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**MEDIA INFORMATION**

**PRS FOUNDATION’S NEW MUSIC BIENNIAL 2017, including associated residencies in Hull and Minute of Listening projects.**

* The **New Music Biennial 2017**, a PRS Foundation initiative is presented in partnership with Hull UK City of Culture 2017, London’s Southbank Centre and BBC Radio 3.
* The Festival features 20 of the best composers working in the UK today across a range of genres.
* The 20 selected and commissioned works present a snapshot of contemporary music in the UK including 13 brand new works.
* **Composers: Eliza Carthy, Anna Meredith, Simon Holt, Hannah Peel, Mica Levi, Daniel Elms, Ray Lee, Laurence Crane, Errollyn Warren, Emily Hall, Gavin Bryars, James McVinnie, GoGo Penguin, Mark Simpson, Peter Edwards, Jocelyn Pook, Brian Irvine and Jennifer Walsh, Philip Venables and David Hoyle, Jason Singh & Anne Martin, Sam Lee.**
* **Hull – various venues – 30 June - 2 July**

[**https://www.hull2017.co.uk/whatson/events/prs-foundations-new-music-biennial/**](https://www.hull2017.co.uk/whatson/events/prs-foundations-new-music-biennial/)

**Further tickets for the Hull weekend will be released on 18 May.**

* **Southbank Centre, London - 7 to 9 July**

[**www.southbankcentre.co.uk**](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)

* **Broadcast on BBC Radio 3 from both Hull and the Southbank Centre.**

The **New Music Biennial includes new music from across all genres**: from **classical and chamber opera to jazz, folk, electronic and music for brass band and organ**.

Works will be no longer than 15 minutes in duration in response to the New Music Biennial's aim to create a pop-up, interactive way for audiences to discover new music and be able to hear the pieces more than once.

Many of the winning new commissions, such as **Eliza Carthy’s collaboration with the Moulettes – Rivers and Railways** that draws on migration, Hull’s industries and history including the pioneering William Wilberforce, and **GoGo Penguin’s *As Above so Below,*** resonate with the themes of Hull UK City of Culture.

Yorkshire born composers such as **Daniel Elms**, **Gavin Bryars** and **Eliza Carthy**, who have strong family links to the city, are working on new pieces which explore the identity of the city and surrounding landscape, and Mercury Prize -nominated folk singer and song collector **Sam Lee** is exploring vernacular folk song in Hull City.

Other commissions featured in the New Music Biennial simply reflect the exceptional talent and breadth of composers in the UK. This includes composer **Simon Holt’s** new clarinet concerto for 2006’s BBC Young Musician of the Year **Mark Simpson** commissioned by BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, **Emily Hall’s** new Opera for children and organist **James McVinnie and Darkstar** showcasing the potential for this incredible instrument beyond traditional organ music. (See full list below).

The winning compositions were selected by a **panel of judges** that included Vanessa Reed (Executive Director, PRS for Music Foundation), Judith Weir (Master of the Queen's Music), Sara Mohr-Pietsch (BBC Radio 3 Hear and Now presenter) Sam Hunt (Executive Producer, Hull UK City of Culture), Gillian Moore MBE (Director of Music, Southbank Centre), Kevin Le Gendre (Broadcaster and journalist) and chaired by BBC Radio 3 Controller, Alan Davey.

The commissions will receive public performances throughout the UK in 2017, culminating in two celebration weekends in Hull on 30 June - 2 July as part of Hull UK City of Culture 2017 and 7- 9 July at London’s Southbank Centre.

The PRS Foundation for Music is also involved in embedding and opening up access to music in Hull throughout 2017 through a programme of composer residencies and supporting Sound and Music’s Minute of Listening in the city.

**Part of Hull UK City of Culture 2017**, these two exciting additional projects will involve local residents, community groups and primary schools across Hull in the creation and performance of new music in the city.

The **New Music Biennial Composer Residencies** are giving local communities in Hull the chance to spend time and create music with five of the New Music Biennial’s brilliant music creators, folk legends **Sam Lee** and **Eliza Carthy,** classical composers **Errollyn Wallen** and **Brian Irvine** and beatbox/electronic artist **Jason Singh.**

**New Music Biennial Minute of Listening** is a special edition of Sound and Music’s simple digital learning tool which provides primary-aged children with the opportunity to experience 60 seconds of creative listening each day of the school year. Featuring minute-long tracks by New Music Biennial composers alongside other sounds recorded in Hull, the New Music Biennial Minute of Listening will run in parallel with the residencies until 2018.

