

## Press Release

For release: strictly embargoed until 4.45pm on Tuesday 4 April 2017



## SHORTLISTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY MUSIC AWARDS

The UK's most prestigious awards for live classical music  
Presented in association with BBC Radio 3

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

The shortlists have been announced for the Royal Philharmonic Society [RPS] Music Awards.

Outstanding musicians in the running for the UK's most prestigious awards for live classical music, presented in association with BBC Radio 3, include:

RPS Music Award for Conductor: **Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla**, the 31-year-old new Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; **Richard Farnes**, in his final season as Music Director of Opera North and **Donald Runnicles**, outgoing Chief Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

RPS Music Award for Singer: British singers, tenor **Allan Clayton** and mezzo-soprano **Christine Rice**, and Finnish soprano, **Karita Mattila**.

RPS Music Award for Instrumentalist: pianist **Pierre-Laurent Aimard**; violinist **James Ehnes** and cellist **Alisa Weilerstein**.

RPS Music Awards for composition: **Anders Hillborg**, **Enno Poppe** and **Philip Venables** (Large Scale Composition); **Liza Lim**; **Rebecca Saunders** and **Mark Simpson** (Chamber Scale Composition).

RPS Music Award for Young Artist: conductors **Andrew Gourlay** and **Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla** (her second shortlisted nomination); pianist **Joseph Middleton** and soprano **Héloïse Werner**.

The annual RPS Music Awards, presented in association with BBC Radio 3, are the highest recognition for live classical music in the UK. Awards, in thirteen categories, are decided by independent panels consisting of some of the music industry's most distinguished practitioners. The awards honour musicians, composers, writers, broadcasters and inspirational arts organisations. The list of previous winners reads like a *Who's Who* of classical music. **This year's RPS Music Awards celebrate outstanding achievement in 2016.** [www.rpsmusicawards.com](http://www.rpsmusicawards.com)

***Regional organisations and events dominate the shortlists.***

Amongst those making the cut are: **Welsh National Opera**; **Opera North**; **Garsington Opera**; **Birmingham Opera**; **Ulster Orchestra** (which survived the threat of closure in 2014); **Manchester Camerata**; the **Leeds Lieder Festival**; **Cheltenham Music Festival**; East Lothian's **Lammermuir Festival**; Fife's **East Neuk Festival**; **South West Open Youth**

**Orchestra and Age UK Oxfordshire.** The shortlists also feature international artists who made their mark in outstanding events across the UK in 2016, including: Canadian violinist **James Ehnes**, Artist in Residence at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra; French pianist **Pierre-Laurent Aimard**, who took his leave as Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival in 2016 in style, playing Messiaen's *Catalogue d'Oiseaux* over 18 hours al fresco at RSPB Minsmere, and all three shortlisted conductors for work that has contributed so much to the vibrant international reputation of music making in Birmingham, Leeds and Glasgow.

***The RPS is one of the UK's most important commissioners of new music, and contemporary music makes a strong showing in the shortlists.***

The two major composition prizes will be contested by Swedish composer **Anders Hillborg**, German composer **Enno Poppe** and **Philip Venables** (RPS Music Award for Large-Scale Composition) and Australian composer **Liza Lim, Rebecca Saunders** (a two time previous RPS Music Award winner) and (ten years after winning BBC Young Musician of the Year as a clarinettist) composer **Mark Simpson** (Chamber Scale composition). **Philip Venables/Royal Opera House's 4.48 Psychosis** (based on a play by Sarah Kane) is also shortlisted for the RPS Music Award for Opera and Music Theatre. Other new works recognised in the shortlists include: **Welsh National Opera's Figaro Forever** (which featured *Figaro Gets a Divorce*, a new opera by Elena Langer); American composer David Lang's choral work, *Memorial Ground*, commissioned by East Neuk Festival in collaboration with 14-18 NOW, and performed by choirs nationwide on armistice day to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, and choral work, *The Voyage* by **Bob Chilcott**. Young soprano **Héloïse Werner**, a rising figure on the contemporary music scene, features in the Young Artist category, viol consort **Fretwork** in the Chamber Music and Song category, for mixing early music with new commissions, and harpist **Olivia Jageurs's** one woman mission to get more people writing new music for the harp, *15 Second Harp* in the Creative Communication category.

