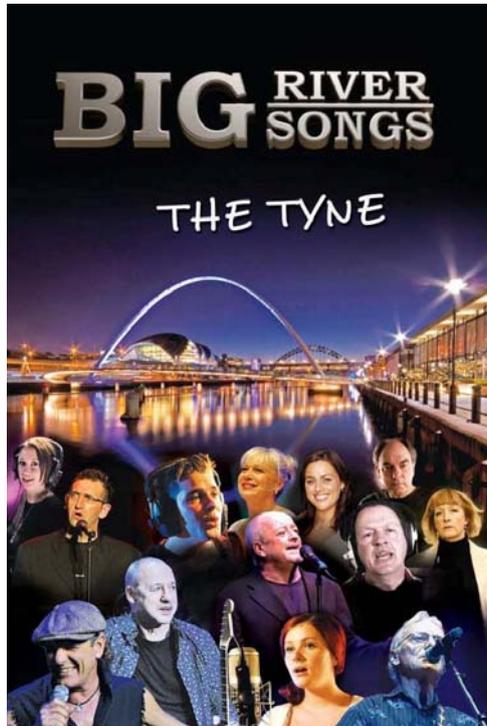




PRESS RELEASE



MWMDVD78 [5021541107893] UK PPD £10.00

The North-East of England has produced some wonderful music and there is nothing that the people of the region appreciate more than their own 'home grown' talent. **Big River Big Songs** features music inspired by the River Tyne and the people who live along its banks, from the hills to the sea.

Fog on The Tyne, Water of Tyne, Big River, Keep Your Feet Still, Geordie Hinnie, Blaydon Races and Local Hero are some of the thirty songs performed by **Sting, Jimmy Nail, Joe McElderry, Mark Knopfler, Brian Johnson, Sir Thomas Allen, Claire Rutter, Lindisfarne, Tim Healy, Kevin Whately, Alun Armstrong, Denise Welch, Jill Halfpenny, Charlie Hardwick, Graeme Danby, Chelsea Halfpenny, Billy Mitchell** and many more. The songs are presented in styles ranging from classical to folk and music hall to rock. **Eric Robson** and **Charlie Hardwick** supply the background to the songs and songwriters and the stories behind the songs are illustrated with breathtaking aerial film and fascinating archive photography. These unique performances create something very special, the biggest collection of Tyneside songs ever released on DVD.

The team behind **Big River Big Songs** are award winning director **Geoff Wonfor** and producer **Ray Laidlaw**. 75% of the profits from this DVD will benefit North-East charities including the **Northumbria Anthology, The Bobby Robson Foundation** and **The Sunday For Sammy Trust**.



Product Information

Take the top Tyneside songs and the cream of North East talent, put them together in a variety of regional locations and then link the unforgettable performances with background to the songs and songwriters plus spectacular aerial footage. Big River Big Songs is the ultimate DVD collection of Tyneside singers, songs and songwriters.

75% of the profits from this DVD will go to the Charities: The Northumbria Anthology, Sunday for Sammy Trust, the Sir Bobby Robson Trust and the Rainforest Foundation

The DVD will be the subject of a heavy rotational advertising campaign on the ITV Tyne/Tees network from 6th-16th March.

'Up in the North East we're very proud of our musical heritage so I'm absolutely sure that this will be a DVD you'll play again and again.' Kevin Whately

Presented by Charlie Hardwick and Eric Robson, this DVD is a journey of discovery of the Tyne from the source to the sea told in the words of some of the regions best loved songs that capture the remarkable history of this 'Big River'.

This Big River DVD contains a rich and varied collection from the early 'power' ballads of the 15th Century which tell us the legendary tales of that turbulent period to, by contrast the lyrical rural songs that describe the lifestyle and sentiments of the country folk of the North and South Tyne throughout the 17th and 18th Century. The journey takes us through songs about the industrial heartlands of Newcastle and Gateshead, with 19th Century favourites penned by the music hall stars of the day including George Ridley and Joe Wilson.

The great tradition of ballads and story telling is continued through the 20th Century with songs by writers such as Alan Hull, Johnny Handle and Mark Knopfler and completing the journey we move out to the coast between North and South Shields, with 21st Century star Joe McElderry singing Jimmy Nail's powerful ballad and the DVD title track 'Big River'.