**NEW MUSIC BIENNIEL 2017 WINNING COMMISSIONS:**

**NEW COMMISSIONS:**

**Sam Lee – *Hullucination***

Commissioned by The Nest Collective

The Mercury Prize nominated Sam Lee and driving force behind the eclectic, award-winning folk club The Nest Collective will explore the rich history of vernacular folk song in Hull City and District using a collection of songs from in and around the city. Through recorded testimonials that capture the current and historical oral traditions extant amongst the residents, Sam Lee creates a sonic triptych combining choral and arranged accompaniment to portrait the city and its ever changing character.

**Emily Hall New Commission –** **The Itch-Witch is a Snappy Opera** (Commissioned by Mahogany Opera Group)

You know the Tooth-Fairy, don’t you? The Itch-Witch is the Tooth-Fairy’s evil older sister. The Itch-Witch sends her horrible Nits to bite your heads and suck your blood. And the Itch-Witch is so mean she doesn’t pay you a penny! This is the story of how some brave children decide to fight back against the Itch-Witch and her nits with the only weapon they have – combs!

Written by composer **Emily Hall** and author **Toby Litt**, *The Itch-Witch* is part of **Mahogany Opera Group**‘s nationwide landmark project [Snappy Operas](http://mahoganyoperagroup.co.uk/productions/snappy-operas) – a series ten new, ten-minute long, mini-operas from UK artists, created with and performed by young people aged 7-11 from across the country.

**Daniel Elms – *Bethia***

Commissioned by British Film Institute

Influenced by the natural landscape surrounding his Yorkshire Hometown, Daniel Elms’ piece for acoustic and electronic instruments celebrates the maritime history of Hull using re-imagined sea shanties and maritime hymns. It will be performed alongside projected film footage that has been edited and adapted to create abstract ambience and light. Written for a small group of chamber musicians the music will interweave cross-rhythms and interlocking harmony to create a texture similar to that of a tremulous sea.

**Peter Edwards – *A Journey with the Giants of Jazz***

Commissioned by Turner Sims, Southampton

Pianist, composer and bandleader and nominee for the 2015 Jazz FM Breakthrough Artist Awards, Peter Edwards, looks into the year 1917, which was a defining year for jazz. It saw the births of some of the most influential jazz artists including composer ‘Tadd’ Dameron, singer Ella Fitzgerald, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, pianist Thelonious Monk, drummer Buddy Rich and percussionist Mongo Santamaria. Taking inspiration from the motifs found in six of the artists’ classic works, Peter Edwards’ piece, to be performed by the Nu Civilisation Orchestra (a Tomorrow’s Warriors ensemble), deconstructs their themes to offer the audience a re-imagined and alternative musical experience*.*

**Ray Lee *– Ring Out*** (Commissioned by Oxford Contemporary Music)

A series of industrial giant towers hold suspended bell-like speaker cones, as they gradually swing higher and higher until each arm soars up over the heads of the audience.

Ringing forth with a peel of electronic tones that combine into a transfixing harmony of pulsing drones, ***Ring Out*** continues the work of multi-award winning composer and artist [Ray Lee](http://invisible-forces.com/), whose distinctive combination of sound and kinetic sculpture has thrilled audiences the world over.

The audience are able to walk around the space and experience the series of micro-melodies shifting and changing as the piece progresses.

**Simon Holt – *Joy Beast* - Concerto for clarinet & Orchestra**

Commissioned by BBC Philharmonic Orchestra

Simon Holt is one of the UK’s leading composers and is currently Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music. He will write a basset clarinet concerto for 2006’s BBC Young Musician of the Year Mark Simpson, inspired from a black and white print by the English artist, Cecil Collins, of a rampant bull-like creature with fearsome horns.

**Mica Levi – New work for the BBC Concert Orchestra**

Commissioned by BBC Concert Orchestra

Mica Levi is a classically trained singer, songwriter, BAFTA nominated composer and producer who is best known for her band Micachu & The Shapes. Mica will write an exciting piece with the BBC Concert Orchestra drawing on and utilising the Orchestra’s huge sound and great power.

**Gavin Bryars – *Winestead***

Commissioned by Opera North

Born in Yorkshire Gavin Bryars has been described as a composer ‘who falls under no category’ and since 2006 he has been collaborating with Opera North on numerous projects. Inspired by the eerie, flat landscape east of Hull towards the North Sea, ***Winestead*** sees the composer Gavin Bryars, originally from Goole, returning to his East Yorkshire roots in his first work directly inspired by his birthplace. He will also draw on the life and poetry of Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), the metaphysical poet who was born and raised in the Holderness region. When a young man of just 19, Marvell may have witnessed his father drowning as he tried to cross the Humber. The new commission will take two iterations; one a sound installation in the church at Winestead where Marvell’s father was the rector; and the second a live performance by an ensemble of musicians and possibly one singer. The piece will also be screened online by Opera North and Hull 2017 UK City of Culture.