***The shortlists also celebrate artists and organisations that match musical enquiry and excellence with an imaginative approach to bringing music out of the concert hall and a desire to reach wider, broader audiences.***

And the approaches are wide and varied: **Chineke! Orchestra**, championing change and celebrating diversity in classical music, and providing career opportunities to young Black and Minority Ethnic classical musicians in the UK and Europe; the young musicians of **Southbank Sinfonia**, bringing Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* at the National Theatre to musical life and playing free 'rush hour' concerts a stone's throw from Waterloo Station; **Manchester Camerata**, fusing classical and club music in Hacienda Classical, offering a chance to hear UpClose the next generation of musical talent in iconic Manchester buildings, and working with people living with dementia in the community and advancing academic research into the role of music in their lives; **Birmingham Opera's #DnA**, (Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*), staged in the former Birmingham Ballroom with a cast of 180 of all ages, drawn largely from the local community; **Lammermuir Festival**, setting music within East Lothian's striking local architecture and scenery, and providing a platform for Scottish music and musicians; **Philharmonia – Stravinsky: Myths and Rituals**, marrying live music with outstanding use of interactive technology to animate and innovate. The RPS Music Award for Creative Communication shortlists two books, **Anna Beer's** study of eight female composers, ***Sounds and Sweet Airs: The Forgotten Women of Classical Music*** (published by One World) and **Edward Dusinberre**, first violinist of the Tacàcs Quartet's ***Beethoven for a Later Age: The Journey of a String Quartet*** (Faber). They are joined by **The Listening Service, BBC Radio 3's** 'journey of imagination and insight, exploring how music works' and young harpist **Olivia Jageurs** for *15 Second Harp*. In 2016 Olivia made a pledge to video record and post online by 5pm the following day any notated harp music as long as it was 15 seconds in length; she received over 200 submissions from all over the world.

***Music's capacity to reflect and respond to the world we live in is also recognised.***

A strong shortlist for the RPS Music Award for Learning and Participation features: the UK's only disabled-led orchestra, Bristol-based **South-West Open Youth Orchestra**; Wandsworth's **World Heart Beat Music Academy**, which creates education experiences for young people in a vast array of musical forms with the aim of bridging 'cultural, political, economic and linguistic barriers' and Bob Chilcott's vocal work, ***The Voyage***, exploring life and loneliness across the generations as part of a project by Age UK Oxfordshire to bring people together through music.

***And it's also a good year for accompanists...***

...with two young pianists, **James Baillieu** (shortlisted for the second year running) and **Joseph Middleton** (who is also director of the shortlisted Leeds Lieder Festival), both featured (in the Chamber Music and Song, and Young Artists categories respectively).

**John Gilhooly**, Chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Society comments:

*"This year, the RPS Music Awards jurors were struck by the depth of quality and imagination of artists and organisations from right across the country, and the wealth of nominations we received from all areas of the UK reflects this. The shortlists are fizzing with energy, ambition and invention. They celebrate not just musical excellence, but a very tangible pioneering artistic spirit: outstanding musicians and organisations who want to share and encourage musical excellence, investigate new creative avenues and to see music make a real difference to the world we live in. In short, the shortlists celebrate great music, happening in the moment – the essence of what makes live music so special. Congratulations to them all."*

**RPS Music Award winners will be announced at a ceremony on Tuesday 9 May** at The Brewery in the City of London, hosted by **Andrew McGregor** and **Sarah Walker** from BBC Radio 3. The winners trophies will be presented by pianist **Stephen Hough**, who has a long association with the Society (in 1980 he won the first RPS Julius Isserlis Prize, enabling him to study abroad at the Juilliard School of Music in New York).

**A special RPS Music Awards programme will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 at 19:30 on Sunday 14 May.**

**RPS Music Awards Sponsors**

**The RPS Music Awards are presented in association with BBC Radio 3**, with individual category sponsors: **ABRSM**, the exam board for the Royal Schools of Music; **BBC Music Magazine**; **The Boltini Trust**; **Boosey and Hawkes**, in memory of **Tony Fell**; **the Bowerman Charitable Trust**; **Sir Simon and Victoria, Lady Robey OBE** and **Schott Music**.

