



GRIEG SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND

GRIEGFORENINGEN I SKOTTLAND

HONORARY PRESIDENT – JOHANNE GRIEG KIPPENBROECK

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***Monumentally Grieg!* documentary film plus online 3D model celebrates the story of an iconic Scottish gravestone's rescue**

The Grieg Society of Scotland set out to rescue the gravestone of Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg's Scottish ancestors, before its historic inscription was lost. The stone, which is over 200 years old, has become a symbol of Scottish-Norwegian friendship and cultural exchange. It lies in Rathen Old Kirkyard, near Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire. The 10-minute film *Monumentally Grieg!* (which can be viewed on YouTube or via the Society's website) illustrates the historical significance of the stone, and captures the process of its conservation in the summer of 2018.

The stone commemorates Edvard Grieg's great great grandparents, John Greig and his spouse Ann Milne, two of whose sons, Alexander (the composer's great grandfather) and James emigrated to Norway. The conservation, a Scottish initiative, was given special permission by Bergen businessman and philanthropist Per Grieg sr, representative of the Norwegian Grieg family. Work, commissioned by the Grieg Society of Scotland, and carried out by dynamic young conservation team Spectrum Heritage, received support from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The film is complemented by an online interactive *Monumentally Grieg!* 3D model (which can be viewed on 3D model platform Sketchfab, or via the Society's website).

The conservation of the gravestone and its interpretation using contemporary digital imaging techniques will benefit heritage tourism, education, and bring together communities of different interest. Visitors will be attracted through globally accessible information. By linking children's fascination with computer games to learning, children will discover historical details and gain an introduction to the music of Grieg. Communities with different special interests (archaeologists, musicians, historians, folk with a love of genealogy) will find a shared focus and interaction. Finally, the work provides an accessible and enjoyable resource for everyone to understand and value the North Sea network of family and cultural ties which still, today, links Scotland with her Scandinavian neighbours.

Advancing understanding of the lives, artistic legacies and Scottish connections of composer Edvard Grieg and his wife, singer Nina Grieg. Our mission is to inform and inspire.

The Society will host a weekend of community workshops (on digital imaging techniques for local heritage) led by Spectrum Heritage, at Rathen, in June.

Dr Sally Garden (Honorary Director, Grieg Society of Scotland) said: “It’s thanks to our fantastic, and ongoing North Sea friendships that this conservation project was possible in the first place, and being able to let Edvard Grieg, in his own music, tell the story of the stone’s rescue in the film and 3D model, refreshes those living Scottish-Norwegian ties for a whole new generation.”

Councillor Charles Buchan (Aberdeenshire Council) said: “The Grieg Society of Scotland, and its director, Dr Sally Garden, has done so much to bring back into the public awareness the composer Edvard Grieg, and his connections with the village of Rathen, and surrounding farms. In particular, they have to be commended for having spent immense efforts on conservation work in the old Rathen Kirkyard, including the restoration of the family grave, which will be a huge addition to the heritage tourism of Rathen and the North-East.”

Johanne Grieg Kippenbroeck (Honorary President, Grieg Society of Scotland) and member of the Norwegian Grieg family said: “The Griegs in Norway are very proud of Edvard Grieg, of course, but we are also proud of our Scottish ancestry. The job that has been done to literally rescue the gravestone of John Greig and Ann Milne, our and Edvard Grieg’s ancestors in Scotland, is marvellous. Another year and it would probably have been too late. The Grieg Society of Scotland does a wonderful job both for Grieg – and also for Bergen and Norway, actually! I am humbly proud of having been asked to be the Honorary President of this Society!”

Clara Molina Sanchez (Spectrum Heritage) said: “New imaging techniques like photogrammetry and RTI (Reflectance Transformation Imaging) help us enhance details of the surface of cultural heritage objects which we would not be able to see with the naked eye. These tools help conservators record the state of objects, and to engage with different audiences, as in the case of this gravestone, from Scotland, Norway, and all across the globe. We are very much looking forward to passing this knowledge on to the community at Rathen, especially to the younger generation, during our upcoming training session (hosted by the Grieg Society of Scotland), that will take place there in June.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

Viewing the *Monumentally Grieg!* film – the film can be viewed on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/nLqQxOTqSzg>) and via the Grieg Society of Scotland website www.griegsocietyofscotland.org

Viewing the *Monumentally Grieg!* 3D model – the 3D model can be viewed on Sketchfab (<https://skfb.ly/6lyL8>) and via the Grieg Society of Scotland website www.griegsocietyofscotland.org

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About the Grieg Society of Scotland - Founded in 2017, the Society advances understanding of the lives, artistic legacies and Scottish connections of composer Edvard Grieg and his wife, singer, Nina Grieg. More at <https://griegsocietyscotland.org/about> and Twitter @GriegScotland #MonumentallyGrieg.

About the Heritage Lottery Fund - Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. More at www.heritagefund.org.uk and Twitter #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.

About Spectrum Heritage – Edinburgh-based team of heritage specialists dedicated to the conservation and documentation of cultural heritage using innovative technologies and traditional skills www.spectrumheritage.com

About Sketchfab – Sketchfab is a 3D models platform enabling viewers to move freely around or inside 3D scenes using mouse, touchpad manipulation, or in virtual reality www.sketchfab.com

For further information, images, interviews

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