**Eliza Carthy in collaboration with the Moulettes – *Rivers and Railways***

Commissioned by Freedom Festival

Eliza Carthy is a traditional folk musician and composer who was championed from an early age by John Peel, Andy Kershaw and Billy Bragg and is the winner of five BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and currently Associate Artist at Sage Gateshead. Eliza’s new piece, Rivers and Railways is a collaboration with celebrated sonic adventurers Moulettes, exploring the theme of what makes a city what it is when it is perched on the edge of a place, a port, a destination, an identity.

Touching upon themes of migration, Hull’s industries and history (Hull was the second most bombed city in the Second World War) and its pioneering son William Wilberforce who was instrumental in writing the Abolition of Slavery Act. Using local stories and music to create the new work, and through creative staging, using outdoor location and engagement with the ‘Freedom Choir’, will make something very special and unique and with a strong Hull flavour that will be unmistakeable and moving.

**GoGo Penguin – As Above So Below**

Commissioned by Jnight Jazz Promoters

Renowned for the minimalist piano themes, deeply propulsive bass lines and electronica inspired drums, the Mercury Prize nominated Manchester based jazz trio GoGo Penguin will create a piece of music inspired by the Northern industrial landscape in 2017 for the documentary film *Mind On The Run*. The film will be created by producers from Nova Studios, the University of Hull and Hull 2017 and will be about Basil Kirchin, who died in Hull in 2005. Basil Kirchin is the forgotten genius of post-war British music. British pioneer of musique concrete, leading light in the free jazz movement, a film composer who inspired Bernard Hermann and according to Brian Eno, the founding father of ambient.

**Darkstar – Dance Unity**

**Commissioned by James McVinnie**

Dance Unity is a piece composed by Darkstar and performed by James Mcvinnie. It is inspired by Hull as a city and the Dance Unity parties that were held there in the early 90s. With focus on trying to create a piece that oscillates through a series of movements and emotions Dance Unity is the result of trying to immerse ourselves in the capabilities and functionality of the organ but also the landscape of Hull as backdrop in playing host to parties that were intrinsic to the city in the early 90s. Dance Unity feels like an appropriate reaction to the positivity galvanised in the recent election and the context draws parallels in trying to display a unified front in times of adversity.

Having recently scored the the Palm D’or nominated short film ‘Dreamlands’ Darkstar (James Young and Aiden Whalley) will compose a piece of music that reflects the landscape of Hull and its community. They have recently collaborated with Gaika and Empress Of on their EP on Warp Records ‘Made to Measure’ and now look forward to working with James McVinnie in exploring the Organs capabilities and how it merges with their sonic palette. On the New Music Biennial piece, James Young said: *“For the piece we are writing we’d like to explore the industry of Hull as a City, what is intrinsic to Hull and what makes it tick? How can we immerse musically and sonically so that the piece we write not only compliments Hull but feels at home there too? We’d like our collaboration to reflect as many facets of Hull that we can encompass so it ebbs and flows as a recording and a performance.”* Organist James McVinnie has collaborated with some of the world’s leading composers, producers and performers from classical, contemporary, popular and experimental music. 2017 includes solo performances and a concerto appearance at the Walt Disney Concert Hall with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Kilkenny Festival and the Köln Philharmonie. He is a member of the Icelandic record label Bedroom Community.

***Mary Casio: Journey to Cassiopeia***

**Artist: Hannah Peel and Tubular Brass**

Electronic artist, arranger and composer Hannah Peel’s work combines the tremendously deep, rich power of traditional brass with the uplifting arpeggiated patterns and unearthly sound textures of analogue synthesizers. Through an intergalactic journey from Earth to the star constellation of Cassiopeia, Peel explores one person's journey through space, time and mortality by telling the story of 86 year old Mary Casio and her lifelong stargazing dream to leave her South Yorkshire home in the mining town of Barnsley and see Cassiopeia for herself.

Drawing influences from synth pioneers such as Daphne Oram and Delia Derbyshire and performing live with the newly formed brass band Tubular Brass, featuring the UK’s finest brass players, Mary Casio: Journey to Cassiopeia will be released in September 2017 as Hannah Peel’s third album. Their special performance at Hull UK City of Culture 2017 will be one of only a handful of shows around the UK.

*“Absolutely terrific, and the most satisfying live musical event I’ve attended in years.”* **The Arts Desk**

**Presented in association with the PRS Foundation, Arts Council England and Root Music.**

**Mark Simpson – AFTER AVEDON**

Commissioned by Glen Gould Trio (Welsh based)

At the age of 17 Mark Simpson became the first ever winner of both BBC Young Musician and BBC Proms/Guardian Young composer of the Year. In 2015 he was appointed Composer in Association of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. The new work by Mark will form the centrepiece of the Gould Piano Trio’s 25th anniversary celebration. Impressed by Mark’s high profile appointment as the BBC Philharmonic’s new Composer-in-Association, as well as critical acclaim following his latest premiere of a large scale oratorio at the Manchester International Festival.