Big River, Big Songs has been issued by the Northumbria Anthology, a 'Not for Profit' company which is building up a continuously expanding collection of songs and poems from the North East of England. As well as releasing a number of artist led albums, a 20 CD boxed set featuring almost 300 songs spanning over 300 years was issued in 2001 - the most comprehensive collection of North East songs ever recorded. For more information on this project please visit www.northumbriaathology.com

The Production Team

Geoff Wonfor began his career in Britain as a cameraman and film editor, working for ITV and the BBC. In 1974 he became a freelance director working on documentaries, entertainment and music specials. During the mid-seventies he made short films with England's international soccer star Malcolm McDonald and world heavyweight boxing champion, Muhammad Ali.

In 1981 he was appointed Senior Director for a weekly rock show for Channel Four, which launched in 1982. 'The Tube' was a 90 minute 'live' show, with featured specials on location and filmed inserts. It ran for five years and consolidated Geoff's reputation for inventing new stylistic approaches. His output ranges from classical concerts through the great stars of popular music to the cutting edge of new and experimental bands.



Having worked with Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr individually, they chose Geoff to put together the acclaimed 'Beatles Anthology' for video and network television in the early '90s. He has also worked with Tina Turner, Stevie Wonder, Prince, Oasis, George Michael, Mick Jagger, Fats Domino, Sting, Dire Straits and Elton John, to name but a few. Geoff's other credits include: 'Stella' a profile of fashion designer Stella McCartney; 'Gorilla Gorilla,' an account of a project which introduces gorillas bred in captivity in the UK back into the wild; Jools Holland and Friends, a concert held at London's Royal Albert Hall and Band Aid 20, a film to mark the 20th anniversary of the Band Aid project.

Ray Laidlaw has been actively involved in music for many years achieving major international acclaim as the drummer with rock group Lindisfarne in the 1970's, taking responsibility for the group's visual output and establishing a strong relationship with TV director, Geoff Wonfor. In the 1980's Ray became the bands manager – as well as continuing as a band member. In the 1990's he opened his own recording studio and clients included Chas Chandler, Jimmy Nail and countless others. He has worked regularly over the years with Geoff Wonfor on visual projects as well as producing numerous live events across the North East.

Tracklisting

Songs performed:

Water of Tyne performed by Sting and Jimmy Nail
Fog on the Tyne performed by Lindisfarne
Hughie the Graeme performed by Judy Dinning
Chevy Chase performed by Johnny Handle
Still I Love Him performed by Chelsea Halfpenny
Doon the Wagon Way performed by Claire Rutter with the English Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Haslam
Why Aye Man performed by Billy Mitchell
Eastern Allen Runs performed by Terry Conway
The Hexhamshire Lass performed by Sir Thomas Allen with Northumbria Concert Orchestra conducted by David Haslam and Graeme Danby with the Brown Ale Brass Band
The Shoe Makker performed by Charlie Hardwick and Chelsea Halfpenny
Derwentwater performed by Judy Dinning
Blaydon Races performed by Tim Healy, Jimmy Nail and Kevin Whately
Keep Your Feet Still Geordie Hinny performed by Sir Thomas Allen, Graeme Danby and Claire Rutter with the English Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Haslam
Mally Didn't Come performed by Pete Scott
Gallowgate Lad performed by Judy Dinning

Ne Work performed by Pete Scott and Charlie Hardwick
The Row upon the Stairs performed by Alun Armstrong and Tim Healy
Sandgate Dandling Song performed by Charlie Hardwick and Lucy Hoile
The Pitman and the Blackin' performed by Billy Mitchell
Guard Yer Man Weel performed by Bob Fox with the English Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Haslam
Wor Geordie's Lost His Liggie performed by Brian Johnson and Billy Mitchell
Hev Ye Seen Wor Jimmy performed by Denise Welch with Northern Sinfonia conducted by David Haslam
The Toon Improvement Bill performed by Geoff Wonfor and Billy Mitchell
Canny Tyneside performed by Jimmy Nail and Val McLane
Cullercoats Fish Lass performed by Angie Lonsdale
Meet Me on the Corner performed by Lindisfarne
Blow the Wind Southerly performed by Jill Halfpenny with the English Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Haslam
Dance Ti Th Daddy performed by Alex Glasgow with members of Northern Sinfonia
Big River performed by Joe McElderry. Joe appears by kind permission of Decca Records
Going Home - Theme from 'Local Hero' performed by Mark Knopfler

Press/Media and Further Information

Information about this DVD will be fully serviced to all appropriate UK music press and radio. For more details, and to request a review sample and/or an interview request, please contact John Cronin at Music & Media Consulting Limited.