



## Press Release

For release: Wednesday 12 October 2016

**18-year-old Freya Ireland appointed Royal Philharmonic Society/Wigmore Hall Apprentice Composer, in association with the Duet Group.**

As part of its commitment to providing professional development opportunities for a new generation of outstanding musical talent, the **Royal Philharmonic Society** has joined forces with **Wigmore Hall** to nurture the talents of 18-year-old **Freya Ireland**, recent winner of the inaugural RPS Duet Prize for Young Composers\*.

As **RPS/Wigmore Hall Apprentice Composer**, in association with the Duet Group, Freya, who has just left Pate's School in Cheltenham, will benefit from both formal and informal teaching and advice from Wigmore Hall Composer in Residence, **Helen Grime**. She will attend regular rehearsals and concerts, meet musicians and composers at Wigmore Hall, and assist Helen in secondary school workshops. **Her apprenticeship begins with Helen Grime Day at Wigmore Hall** (this Saturday – 15 October) and continues throughout Wigmore Hall's 2016/17 season, during which time she will also write a new work.

**Rosemary Johnson**, Executive Director of the Royal Philharmonic Society comments: *"The RPS Young Musicians Programme provides unparalleled opportunities for committed, talented young musicians to be mentored by and forge links with the very best in the business. This is about widening horizons, understanding music in a profound and rewarding way, and learning, each generation from the other."*

*At just 18, Freya is one of the youngest RPS Young Musicians. She has shown both considerable talent and impressive commitment and this was recognised by her RPS Duet*

*Prize. We are pleased to now be able to extend our support through this new partnership with Wigmore Hall Learning programme. The RPS, with its track record of supporting composers both now, and throughout its 200 year history, is delighted to be able to play its part in helping to provide her with invigorating new musical experiences."*

**John Gilhooly**, Artistic and Executive Director of Wigmore Hall comments:

*"We are delighted to welcome Freya as the first Apprentice Composer at Wigmore Hall. For over 20 years our renowned Learning programme has been giving people of all ages, background and abilities opportunities to take part in creative music making. We have developed this new role of Apprentice Composer in partnership with the RPS so that a composer, in the crucial early stage of their professional career, can benefit from and enjoy closer engagement with the vibrant artistic life of Wigmore Hall. We very much look forward to welcoming and working alongside Freya over the coming season".*

## **ABOUT FREYA IRELAND**

**Freya Ireland** is 18 years old and attended Pate's Grammar School in Cheltenham. She plays percussion, clarinet and piano, and sings in a number of local choirs. As a composer, Freya has had her setting of Jeremiah's Lamentations performed by The Tallis Scholars and broadcast on BBC Radio 3 as the winning piece of the NCEM young composers' competition 2014. She has recently been commissioned to write a number of works for local choirs including the Tewkesbury Abbey choir, Gloucester Choral Society, and the Oriel singers. In November 2014 she was a finalist in the Nonclassical composers' competition, with a piece that involved musicians and singers in four different countries playing a work via video links; this piece was singled out for praise in the Daily Telegraph's review of the event.

In 2016, Freya was principal composer for the National Youth Orchestra, having joined the composing section in 2013; her music has been performed by members of the NYO in Birmingham Symphony Hall, Tate Britain, Royal Festival Hall and other prestigious venues.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

## ABOUT THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

The Royal Philharmonic Society unites the music profession and its audiences to create a vibrant future for music: supporting and working creatively with talented young performers and composers, championing excellence, and encouraging audiences to listen to, and talk about, great music. The Society has been at the heart of music for over 200 years, with direct links to Beethoven (it commissioned the composer's Ninth Symphony), Mendelssohn, Wagner and many of the iconic figures of classical music.

**CHAMPIONS OF EXCELLENCE:** The Society sets the standard and lets the world know about the finest classical music making. From its historic Gold Medal to the annual RPS Music Awards for live music, recognition by the RPS is a guarantee of outstanding music achievement.

**YOUNG MUSICIANS:** The RPS invests in talented young performers, offering much needed funding to buy instruments, teaching tailored to their individual needs, or the chance to be mentored by an experienced, established performer.

**COMPOSERS:** The Society supports new music through commissioning new work, repeat performances, workshops, residency schemes and encouraging interaction between composers and audiences.

**AUDIENCES:** The RPS is a voice for music, putting music at the centre of cultural life.

Whether a regular listener or just beginning to explore classical music, the RPS actively promotes greater engagement with live music performance and encourages people to listen and talk about music through events and debate.

## **ABOUT WIGMORE HALL LEARNING**

### *Connecting people through music*

For over 20 years Wigmore Hall's renowned Learning programme has been giving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities opportunities to take part in creative music making, engaging a broad and diverse audience through innovative creative projects, concerts, events and online resources.

The spirit of chamber music lies at the heart of all that we do: making music together as an ensemble, with every voice heard and equally valued.

We collaborate with a range of community, health, social care and education organisations, working together to engage people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to take part.

Our programme comprises:

**Schools and Early Years**, including our new Partner Schools Programme, in which we work in partnership with schools and Music Education Hubs to co-produce activity over a three-year period, creating a creative whole school plan for music

**Community**, including Music for Life, our programme for people living with dementia and their care staff; hospital schools projects, on which we partner with Chelsea Community Hospital Schools; Musical Portraits, a project for young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders in partnership with National Portrait Gallery and Turtle Key Arts; and projects with the Cardinal Hume Centre, a centre for adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

**Family**, which invites families to come to Wigmore Hall to take part in inspiring, one-off workshops and concerts

Events and projects for **Young People**, including Young Producers, a project which invites 14 – 18 year-olds to programme, plan, promote and present their own concert at Wigmore Hall

**Behind the Music**, a programme of study events including talks, lecture-recitals, masterclasses, study groups and Come and Sing days

*In 2015/16 we led 539 Learning events, and engaged 11,532 people with 22,364 visits to the programme.*

## ABOUT HELEN GRIME

Born in 1981, **Helen Grime** studied at the Royal College of Music with Julian Anderson and Edwin Roxburgh (composition) and John Anderson (oboe). She came to public attention in 2003, when her Oboe Concerto won a British Composer Award. In 2008 she was awarded a Leonard Bernstein Fellowship to attend the Tanglewood Music Center where she studied with John Harbison, Michael Gandolfi, Shulamit Ran and Augusta Read Thomas. Grime was Associate Composer to the Hallé Orchestra between 2011 and 2015, a fruitful period which resulted in a series of new works and a recording of her orchestral works released by NMC Recordings. Forthcoming works include a Violin Concerto, which will be premiered by Malin Broman and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding in December 2016, and the first new piece of her Wigmore Hall residency, written for pianist Huw Watkins and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group to be premiered in March 2017.

[www.helengrime.com](http://www.helengrime.com) | [www.musicsalesclassical.com](http://www.musicsalesclassical.com)

## \* ABOUT RPS DUET PRIZES

The biennial RPS Duet Prizes are for outstanding young musicians aged under-18, who study at a mainstream school (not a music specialist school). They are part of 'Ensemble Philharmonic', a partnership between the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Duet Group to build links between exceptional young musicians and secondary music departments, and the music profession. The Duet Group is the leading organisation for leasing and maintaining musical instruments in schools. [www.duetgroup.co.uk](http://www.duetgroup.co.uk)

duet group