

***Jenny McFie, Northings Magazine Online – Inverness, Scotland***

*“IT’S a family affair”, sang Sly & the Family Stone, in one song the Family Campbell have not – yet – translated into Gaelic.*

*THIS eminent dynasty of Mod gold medallist singers and pipers are a living treasury of songs big and small sung in the tiny, remote township of Greepe in NW Skye, handed down with loving care for hundreds of years. In typically speedy Gaelic fashion, this show has taken a decade and a half to get going but it’s been worth the wait*

*Kenna Campbell and her brother Seumus, their sister Ann’s daughter, Maggie Macdonald, and Kenna’s daughters Mary Ann and Wilma Kennedy took to the stage in silence and without introduction launched straight into their first song, soon to be joined on ‘Cnoc nan Craobh’ by Lorne Macdougall’s hauntingly lovely flute. There was plenty of puirt a beul, underpinned by Seumus’ warm tenor, and enlivened by the extraordinary stepdancing of **Nic Gareiss**, who was first encountered by Mary Ann Kennedy at one of Alasdair Fraser’s legendary fiddle camps.*

*The Valley of the Moon would have been the right sort of place to encounter Gareiss **who could easily pass for part-elf**, clicking his heels lightly together in mid-leap and seeming to **be only very lightly tethered by gravity**. Other delights included the beautifully restrained playing of MacDougall, guitarist Finlay Wells and bassist James Lindsay, and the very effective minimalist arrangements, a testament to the sense of the adage ‘less is more’. **With a lily as good as these voices, no gilding is necessary.***

*One of the highlights of the evening was a set of the little lullabies their grandmother sang as she went about her daily chores, sung with such depth of feeling in those glorious voices that it was not only the performers who felt that, as Mary Ann Kennedy said later in the show, “those folks are on stage with us when we sing their songs”*

*Equally unforgettable were the first half closer, which leaped across the Atlantic for a stunning Gaelic treatment of the spiritual ‘Down to the River to Pray’; the heartrending version of the theme of Patrick Mor Macrimmon’s pibroch ‘Lament for the Children’, **and the moment when a 1950 recording of Ann Campbell (who took a bow from the stalls) merged with her daughter Maggie’s live version of the same song. Tradition is alive and well and on stage in Inverness.***