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Martin Simpson, who plays Selkirk's String Jam Club on Saturday and Eyemouth's Hippodrome on Sunday, has had more nominations in the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards than any other performer.

Simpson's quite simply the best of the best

String Jam Club at the County Hotel in Selkirk welcomes back "one of the UK's finest folk musicians" (Sunday Times) this Saturday, April 23, for what promises to be one of its highest profile concerts of the season.

Folk giant Martin Simpson is widely acknowledged as one of the best acoustic and slide guitar players in the world. His interpretations of traditional songs are masterpieces of storytelling,

and his solo shows are intense, eclectic, spellbinding and deeply moving. This is a musician at the height of his powers with an enviable reputation as "the best of the best".

Martin has been nominated an astounding and unprecedented 27 times in the 15 years of the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards – more than any other performer. This includes nine consecutive years as nominee for Musician of The Year, which he has now won twice.

In 2008 he received an incredible five nominations for 'Prodigal Son' and two wins, whilst in 2010 he had an incredible six nominations for his CD, 'True Stories' and a win for Best Traditional Track, 'Sir Patrick Spens'.

His career includes collaborations on stage and record with Richard Hawley, Richard Thompson, June Tabor, Kelly Joe Phelps, Jackson Browne, Danny Thompson, Danú, Martin Carthy, Curs Dillon, David

Lindley, Roy Bailey, Martin Taylor, David Hidalgo, Steve Miller, Dick Gaughan, Dom Flemons and many more – far too many to mention here.

In 2015 he started working in a new trio with Andy Cutting and Nancy Kerr; they have already released an album together, 'Murmurs', to wide critical acclaim. He is currently working on new material for his next solo album.

Whether playing American old-time music, blues,

a Dylan song or his own material, Martin Simpson is unpredictable, individual and a guitarist of immense subtlety.

Tickets are £15. Call the County Hotel or phone 01750 721233 (credit card bookings incur a 50p transaction fee).

Martin will also be appearing at Eyemouth Hippodrome on Sunday, April 24 at 8pm. Tickets £12.50. Call 01890 750099 to book, or see eyemouthhippodrome.org

Musical fusion in Bowden concert

Borders musicians Paul Chamberlain and Michael Haywood are releasing their debut album 'First Impression' with a concert in Bowden Village Hall on Friday April 29.

With a fresh take on world music Paul (accordion) and Michael (saxophone/violin/whistle/clarinet) take their instruments on an international tour – enjoy the sultry sounds of the Tango, the rhythmic drive of the Balkans, along with rip-roaring tunes from Russia and Scotland. With their virtuosic playing and fresh musical ideas, Paul and Michael explore the potential of their instruments in a way that is exciting and engaging. They take the strength of each instrument's traditions and blend them into their own unique brand of fusion music. The result is a vibrant, intriguing and occasionally explosive mix of music that crosses cultural boundaries.

Paul grew up in Bowden and his father was the peripatetic violin teacher in the Borders schools for many years, whilst Michael who originally hails from Lockerbie has now settled in the Borders and teaches music at Earlston High School. United by a common interest in traditional music, they bring together Michael's jazz-influenced style and Paul's classical training, to create a dynamic album bursting with energy.

Tickets for the concert are £8 for adults, U-16s free, available at the door on the night. More information is available at www.chamberlain-haywood.com

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