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# second sight

A FILM BY ALISON MCALPINE

FEATURING Don Angie MacLean, Lachlan MacIntosh, Lachlan Gillies, Ian Anderson and Ian Morrison CINEMATOGRAPHERS John Walker, Kim Derko and Jeremy Lyall EDITOR Alison McAlpine COMPOSER John Gzowski  
RE-RECORDING MIXERS Lou Solakofski and Kirk Lynds SOUND EDITORS Garrett Kerr and John Gzowski EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS Peter Wintonick and John Walker DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY Alison McAlpine  
PRODUCED BY Second Sight Pictures WITH THE SUPPORT OF Necessary Illusions [www.alisonmcalpine.com](http://www.alisonmcalpine.com) POSTER DESIGN BY Manfred Neescher AT [www.manfredneescher.com](http://www.manfredneescher.com) PROMOCARD BY Amoghavia Dharmaraj AND Lonsdale Main Chamberlain



second sight  
pictures



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## Synopsis

A cinematic, non-fiction ghost story.  
An evocative personal tale featuring the  
last generation of Gaelic storytellers on  
Scotland's Isle of Skye.

### Film Info:

2008

51 minutes

Scotland/Canada

English and Gaelic

16mm and Digital

5.1 Surround Sound





### Credits

Poetic, humorous and magic real, **second sight** is directed, produced and edited by Alison McAlpine. Starring the charismatic Don Angie MacLean, Lachlan MacIntosh, Lachlan Gillies, Iain Morrison and Iain Anderson. Beautifully shot by John Walker, Kim Derko and McAlpine. Original music composed by John Gzowski with the Madawaska String Quartet and mixed by Lou Solakofski and Kirk Lynds; sound editors Garrett Kerr and Gzowski. Executive Producers Peter Wintonick and John Walker.

**second sight** is produced by Second Sight Pictures with the support of Necessary Illusions Productions and TV Ontario.

#### Alison McAlpine

Director/Producer  
Second Sight Pictures  
second sight@alisonmcalpine.com

***second sight pictures***



### Director's Statement

This film began very alive like a dream, images of Scotland I've had since I was a child and my great-grandmother's storytelling. These images were vivid, clear, transparent: the ever changing magical light of North-West Scotland, the windy isles of mountains and moorland and utterly compelling stories. My search was for the roots of the Gaelic oral tradition I come from. My goal: to create a film that unfolds like a great story. No artifice, no themes or messages, simply moving images, sounds which surprise with their directness, their tenderness, their rediscovery of the world.

I have learned so much from the characters in my film. Their extraordinary dignity and humanity radiate on screen as does their tremendous gift of storytelling.



Alison McAlpine

### Background

Alison McAlpine's award-winning film has been critically acclaimed and screened at over thirty international film festivals including Hotdocs, BAFICI, Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, Krakow, Slamdance (Special Jury Award), Sheffield Doc/Fest, Cineteca Nacional México, Guth Gafa Ireland, Mill Valley and festivals in Chile, Australia, UK, Canada, US and Argentina. Broadcast sales include: TVO; CBC Documentary; Catalan TV3, Spain.

Alison has received two BBC commissions: "An Da Shealladh", 30 min, 2005, BBC Scotland, and BBC2 London, Wonderland, commissioned "The Ghostman of Skye", 40 min, which premiered on October 31, 2009, and was Pick of the Day or Critic's Choice in every major U.K. newspaper.

Alison's background is in theatre and writing. She has directed, written and produced plays across Canada and in Ireland and is a published poet and writer in Canada, US, Ireland, UK.

[www.alisonmcalpine.com](http://www.alisonmcalpine.com)



## Reviews

### Second Sight ★★★★★

JOHN GRIFFIN, MONTREAL GAZETTE

Alison McAlpine's glorious hour-long tribute to the great characters and laid-back way of life on the remote Scottish Isle of Skye has a misty-twisty Gaelic quality uniquely appropriate to the subject of ghosts...

An intimate documentary... a grand tale, told with restraint and love, and set against some of the most rugged, awesome and phenomena-friendly landscape on Earth.

### Second Sight (TVOntario, Human Edge)

JOHN DOYLE, GLOBE AND MAIL

...a gloriously good, gorgeous documentary... It's about storytellers, ghosts, apparitions and the haunting, haunted landscape... it's stunningly good.

