

Jim Sutherland

*"Conjurer of the ear"* John Berger

*"A musician renowned for his versatility and individualistic approach to thinking about and creating music."* Michael Tumelty: Music Critic, The Herald

### Biography and selected quotes

Jim Sutherland is composer, music producer and Artistic director who works across genres and cultures. His company La Banda creates and manages large scale music projects such as **Struileag** and **La Banda Europa**. Sutherland's career has ranged across a vast spectrum of musical genres, as well as a string of major commissions for film, TV and theatre.

Jim's influential folk tune compositions have been recorded on more than one hundred CDs by artists all over the world. He has had a powerful influence on the Scottish folk music scene from his early days with the **Easy Club** in the 80's right through to the present day. His production work with the likes of **Eliza Carthy's Wayward band**, **Shooglenifty**, **Salsa Celtica** and **Aberfeldy** is legendary.

### Recent projects:

- **We Are An Ocean** - Composed three new commissions for La Banda Europa which performed at Celtic Connections festival January 2017
- **The Big Machine** – production of Eliza Carthy album (entered UK album charts at Number 26 in February 2017)
- **Always a Bridesmaid** Commissioned by St Cecilia's and Fruitmarket Gallery Edinburgh to write brass quartet in May 2017
- 'Pet Problem Solvers' Composed 20 songs for CBBC along with long term collaborator Annie Griffin
- **Hamish** – score for feature doc, dir Robbie Fraser for Bees knees (cinema release)
- **And Now** – score for contemporary dance theatre piece, dir Frank McConnell for Plan B (currently touring)
- **Together** – score for 6 program BBC series by Jonny Sweet dir Annie Griffin (screened on BBC3 Dec 2015)
- **The Swallower** – Score commissioned by HIE (performed November 2015 see below for details)
- **Whisky Galore** – Played all percussion on Patrick Doyle's score (Closing film EIFF 2016)

### Selected Highlights include:

- The Swallower 2015 – This performance piece was commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise for the launch of Nomadic boulders by, celebrated sculptors, Dalziel and Scullion. Jim composed a 15 minute score which underscored a performance by a local cast of 40 people and included a specially commissioned epic poem by Georg Gunn.

*" We have never done a project that had quite such a wonderful benediction bestowed upon it, it was magical! I, of course, could hardly see it for tears in my eyes and Matthew (who is an emotional man at the best of times) said "it was like something that would happen in another country..." Thanks so much for creating such a special end to what for us has been a gruelling at times but very important project to us. "* Louise Scullion

- **Struileag** - 2013 to 2015 Struleag/Shore to Shore is the umbrella for projects involving technology, community outreach, spoken word and music, with participants and events occurring across the Gaelic Diaspora. The project examined the relevance of indigenous language to the concept of identity and belonging. The project culminated in an acclaimed large scale performance *Children of the Smoke* presented in Gaelic during the Commonwealth Games 2014. The vital legacy of the project includes A CD of the show, a TV arts documentary broadcast on Christmas eve 2014 on BBC ALBA and a book of poetry published by Birlinn books March 2015.

*"A watershed moment in Gaelic music"* Margaret Mary Murray:  
head of BBC ALBA

*"(Children of the Smoke) has a fresh, utterly engaging vitality that is open to all. It should go far."* Mary Brennan (four stars  
The Herald)

nominated for show of the year of the Smoke at the Scots Trad Awards.

- 'An Turas/The Voyage' – 2013 Commissioned by the Scottish Government as a gift from Scotland's people to the people of Derry UK Capital of Culture 2013, this piece was presented by Scottish Culture Secretary Fiona Hislop to the Mayor of the City and the Irish President. The music also underscored the opening ceremony of the 'Return of Colmcille', directed by Frank Cottrell Boyce and attended by 30,000 people.

*"Jim Sutherland must surely now be approaching national treasure status."*

Murray Buchanan: media lawyer, producer

- European Capital of Culture 2013 - Pillars of Hercules - Commissioned Lieux publics compose music for an orchestra of musicians, from all round the Mediterranean, to celebrate Marseille, France as European Capital of Culture 2013.

*"Moving beyond the folk traditions, Jim Sutherland emancipates his musical resources from the specific of time and place to embrace a musical heritage of European dimension. In an age when the quest for modernity can be identified with a form of servitude, drawing on resources from the past opens fresh perspectives."* Mouvement (French Art Magazine)

- Film highlights include; production of two songs for Pixar's '**Brave** 2012' and one song for the score of Lasse Hallström's 'Salmon Fishing in the Yemen' 2012, additional music for 'What we did on our Holidays' 2014 Origin pictures. He has, composed scores for more than 80 film and TV productions including the multi award winning feature film FESTIVAL (Best film at the British Comedy awards) and the acclaimed Gaelic film Seachd premiered at Edinburgh film festival 2007.

