

Press Release

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Rosemary Johnson to stand down as Executive Director of Royal Philharmonic Society

Rosemary Johnson is standing down from her role as Executive Director of the Royal Philharmonic Society in Summer 2018.

Over two decades, Rosie has overseen, alongside three RPS Chairmen (**Tony Fell**, **Graham Sheffield** and current Chairman, **John Gilhooly**) a complete transformation of the RPS from a London Society into a national organisation which helps set the agenda for classical music, plays a major role in the commissioning of new work and is an important supporter of emerging young professional musicians. She has also developed the RPS's flagship event, the RPS Music Awards, into the most respected Awards for live classical performance in the country, embracing the whole profession from learning and participation to the highest regarded solo performers.

Since 2000, the RPS has commissioned or co-commissioned over 170 works (it commissioned just 16 in the whole of the 20th century). Today it supports over 100 young musicians annually through its young musicians programme, facilitating valuable opportunities for enhanced learning and ongoing professional development: mentoring with distinguished musicians; study and travel to international conservatoires; performance opportunities; encouraging women to develop conducting and musical leadership skills; helping students in need to purchase quality instruments, the very tools of the trade. The Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards and RPS Lectures have provided a valuable, independent platform for cultural thinkers to explore the future of music, and to celebrate music of the very highest quality.

The Society's close links with leading organisations, including **BBC Radio 3**, **Classic FM**, most of the UK's finest orchestras, ensembles and festivals, and internationally organisations including the **New York Philharmonic**, **Berlin Philharmonic** and most recently, **Shanghai Festival** and **Beethoven Haus Bonn**, has helped encourage a wider understanding and sheer enjoyment of music. RPS projects have included: *RPS Bicentenary* celebrations in 2013, which included exhibitions, talks and concerts on both sides of the Atlantic; *Hear Here!*, a two-year long exploration of listening with Classic FM; *Encore*, the first scheme to focus on follow up performance for the work of living composers; the *Women Conductors* programme; *Musical Routes*, a key report into progression in music education by **Sarah Derbyshire** and the introduction of awards which recognise the importance of music in challenging social circumstances.

John Gilhooly, Chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Society comments: "*Rosie has made an outstanding contribution not just to the RPS, but to the musical life of the UK, and we are very grateful to her for all she has done. We will have the opportunity celebrate her significant achievements at the annual RPS Awards next May. We wish Rosie every possible success in her future plans*"

Rosemary Johnson comments: *"Musicians and members have always been at the very heart of the Society, together with a conviction that creativity, integrity and excellence of musicianship are fundamental to the health and success of the art form. It has been a huge privilege to work closely alongside so many distinguished and emerging musicians, programmers and generous supporters and colleagues who all care passionately about ensuring music continues to thrive and is accessible to all. With the RPS trajectory set firmly towards the future, I'm looking forward to watching its next adventures."*

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