

## Press Release

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## Royal Philharmonic Society to fund young musicians and composers to the tune of £65,000 in 2015/16

### RPS announces new grants and commissions

- **Six composers under-29 commissioned to write new works for the Philharmonia's Music of Today, Cheltenham and Presteigne Festivals**
- **16 music students helped to purchase the 'tools of the trade' - quality instruments**
- **Two young musicians heading to Germany for advanced study**

The Royal Philharmonic Society's Young Musician Programme has announced its annual grants to young composers and musicians.

So far this year, 30 young musicians have joined the RPS Young Musicians, benefitting from grants totaling £65,000. The RPS Young Musicians Programme supports outstanding talent of the next generation, from first year music students to nascent young professionals, and this year's grants aim to facilitate musical development across this spectrum – from help towards the purchase of quality instruments for music students and enabling further advanced study abroad with the best in the business, to the commissioning of new music from some of the UK's most striking young composers. These awards follow on from career development awards for young string players, announced in June.\*

The number of applications for support far outstripped available resources.

Rosemary Johnson, Executive Director comments: *"The need to support young musicians is becoming more acute; year-on-year, we have seen an increase in the number of young musicians who apply for RPS grants, and our available funds are sadly unable to keep pace. For example, whilst we are delighted to have been able*

*to make awards totaling more than £20,000 towards instrument purchase, there was a further £74,000 of requests – all deserving serious consideration – that we were sadly not able to meet. This suggests that across the country, there are significant numbers of music students whose musical development is being slowed, and in some cases, irreparably harmed, by an inability to purchase the simple tools of the trade, with serious implications for music now and in the future.*

*If we want to continue to support the next generation of musical talent and to harness the expertise that the RPS has developed over many years in this crucial field, we need to do more. We will continue to fundraise and shout loudly about this vital issue in the hope that the immense amount of goodwill can be matched by increased funding needed to make a difference.”*

### **About the Royal Philharmonic Society Young Musicians Programme**

The Royal Philharmonic Society’s thriving Young Musicians Programme is based on the quiet idea of serious intellectual engagement and striving for artistic excellence. It supports the serious musical development of young musicians at the start of their careers. It’s not flashy, or about fast-tracking young talent, but about giving young musicians valuable time to mature and grow in confidence, helping with the tools of the trade, and providing them with tailor-made opportunities for mentoring, specialist study, coaching. The Society makes an annual commitment to around 30 young musicians, and alumni include Stephen Hough and Alina Ibragimova.

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY’S  
YOUNG MUSICIANS PROGRAMME AT [www.philharmonicsociety.uk](http://www.philharmonicsociety.uk)**

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\* Career development awards for young string players, announced in June, were made to violinist **Marta Kowalczyk** (RPS Emily Anderson Prize) and the **Ruisi Quartet** (RPS Albert and Eugenie Frost Prize), alongside the RPS Duet Prize, two new awards for school-aged musicians and composers.

## RPS Young Musicians fund for Instrument Purchase supported by the Sir John Barbirolli Memorial Foundation

Without quality instruments, musical development can stall. The RPS Young Musicians fund for Instrument Purchase, supported by the Sir John Barbirolli Memorial Foundation seeks to redress this issue by making non-repayable grants to help students of limited financial means purchase better instruments.

For 2015/16, the RPS Young Musicians Programme has awarded grants to 16 students totaling £20,150 from eight major conservatoires across the UK. Such has been the demand in recent years, in an attempt to steer the funding towards those that need it most, conservatoire Principals were again asked to nominate a shortlist of the students most in need of help. This year's grants will help towards the purchase of a range of instruments, including: two French horns; two violas; xylophone; double bass; accordion; two Bb clarinets; Bb trumpet; bass clarinet; oboe; two alto saxophones; a piccolo and a cello bow.

The RPS is grateful to the **ABRSM**, the exam board of the Royal Schools of Music; the **Angus Allnatt Charitable Foundation**; the **Mercers' Company**; the **Andor Charitable Trust**; the **Kirby Laing Foundation**; and individual donors who have contributed towards this fund. **Edward Blakeman**, Commissioning and Programme Editor at BBC Radio 3, Director of BBC Proms 2015 chaired the fund panel, which included **Lincoln Abbott**, Director of Strategic Development, ABRSM, Composer and Founder and Executive Producer at NMC, **Colin Matthews** and pianist, broadcaster and programmer **Iain Burnside**.

## RPS Young Musicians fund for Study Abroad The RPS Julius Isserlis Scholarship

Ever since Stephen Hough set off to New York to study at the Juilliard School in 1980, the RPS Julius Isserlis Scholarship has widened the horizons of some of the UK's finest young instrumentalists. Distinguished previous winners also include cellist Caroline Dale, violinist Janice Graham, organist Stephen Disley and flautist Katherine Bryan. The scholarship, one of the most prestigious scholarships for music students, funds study abroad for musicians of any nationality between the ages of 15 and 24 who are permanently resident in the UK, with awards made biennially.

The 2015 Royal Philharmonic Society Julius Isserlis Scholarship has been awarded to former Royal Academy of Music student, 25-year-old London-based Latvian violinist **Kristine Balanas**. She will receive £10,000 to enable her to study at the Hochschule fur Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin. An award for £5000

goes to recent Royal Academy graduate, trumpeter **Imogen Hancock**, who will also continue her studies in Germany.

This year's Isserlis selection panel, chaired by **Edward Blakeman**, included **Peter Bassano**, performer and conductor; violinist **Margaret Faultess**, Director of Performance Studies at Cambridge University and **Quentin Poole**, conductor and former Director of Music at the Purcell School.

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

## **RPS Young Musicians Programme and composers Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize**

Six composers have been selected by a distinguished jury to write new works for performance at prestigious venues in 2016 through the Royal Philharmonic Society's annual Composition Prize for composers aged under 29.

The composers, selected from 71 applicants by the RPS composition prize jury of composers **Unsuik Chin**, **Sally Beamish** and former Editor for New and Specialist Music at the BBC, **Andrew Kurowski**, are: **Desmond Clarke** (b.1989), **Michael Taplin** (b. 1991) and 26 year old **Patrick John Jones** (b.1989) who will write for the Philharmonia's Music of Today and join the Philharmonia Orchestra's Young Composers Academy, in partnership with the RPS) and Canadian composer **Hunter Coblenz** (b. 1988) who will write a new work for 2016 Cheltenham Festival. All will receive £3000 in prize money. A £1000 RPS commission for a chamber piece to be performed at Presteigne Festival 2016\* has been awarded to 26 year old **Ninfea Crutwell-Reade**, and 21 year old **Dani Howard** also receives a £1000 RPS commission (performance details to be announced).

The RPS Composition Prize is supported by: Britten-Pears Foundation, the Garrick Charitable Trust, Alan Horne Memorial Fund, and receives additional support for the Cheltenham Festival commission from the Susan Bradshaw Composers' Fund.

*\*"White Space", a new work for solo violin by 2014 RPS Composition Prize winner **Michael Small** will be premiered at this summer's Presteigne Festival on 29 August.*

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