### The Ghostman of Skye, BBC Two

DAMIEN LOVE, GLASGOW HERALD

...a memorable, genuinely haunting film... Alison McAlpine weaves an extraordinary spell... (BBC2 Wonderland commissioned "The Ghostman of Skye", 40 min, which was Pick of the Day or Critics Choice in every major U.K. newspaper.)

### Very Hot Docs: The Hot Docs Festival's Excellent Film Experiences

BEN KEMPAS, DOX, EUROPEAN DOCUMENTARY FILM MAGAZINE

Second Sight is a film about loss and death... it's magical... a beautifully crafted visual layer of landscapes and journeys...



### Mill Valley Film Festival: 'Second Sight'

WALTER ADDIEGO, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

For residents of the remote Isle of Skye, seeing dead people isn't all that extraordinary. At least that's the implication of this delightful documentary by Canadian Alison McAlpine...

The filmmaker mixes footage of the gorgeous and haunted Skye landscape with supernatural lore gleefully recounted by the island's older inhabitants, such as the octogenarian ex-preacher Donald Angus MacLean, who introduces us to some of his equally idiosyncratic friends...

### Second Sight, Rating 9/10

BROOKE SMITH, TORONTO SCREEN SHOTS

Through the wit and charm of near-80 Donald Angus MacLean, filmmaker Alison McAlpine explores the oral tradition in northern Scotland on the Isle of Skye. Donald "Angie" is quite a character, an entertaining rogue with an eye for the ladies and an ear for a good story...

### Documentaries: Second Sight

HENRIETTA WALMARK, GLOBE AND MAIL

Alison McAlpine's gorgeously introspective film, as wispy yet persistent as the mists hugging glens and moors... is a story of ghosts, longing and leave-taking that is as potent as the primordial Isle of Skye...

## second sight

A FILM BY ALISON MCALPINE

51 minutes. Scotland/Canada, 2008.

Documentary. 16mm and digital, multiple format delivery.

In English and Gaelic, with subtitles.

5.1 Surround Sound.

"Imagine a film where time crosses over. Imagine a film populated by wise old tale-tellers who can call the dead to life. Imagine Bergman meeting Beckett on some ghostly, fog-bound track on the Isle of Skye, Scotland. Imagine a film which has everything to do with the sudden, quick passages of our lives."

—Peter Wintonick, Executive Producer

Handsome and gallant, with a ready smile, eighty-year-old Donald Angus MacLean invites us to discover the truth about ghosts. A man of the church and a lover of women, he takes us on a cinematic journey full of spectres, ghost cars, premonitions and the "second sight." We hear of death foretold and explanations of the small mysteries abounding in an isolated community swirling with mists and fitful sunshine, battered waves upon the shore, pathways winding over the rough green hills.

**second sight** is anchored by the charismatic Don Angie MacLean's investigation of ghosts and the "second sight." It is also a personal, humorous story of his daily rituals: writing up his notes by the fire, scrambling through crazy cabinets filled with research, walking the seashore with his faithful dog. His poetic, human musings on life and death reveal his love for his late wife, Nina. When asked, "Do you believe in ghosts?" Don Angie avoids a direct answer. "There are things around us, lights and visions..."



Cinematically, this is non-fiction noir with a Scottish twist. Travelling with Don Angie on a wild and windy isle, our camera is confidant and witness. He visits other elderly friends and storytellers. The tale collects in fragments, personal experiences coming together to portray a country life about to disappear. As he well knows, "Seeing somebody well today, that he's going to be well tomorrow, doesn't necessarily happen."

**second sight** features the last generation of a Scottish Gaelic oral tradition, a community growing up without TV and electricity. Rich in humour, the film is a reflection on life and mortality. It is a celebration of extraordinary characters we come to know, many of them no longer with us. Haunting landscapes and soundscapes as pure as nature reveal a magic, real isle full of spine-tingling ghost stories and unforgettable islanders.

Imagine a cinematic ghost story, a mystery and an evocative personal tale.

Directed, produced and edited by first-time filmmaker Alison McAlpine. Shot by McAlpine, John Walker and Kim Derko. Original music composed by John Gzowski with the Madawaska String Quartet. Executive Producers Peter Wintonick and John Walker.

A Second Sight Pictures Production.



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