*"Jim is a brilliantly versatile, capable composer who brings to each project artistic integrity, creativity, musical excellence and ambition. Throughout my working relationship with Jim, I have noted an exceptional ability to follow and enhance an*

*emotional narrative. I can say very honestly that the scores for each film have been of outstanding quality. His ability to intuitively contextualize his compositions and productions makes Jim a very unique and exciting talent. He works across genres with ease and clarity."*

Christopher Young: Film producer

*"What can I say, the man is a genius and like all true geniuses, he is incredibly modest. I would love to be as good a writer and director as Jim is a composer."* Annie Griffin:  
film director

*"The music is sounding delicious in the mix. Thank you for your patience, understanding and skill - not to mention the speedy turnaround."*

Lucy Armitage: TV Producer

- In 2009 Jim created the **True North Orchestra** to perform his specially commissioned score for Aisling's Children as part of the Gathering 2009. The show was enjoyed by an audience of 9000 people on the Esplanade of Edinburgh Castle, Conducted by Greg Lawson this became the foundations for the GRIT ORCHESTRA

*"The orchestral alchemist" - Anna Burnside: The Times*

*"Working with Jim Sutherland, who I commissioned to write the original score for Aisling's Children: Tales of the Homecoming, the centrepiece theatrical event at The Gathering 2009, was one of the most satisfying professional experiences of my career."* Jenny Gilmore: Producer, Red Sky at Night Ltd

*"Sutherland has achieved his aim of creating orchestral music with the finesse of the classical tradition and the accent of Scottish folk music – and in the True North Orchestra he has the band to play it convincingly. The writing was by turns luminous, understatedly beefy and superbly delicate, as on the emotional but never schmaltzy."*

Rob Adams - The Herald

- Creative Scotland award winning **La Banda Europa**. Over the winter of 2006/7 Jim researched and put together La Banda Europa an extraordinary orchestra of 35 virtuoso musicians all of whom play instruments indigenous to their own European country of origin. La Banda Europa continues to put on site specific and concert performances.

*"Redefining crossover music"- Michael Tumelty: The Herald*

*"The audience, bemused, entranced, astonished, parted to allow a procession of 20 side drummers and two horsemen to escort a locally recruited choir - all similarly uniformed, bewigged and each armed with a red umbrella - on to the*

*stage, where they were flanked by two diminutive members of the Vienna Boys' Choir. Imagine some eccentric Regency tableaux, with a distinct whiff of Alice in Wonderland and Sgt Pepper.*" Jim Gilchrist: The Scotsman

*"When people see that their own culture is respected they will learn to respect other cultures as well."* Slobodan Trkulja  
– Serbia on La Banda Europa

- He has performed and recorded with such luminaries as The Chieftains, Plant and Page (Led Zeppelin), The Buhndu Boys, Billy Bragg, Emmylou Harris, Maddy Prior and June Tabor and the Shotts and Dyke head pipe band!
- As a founder member of pop trio **The Lanterns**, Jim was signed to Sony as a songwriter in 1997, with the group's debut single Highrise Town, from their wisely-praised album, Illuminate Yer Heid, earning a UK Top 40 place and a number two in the UK dance charts for Winter in my heart.

*"Impressive ideas powerhouse"* Dazed and Confused magazine

*"Music doesn't get more exciting than this."* The Boston Globe

*"Oh-so-irresistible"* Billboard

*"luminously beautiful music"* Jonathan Coe - The Observer

*"A wonderful musical mind at work"* – Hamish Henderson: *Cencrastus* magazine

*"You can walk down Princes Street in Edinburgh and hear the buskers playing Jim Sutherland's tunes or walk into Irish pubs around the world from San Francisco to Sydney and hear them played as part of the jam session. His Easy Club Reel, has passed into folk legend."* Simon Thoumire:  
Footstompin

*"The effect this album had on the folk world and wider music circles was earth-shattering on more than one level."* Rob Adams: The Herald on Jim's production of Shooglenifty's 'Venus in Tweeds'

Composer of the year 2014 the Scots Trad Awards

[www.jimsutherland.uk.com](http://www.jimsutherland.uk.com)