SARAH:

With me now is Crisdean Dòmhnallach from South Uist, who now lives on the Isle of Skye. Crisdean is able to play many musical instruments, but he's going to tell us about the accordion. Welcome, Crisdean. Now, tell us, when did your interest in music begin, and what, specifically did you like?

CRISDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

Well, I was interested in music at a very young age, about nine or ten, and I started playing the pipes. My mother used to play the pipes, and my uncle too, and when we used to go to visit him in Inverness, he had what they call an electric chanter, so I always used to pick that up and then start to play it, you know? He taught me the scales and ... just to get me started. Then I began to learn at primary school, along with Niall Stewart at Sleat Primary School. And then, you got these books, and they were very good, but then, when started going to fèisean, you had to choose three classes. I couldn't just take three chanter classes, so I took piping, accordion and then, maybe, percussion. So that's ... That's when I started with the accordion and there you have it.

SARAH:

If someone wanted to play the accordion, or to learn how to play the accordion, how would you advise them to start?

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CRÌSDEAN:

Ma bha bogsa aca, bhiodh sin gu math "handy", ach mur nach robh, thalla gu bùth agus faigh fear, agus ma tha seòrsa de fios agad air ceòl mar-thà tha sin glè math, agus 's urrainn dhut ma dh'fhaodte port no dhà a chluich leat fhèin, ach mur nach urrainn dhut sin a dhèanamh, thalla 's faigh leasanan bho tidsear.

SARAH:

Dè cho cudromach 's a tha thu a' smaoinichadh a tha ceòl a leughadh airson ionnsachadh?

CRÌSDEAN:

Bidh tòrr daoine ag ràdh an dòigh as fhasa a bhith ag ionnsachadh puirt 's e ri bhith ag èisteachd ri ceòl traidiseanta, no ge bith dè an seòrsa ceòl a tha thu ag èisteachd ris. Mur nach urrainn dhut ceòl a leughadh, tòisich a leughadh agus bidh e fada nas fhasa anns an àm ri teachd. Agus airson toiseach tòiseachaidh dhòmhsa, thòisich mi a' leughadh agus - a' leughadh airson a' phìob - agus chuidich sineach airson a' bhogsa-chiùil. Ach, an uairsin, chan eil ach naoi tuill air a' phìob so feumaidh tu a dhol sìos an accordion, agus cha robh mi cho math air sineach agus an uairsin, dìreach thòisich mi a' leughadh airson a' ... ceòl a' bhogsa chiùil, 's chuidich sineach mi. Ach le bhith ag èisteachd ri ceòl, tha thu dìreach ag obrachadh a-mach dhut fhèin e cuideachd.

SARAH:

Dè na fuinn as fheàrr leat fhèin a bhith a' cluich, agus inns dhuinn carson. Tha tòrr fuinn agam a bhios mi ga chluich, ach tha fear ann air an ainm "Jig Runrig" a chaidh a sgrìobhadh dha Fergie MacDonald a chluiche air a' bhogsa putain. Tha e a' dol mar seo.

Math dha-rìribh!

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

If they had an accordion, that would be handy, but if you don't, go to the shop and buy one, and if you have any prior knowledge of music that's good, as it means you may be able to play a few tunes by yourself, but if you can't do that, go and get some lessons from a tutor.

SARAH:

How important do you think it is to be able to read music when learning?

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

Lots of people say that the easiest way to learn tunes is to listen to traditional music or whatever type of music you prefer to listen to. but ... If you can't read music, start to learn how to and it will make things easier in future. And for myself, when I first started, I learnt to read and - to read for piping - and that helped me with the accordion. But then, there are only nine holes on the chanter so you have to move down the accordion, and I wasn't too good at that and then, I just started to read for the ... accordion music, and that helped me. But by listening to music, you just work things out for yourself too.

SARAH:

Which tunes do you prefer to play, and tell us why. I play a lot of different tunes, but there's one called "Jig Runrig" that was written for Fergie MacDonald to be played on the button key accordion. It goes like this.

