

# Book Festival re-visits a classic the “Ryedale” way

Submitted by: Ryedale Book Festival

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The distinctive calling of increasingly large skeins of geese flying over her home in Ryedale, North Yorkshire inspired former barrister and book festival (<http://ryedalebookfestival.com/>) director Sarah Tyson to contemplate the commission of an exciting collaborative event that would bring together a music, travel and literature, and end in a debate about the value that they add to our lives.

For literature she looked no further than William Fiennes' (<http://williamfiennes.com/>) book that was first published to high acclaim in 2002. The Snow Geese is “an inspired work of natural history and travel” that has already become a classic work of contemporary travel writing. In his book the award-winning writer takes the reader on an epic journey across North America, accompanying a million-strong flocks of migrating snow geese as they fly from Texas to their breeding grounds in the Arctic tundra.

“Although not snow geese” says Sarah, “the birds in Ryedale preparing for their great journey ahead cause one to pause a moment and consider how timeless this rite is and how insignificant we are.”

She should be assured that the critics at the time of publication clearly felt William's (<http://williamfiennes.com/>) book and descriptions of the migrating birds provoked a similar response from the reader. The Times Literary Supplement commented “The Snow Geese moved me as few other recent books. No one who reads it is likely to continue to view the world in the same way.”

The Sunday Telegraph asked “Why are we drawn to birds, to landscape, to nature? It is for the sense of wonder – and in capturing that sense of wonder, Fiennes (<http://williamfiennes.com/>) reminds us how desperately we all need it.”

At the forthcoming book festival (<http://ryedalebookfestival.com/>), William Fiennes (<http://williamfiennes.com/>) will be giving a special recount of his adventure accompanied with music from The Bookshop Band (<http://www.thebookshopband.co.uk/%20>) to create a unique and moving performance. He says “I love The Bookshop Band's (<http://www.thebookshopband.co.uk/%20>) music and I'm so glad to be revisiting The Snow Geese in the company of their songs. It's brilliant of the Ryedale Book Festival to have thought of such a combination and made it happen.”

And it is only “happening” as a consequence of the support of local travel company Inntravel (<https://www.inntravel.co.uk/>), who have stepped in and sponsored the commission of the original music from The Bookshop Band (<http://www.thebookshopband.co.uk/%20>). A spokesman from the Inntravel (<https://www.inntravel.co.uk/>) says, “The book itself is nothing short of a masterpiece, and strikes many chords with our own love of travel – and our Slow Holidays philosophy. So to enable it to be ‘performed’ live, in front of a book-loving audience in our local town of Malton, is a rare privilege. We wish the festival (<http://ryedalebookfestival.com/>) – as well as its authors and performers – every success.”

Enter the musicians Bethany Porter and Ben Please, who perform together as The Bookshop Band (<http://www.thebookshopband.co.uk/%20>) to the delight of readers at literary events up and down the land.

"They write songs about books, and were our very popular Band in Residence last year" says Sarah. "I have no doubt that their ability to take inspiration from books and to transform them into something lyrical and musical will elevate this event to a unique and moving performance."

It seems that The Bookshop Band (<http://www.thebookshopband.co.uk/%20>) are equally delighted by this opportunity as they say "If books take the reader on a journey, then The Snow Geese is carrying us on the wings of its wild journey. We can't wait to musically respond to the book - a wealth of inspiration."

As with all Ryedale Book Festival (<http://ryedalebookfestival.com/>) events this performance is the result of the collaborative efforts and talents of many – most of whom are volunteers who simply love a good book. "This event is probably our most ambitious yet" says Sarah, "and I can't wait to see it all come together."

'The Snow Geese – a Journey with Music' will be performed at The Milton Rooms (<http://www.themiltonrooms.com/>) in Malton, North Yorkshire on Sunday 9th October at 3.15pm.

Tickets and information:

<http://ryedalebookfestival.com/whats-on/william-fiennes-and-the-bookshop-band/>  
(<http://ryedalebookfestival.com/whats-on/william-fiennes-and-the-bookshop-band/>)

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