**MARY ANN KENNEDY BIOGRAPHY JAN 2017**

**www.maryannkennedy.co.uk**

[Mary Ann Kennedy](http://www.watercolourmusic.co.uk/MAK/index.html) has spent her life surrounded by music – from earliest memories of her family rehearsing in the front room at nights, through a hothouse classical musical training - and a brief diversion running the BBC’s Gaelic news service - to her world today as musician, singer, broadcaster, writer, choral director, composer and producer.

A member of the ‘first family of Gaelic music’, the [Campbell](http://www.watercolourmusic.co.uk/The%20Campbells.html) dynasty of singers from Greepe in the Isle of Skye, she is never happier than when making music with other folk. It’s a rare occasion to see her step forward to take the lead role, despite the many awards that have followed her career. Hers is a path that collaborates, nurtures, chivvies and inspires, whether introducing audiences to new world music, producing albums by significant emerging artists, performing on stage or directing her beloved Inverness Gaelic Choir.

Born and brought up in the urban Gàidhealtachd of Glasgow in a richly multi-cultural part of the city, Gaelic was Mary Ann’s mother tongue and holidays and special occasions always took the family back home to Skye and to her father’s island of Tiree. With few Gaelic-speaking peers around them (no Gaelic-medium education then), she and her sister were brought up in an older world of close and extended family, and a widespread and benign network of Highland and island ‘uncles’ and ‘aunties’ in the city diaspora.

Mary Ann can count amongst her awards the [Mòd gold medal](http://acgmod.org/) ‘double’, twice Lorient international harp champion, Celtic Media Festival Radio Presenter of the Year, winner, with [Cliar](http://www.gaelicmusic.com/album.php?SKU=SKYECD14), of the ‘all-time’ best album at the [Scots Trad Music Awards](http://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/scotstradmusicawards/) and - with the Campbells - of Gaelic Book of the Year and the Arts & Culture prize at the first-ever National Gaelic Awards.

Following an inspirational year as musician-in-residence at the Gaelic college, [Sabhal Mòr Ostaig,](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/en/ealain-is-cultar/air-mhuinntireas/) she brought to fruition a unique transatlantic commission for the [PRSF New Music Biennial](http://www.prsformusicfoundation.com/Partnerships/Flagship-Programmes/New-Music-Biennial) at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, and is currently working on a follow up to her very personal solo album “An Dan” ; Glaschu -songs of the Glasgow Urban Gael.

Recent commissions and compositions also include a soundtrack of original music for BBC documentary, ‘[Càirdean Cogaidh’](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04nvf6c); the test piece for the premier choral competition at the National Mòd 2015; ‘[Aon Teanga’](http://www.watercolourmusic.co.uk/Aon%20Teanga.html), a Beyond Borders commission for PRSF celebrating the links between the three Gaelic nations; and an ongoing song writing partnership with poet, Aonghas MacNeacail.

Mary Ann continues to run the legendary Watercolour Music studios in Lochaber with her producer-songwriter husband Nick Turner, the base for most of the successful recordings in which she’s been involved – with Cliar, The Campbells of Greepe, Na Seòid and producing albums by the likes of Rona Wilkie, James Graham, Alasdair MacIlleBhàin and Gillebrìde MacMillan.

When life is quiet on the performance front… Mary Ann still finds time to broadcast her personal blend of world and roots on [BBC Radio 3](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b009vs65) on Friday nights, as well as regular TV anchoring roles for some of Scotland’s premier musical events including the National Mòd and the Scots Trad Music Awards.