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Award	Shortlisted nominations
<b>Audiences and Engagement</b>	Birmingham Opera : #DnA (Dido and Aeneas, Purcell) East Neuk Festival, in collaboration with 14-18 NOW: Memorial Ground (David Lang) Chineke! Orchestra
<b>Chamber Music and Song</b>	James Baillieu Fretwork Leeds Lieder
<b>Chamber-Scale Composition</b> sponsored by Boosey and Hawkes in memory of Tony Fell	Liza Lim: How Forests Think UK premiere: 22 Nov 2016, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival Elision Ensemble, Wu Wei  Rebecca Saunders: Skin UK premiere: 20 Nov 2016, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival Klangforum Wien, Juliet Fraser  Mark Simpson: Hommage à Kurtàg World premiere: 12 August 2016, Queen's Hall Edinburgh (EIF) Mark Simpson, Pierre-Laurent Aimard and Antoine Tamestit
<b>Concert Series and Festivals</b> sponsored by Schott Music	Cheltenham Music Festival Lammermuir Festival Philharmonia Orchestra: Stravinsky: Myths & Rituals Welsh National Opera: Figaro Forever
<b>Conductor</b> sponsored by BBC Music Magazine	Richard Farnes Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla Donald Runnicles
<b>Creative Communication</b>	15 Second Harp BBC Radio 3: 'The Listening Service' Beethoven for a Later Age: The Journey of a String Quartet by Edward Dusinberre (Faber) Sounds and Sweet Airs: The Forgotten Women of Classical Music by Anna Beer (One World)
<b>Ensemble</b>	Manchester Camerata Southbank Sinfonia Ulster Orchestra
<b>Instrumentalist</b>	Pierre-Laurent Aimard James Ehnes Alisa Weilerstein
<b>Large-Scale Composition</b> donated by The Boltini Trust	Anders Hillborg: The Strand Settings UK premiere: 5 February 2016, The Barbican Renée Fleming, BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sakari Oramo  Enno Poppe: Speicher UK premiere: 10 March 2016, Coronet Theatre, London London Sinfonietta, conducted by Susanna Mällki  Philip Venables: 4.48 Psychosis World premiere: 24-28 May 2016, Royal Opera House at the Lyric Hammersmith, London
<b>Learning and Participation</b> sponsored by the ABRSM, the exam board for the Royal Schools of Music	Age UK Oxfordshire: The Voyage Project (Bob Chilcott) South-West Open Youth Orchestra World Heart Beat Music Academy

<b>Opera and Music Theatre</b> donated by Sir Simon and Victoria, Lady Robey OBE	Garsington Opera: Idomeneo Opera North: The Ring Cycle Royal Opera: 4.48 Psychosis (Philip Venables)
<b>Singer</b>	Allan Clayton Karita Mattila Christine Rice
<b>Young Artists</b> donated by the Bowerman Charitable Trust	Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla Andrew Gourlay Joseph Middleton Héloïse Werner

## Notes:

### **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. [www.philharmonicsociety.uk](http://www.philharmonicsociety.uk)

### **About BBC Radio 3**

Since it launched in 1946, the Third Programme which became BBC Radio 3, has been a bold pioneer in the cultural world. It is one of the world's foremost presenters, creators, commissioners and curators across classical, folk, world, jazz and contemporary music as well as drama, philosophy and ideas. The station is also the most significant commissioner of new and contemporary music in the UK, with 35 new works commissioned annually and it broadcasts over 600 concerts a year, including live broadcasts from the greatest classical music festival in the world (BBC Proms). Radio 3's In Concert programme alone reaches the equivalent of 250 packed concert halls a week. The station has always nurtured extraordinary artistic talents, provided a platform for important scientific and political debates/announcements, and broadcast ground-breaking experimental drama – always while delivering its core aim of connecting audiences with pioneering music and culture. [www.bbc.co.uk/radio3](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3)