

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita announce Autumn tour 2018

"The Osprey migrates between West Africa and Wales - harpists Catrin Finch and Seckou Keita join its journey on their exultant, mesmeric second album, SOAR."

4* Neil Spencer, THE OBSERVER

Award winning duo Welsh harpist Catrin Finch and Senegalese kora player Seckou Keita take to the road again this autumn to give audiences the live experience of their remarkable new album SOAR which released in April to huge critical acclaim. Their live performances of the album in spring this year garnered 5* reviews from both the Guardian and London Evening Standard and prompted Songlines Magazine's Tim Cumming to describe them as 'the most popular world music act of the decade'. SOAR, their first release since their debut album *Clychau Dibon* in 2013, entered the UK Official Independent Album Charts at #16 on the first week of its release and subsequently spent over three months at the top of the Amazon World Music charts, hitting number one in the Trans Global World Music Charts in June 2018.

The tour, which starts at Manchester Folk Festival with an appearance at HOME on 20th October, will visit 14 venues in England and Wales, as well as undertaking two French dates in Paris and Morlaix, will see the duo make their African debut when they play the new LXR Festival in Marrakech, Morocco on 2nd November.

Catrin and Seckou have also been selected to showcase at the English Folk Expo, the industry event which runs alongside the Manchester Folk Festival, which this year features Wales as their partner nation. Catrin, who has just been given the all clear following treatment for breast cancer diagnosed earlier this year, says *"I can't wait to be back out on the road touring and performing with Seckou. We're absolutely delighted to have been selected to showcase at this auspicious music industry event in one of Manchester's most iconic industrial heritage sites, the Great Northern Warehouse. The English Folk Expo is one of the most highly regarded and influential platforms for exporting music to the world and we're in great company with our fellow showcasing artists from Wales – 9Bach, Gwyneth Glyn and ALAW"*.

The duo will then continue on to play dates at Festival Ville des Musiques du Monde, Paris; La Roudour, Morlaix, Aberystwyth Arts Centre; St George's Bristol; Pontardawe Arts Centre;

Metronome Nottingham, Theatr Brycheiniog, Brecon; Galeri Caernarfon; Howard Assembly Room, Leeds; Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room; Apex, Bury St Edmunds; St Paul's, Worthing (presented by African Night Fever); St Mary's, Sandwich (presented by Music For Change), Cecil Sharp House, London and Freshwater Memorial Hall, Isle of Wight.

The new album SOAR takes wing on the flight of the osprey, the magnificent raptor persecuted to extinction in Wales during the 17th century, which has recently returned home after a 400-year absence. The osprey makes its annual 3000-mile migration from the estuaries of West Wales, where Catrin grew up, to Seckou's homeland in Senegal, West Africa - an amazing natural connection which hit a resonance with the two artists. Themes of migration - natural, enforced and economic - run throughout SOAR, drawing deep on the sometimes darker history of these two great musical nations. *"Like the iconic raptor, it swoops and soars to capture the bird's very essence,"* says Dave Haslam, in his 5* review for RnR Magazine, *"SOAR is as near to perfection as it is possible"*.

Their music has been described by Elbow's Guy Garvey as "absolutely hypnotic", whilst revered British actor Toby Jones (Atomic Blonde, The Detectorists, Jurassic Park: Fallen Kingdom) says of Catrin and Seckou *"incredible... you're witnessing a state of rapture, it's entrancing"*. This is music with a huge emotional resonance and a remarkable synergy, a seemingly unlikely marriage between the cultures and of Wales and Senegal which has resulted in the most serendipitous of unions. Welsh traditional melodies mix effortlessly with Mandinka staples, with hypnotic improvisations from both in an exhilarating and playful set which leaps over cultural barriers, roaming freely in borderless musical territory.

The duo were recently invited to pen the theme tune for BBC Radio 4's podcast series *The Ratline*, written by QC Philippe Sands and starring Stephen Fry and Laura Linney. The podcast, which released last month, is currently available to download on BBC iplayer.

Catrin and Seckou will be supported on selected dates by singer-songwriter Gwyneth Glyn and her band members Rowan Rheingans, Dylan Fowler and Gillian Stevens. See individual venue websites for tickets and on-sale dates, or visit www.catrinfinchandseckoukeita.com for details.

The tour is produced by Theatr Mwldan mwldan.co.uk, and SOAR released on the 27th April on bendigedig, a label partnership between ARC Music Productions International Ltd and Theatr Mwldan – see bendigedig.org for further information.

ENDS/

Notes for editors:

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bendigedig is a label partnership between ARC Music Productions International Ltd and Theatr Mwldan – see www.bendigedig.org for further details.

The tour is produced by Theatr Mwldan, Cardigan, www.mwldan.co.uk

TOUR DATES OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2018

OCTOBER

Oct 20 [Manchester Folk Festival | venue: Home, MANCHESTER](#)

Oct 30 [Festival Ville des Musiques du Monde, PARIS \(75\)](#)

Oct 31 [Espace Roudour, St Martin Des Champs, MORLAIX \(29\)](#)

NOVEMBER

Nov 2 [LXR Festival, Marrakesh, MOROCCO](#)

Nov 14 [Aberystwyth Arts Centre, ABERYSTWYTH](#)

Nov 15 [St George's Bristol, BRISTOL](#)

with support / gyda chefnogaeth gan Gwyneth Glyn + Band

Nov 16 [Pontardawe Arts Centre, PONTARDAWE](#)

with support from Gwyneth Glyn + Band

Nov 17/18 [Metronome, NOTTINGHAM](#)

Nov 22 [Theatr Brycheiniog, BRECON](#)

Nov 23 [Galeri, CAERNARFON](#)

with support from / gyda chefnogaeth gan Gwyneth Glyn + Band

Nov 24 [Howard Assembly Room, LEEDS](#)

Nov 25 [Music Rooms, Liverpool Philharmonic, LIVERPOOL](#)

with support from / gyda chefnogaeth gan Gwyneth Glyn + Band

Nov 28 [Apex, BURY SAINT EDMUNDS](#)

Nov 29 [St Paul's, WORTHING](#)

Nov 30 [St Mary's Arts Centre, SANDWICH](#)

DECEMBER

Dec 01 [Cecil Sharp House, LONDON](#)

with support from / gyda chefnogaeth gan Gwyneth Glyn +

Band

Dec 02 [Memorial Hall, Freshwater, IOW](#)

PRESS QUOTES:

"They are now one of the most popular world music acts of this decade."

Tim Cumming, SONGLINES

"an emotional demonstration of how two virtuoso musicians triumphantly bring different cultures together"

5* Robin Denselow, THE GUARDIAN (Live review, Union Chapel, 12 May 2018)

"It's rare that you hear something so beautifully conceived and performed"

5* Simon Broughton, LONDON EVENING STANDARD (Live review, Union Chapel, 12 May 2018)

"...it's bitchin" IGGY POP, IGGY CONFIDENTIAL, BBC 6 MUSIC

"You could listen to this 1,000 times and still find something new" 4* DAVID HUTCHEON, MOJO

"Hypnotic and ethereal, SOAR is a unique marriage of cultures"

4* Neil Spencer, THE OBSERVER

"... SOAR is about as near to perfection as is possible."

5*, Dave Haslam, RNR MAGAZINE

YouTube links to tracks from SOAR:

Clarach:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urnm8Aync5s>

Téranga-Bah:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4OSAQeVBw0>

Bach To Baïssó:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5_VfQIMR7w

Further information and clips here: <http://catrinfinchandseckoukeita.com/>