Fantastic!

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CRÌSDEAN:

Tha e glè mhath airson cèilidh, agus dìreach mar "Strip The Willow".

SARAH:

Rudeigin luath?

CRÌSDEAN:

Rudeigin luath. 'S toigh leams' a bhith cluich luath!

SARAH:

Nise, dè na duilgheadasan a tha thu a' smaoinichadh a bh' agad, no a bhiodh aig cuideigin nan togadh iad ionnsramaid mar a' bhogsa-ciùil?

CRÌSDEAN:

Cluich leis an dà làimh còmhla. Tha mise gu math dona le bhith dìreach a' cluich leis a' làimh dheas, ach cuideachd, tha a' làimh chli gu math, gu math, cudromach. 'S e mar "bass and chords" a chanas tu ris a-seo, 's bidh thu a' cleachdadh sin dìreach airson, (you know), mar a chanas Iain Camshron, "Ùm-tia, ùm-tia, " (you know?). Airson waltzes, tha e gu math trom air a' cheòl, dìreach airson ga chumail a' dol. So, 's ann a bhith a' cur a h-uile càil ri chèile, sin agad ... A h-uile càil ri chèile (you know), dìreach a' cluich' an aon rud aig an aon àm, agus ann an "time" cuideachd.

SARAH:

Agus mar sin, cò na cluicheadairean a thug buaidh ortsa, agus carson?

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

It's very good for a cèilidh, and for a Strip The Willow.

SARAH:

Something fast?

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

Something fast. I like to play fast!

SARAH:

Now, what problems do you think you had, or that someone would have if they picked up an instrument like the accordion?

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

Playing with both hands together. I have a bad habit of only playing with my right hand, but the left hand is also very, very important. This is known as the "bass and chords", and you use that for, you know, as Iain Cameron says, "Oom-cha, oom-cha, " you know? For waltzes, it's very heavy on the music, just to keep it going. So, it's putting everything together, that's when you have ... Everything together, you know, just playing the same thing at the same time, and in time too.

SARAH:

And so, which musicians influenced you and why?

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CRÌSDEAN:

An duine a thoirt (thug) buaidh ormsa as mòtha, 's e Fergie Dòmhnallach. Thòisich mise a bhith ag èisteachd ris a' cheòl aige nuair a bha mi gu math òg, ach cuideachd, còmhlan ciùil air an t-ainm "Eriskay Lilt". B' àbhaist mise a bhith a' dol a-null a dh'Uibhist nuair a bha mi òg agus bhithinn a' suidhe sa chidsin còmhla ri mo Phapa, agus chuirinn a' CD ... Uill, actually, 's e teip a bh' ann ann an sheo. A' cur sin ann, agus bhiodh sinn a' dèanamh "Canadian Barn Dance" am meadhan an ùrlair ann a shineach. So, sin ... Bha sineach cuideachd a' cuideachadh mi a bhith a' cluiche ceòl agus a h-uile sion a tha sin, ach cuideachd, Iain Camshron à Glenelg, bidh e a' cluich còmhla ri Cast Ewe Cèilidh Band. 'S e an neach-teagasg a bh' agam airson deagh ghreis, so ... Sin agad e.

SARAH:

Tapadh leatsa a' Chrisdein airson bruidhinn rinn.

CRÌSDEAN:

Tapadh leibhse.

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

The man who had the greatest influence on me was Fergie MacDonald. I started listening to his music when I was very young, and also a band that was called "Eriskay Lilt". I used to go across to Uist when I was young and I would sit in the kitchen with my Papa, and I'd put the CD ... Well, actually it was a tape then. I'd put it in, and we'd do a Canadian Barn Dance right there, in the middle of the floor. So that's ... That also helped me to play music and all that stuff, but also Iain Cameron from Glenelg, who plays with the Cast Ewe Cèilidh Band. He was my teacher for quite a while, so ... There you have it.

SARAH:

Thank you, Crisdean, for talking to us.

CRÌSDEAN (CHRISTOPHER):

Thank you.