



worthing theatres and museum

## PRESS RELEASE

For further information please contact:

Kathryn Follis

Marketing Coordinator

Connaught Theatre | Union Place | Worthing | W.Sx BN11 1LG

Press Direct Line: (01903) 231227 | Box Office: (01903) 206206

07/04/22

Press Release – for immediate release

### **Exceptional live folk in Worthing with Damien O’Kane and Ron Block, bringing their unique blend of Irish and bluegrass banjo music.**

What do you get if you cross an American bluegrass banjo and an Irish tenor banjo? In the case of Coleraine’s Damien O’Kane and California’s Ron Block, fireworks! Experience the spectacular debut duo album live in concert at the Connaught Studio on Tuesday 5 July 2022, 8pm.

This is life-affirming, uplifting music which represents a union of transatlantic cultures. Every note is precise and in exactly the right place, rising and falling with *question and answer* picking and plucking. O’Kane and Block have succeeded in making their masterpiece in this live album performance, so much so that it was awarded *Album of the Month* by the Guardian in 2018, and selected as one of Songlines Magazine’s *Top of the World Albums* that same year.

Damien O’Kane is a thoroughly seasoned performer, having toured international festivals including Cambridge Folk Festival, Celtic Colours in Canada, Celtic Connections and many more. He is a sought after session musician, a regular on BBC Radio, and is a full-time member of Kate Rusby’s band - the UK’s leading female folk voice and winner of a Mercury Music Prize.

He joins forces with another powerhouse of modern folk: Ron Block. Block is the banjo star of Alison Krauss & Union Station, and is a multiple award-winner with no less than 14 Grammy Awards and six International Bluegrass Music Awards to his name. Together, the pair realised how apologetic artists can be about playing the banjo; a much-maligned instrument which finds its origins in West Africa. They set out to prove how incredibly versatile the humble banjo can be in the right hands.

Widely regarded as two of the greatest exponents of the banjo, the duo has collaborated to create arguably their own genre which showcases the instrument by melding two different styles together. Says O’Kane, ‘We coined



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*the phrase - Banjophony - meaning the wondrous sounds of the banjo and decided that described the album well. What that means lies within the virtuosity and beauty of the music'.*

These banjo brothers-in-arms are joined by world renowned fiddle player Stuart Duncan, who has performed with artists such as Dolly Parton, Barbra Streisand, Robert Plant and Emmy-Lou Harris, as well as a host of other stellar guests.

**Damien O'Kane & Ron Block** are playing at the Connaught Studio on Tuesday 5 July 2022. Tickets are available from £16.50. For more information on this or any of the events, visit [www.wtam.uk](http://www.wtam.uk) or call the WTM Box Office on 01903 206 206.

*'I was utterly blown away by these guys. Exquisite musicianship. My gig of the year'* - Ralph McTell

*'Beautiful and wild, there are no boundaries here. Something I have never heard before'* - Jerry Douglas

*'Both incredibly acclaimed musicians in their own right'* - Mark Radcliffe, BBC Radio 2

*'An album of incredibly captivating music'* - Folk Radio UK

*'Banjophony is the sound of summer... two master musicians'* - Kate Rusby

*'A proud, stand-tall album of banjo music'* - Irish Music Magazine

*'I challenge banjo non-believers not to be moved by this transatlantic banjo union'* - Lynette Fay, BBC Radio Ulster

**<ENDS>**

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### NOTES TO EDITORS

#### WTM

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram: @wtmworthing

Website: [wtam.uk](http://wtam.uk)

Box Office Phone: 01903 206 206

#### Damien O'Kane & Ron Block

Facebook: @DeeandRon, Twitter: @DeeOKaneBanjO / @RonBlockAKUS,

Instagram: @deebookane

Website: [damienokane.co.uk](http://damienokane.co.uk) / [ronblock.com](http://ronblock.com)

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### EVENT LISTING

#### Damien O'Kane & Ron Block

Date: Tuesday 5 July 2022

Time: 8pm

Venue: Connaught Studio, Union Pl, Worthing BN11 1LG

Tickets: From £16.50

Link: [wtm.uk/events/damien-okane-ron-block](http://wtm.uk/events/damien-okane-ron-block)

Damien O'Kane & Ron Block Live: [youtu.be/EJqm2b2lC3M](https://youtu.be/EJqm2b2lC3M)

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#### For press enquiries please contact:

Kathryn Follis: Marketing Coordinator for WTM

E: [kathryn.follis@wtm.uk](mailto:kathryn.follis@wtm.uk)

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### IMAGE DOWNLOADS

[WTM Venues](#)

[Damien O'Kane & Ron Block](#)

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