**EXISTING WORKS SELECTED FOR INCLUSION**

**Jason Singh & Anne Martin (UK) with Sharat Chandra Srivastava, Gyan Singh (India) –**

***Ceumannan – Footsteps. 2.***

Commissioned by Atlas Arts

Performed by Anne Martin, Jason Singh, Sharat Chandra Srivastava, Gyan Singh and Joe Harrison

A synthesis of traditional Gaelic song and North Indian Raga, this piece interweaves contemporary rhythms and acoustic sounds with the struggles of culture and identity pertinent to both of the artists’ roots. The work is a continuation of ***Ceumannan – Footsteps*** which explores the struggle for land use experienced by both the Highlanders of Scotland and communities of Northern India, and emphasises the commonality and creativity of human experience.

**Brian Irvine & Jennifer Walshe – *13 VICES***

Commissioned by Moving on Music

Performed by Brian Irvine, Jennifer Walshe & Red Note Ensemble

A collaboration between two of the UK and Ireland’s most dynamic compositional voices, Brian Irvine and Jennifer Washle, this piece explores the weird, humorous, dark and exotic world of contemporary vices. Written for ensemble, improvisers, conductor and voice it melts the boundaries between various disciplines including theatre, opera, poetry and contemporary music.

**Errollyn Wallen – *Mighty River*** (Commissioned by Rev John and Mrs Carol Wates. Produced by Oxford Contemporary Music)

Exploring themes of slavery and freedom, ***Mighty River*** combines contemporary classical techniques with spirituals which were introduced to Hull in 1871 by the Fisk Jubilee Singers - an African-American a cappella choir of ex-slaves. The piece, written for orchestra, takes its inspiration from William Wilberforce the English politician, philanthropist and leader of the movement to abolish the slave trade who was, very fittingly, a native of Hull. Errollyn Wallen is at ease both as a singer-songwriter of pop-influenced songs and a composer of contemporary new music. She describes her own Ensemble X with the motto, ‘We don’t break down barriers in music…we don’t see any.’

**Philip Venables & David Hoyle – *Illusions***

Commissioned by London Sinfonietta

Illusions is politically -engaged contemporary music exploring themes of government, LGBT rights and the rituals of music and art performance, featuring footage of avant -garde performance artist David Hoyle. The interplay between music and the cut-up video snippets of Hoyle searing and topical polemic is reflected in the erratic, boisterous and aggressive nature of the composition. The piece is written for an ensemble of nine musicians and is an extended and further developed version of Philip Venables’ existing composition which was part of the London Sinfonietta’s Notes to the New Government in May 2015. Philip Venables’ music is often concerned with violence, politics and speech within concert music and opera. Performance artist David Hoyles’ often focuses on themes in the LGBT community attacking what he sees as dominant trends in ‘bourgeios Britain’.

**Anna Meredith – Concerto for Beatboxer & orchestra**

Commissioned by Southbank Centre

Anna Meredith is a composer, producer and performer of both acoustic and electronic music. Her sound is often described as ‘maximalist’, ‘uncategorisable’ and ‘genre-hopping’ and straddles the worlds of contemporary classical, avant pop, electronica and experimental rock. Southbank Centre commissioned Anna Meredith and internationally renowned Beatbox Artist Shlomo to write a new piece for Beatboxer and Orchestra in 2010. The Concerto is an acclaimed modern classical work recognising the human voice box as a musical instrument.

**Laurence Crane – *Pieces About Art***

Commissioned by EXAUDI

Composition Professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Laurence Crane was commissioned by EXAUDI vocal ensemble in 2014 to write a new work for them. Initially wanting to use the words that had been written by American artist Bruce Nauman, titled *First Poem Piece*, which Nauman had engraved on a metal sculpture exhibited in a show in the late 1960s, Laurence was denied permission to use the text. Immediately putting his disappointment to one side, Laurence made the decision to write a text based on this permission email while concealing Nauman's name from the score. It is a piece is all about the composers struggle to get permission to set the text. There are sections of wordless music in this movement, perhaps suggesting that if permission had been granted then this is where Nauman's words would be.

**Jocelyn Pook – Anxiety Fanfare and Variation for Voices**

Commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation

First commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation for Anxiety Arts Festival London 2014 and premièred at the Wigmore Hall, London this work extends the multi-award winning composer Jocelyn Pook’s interest in the experience of mental illness, which she explored in her ground breaking 2012 work Hearing Voices. The Fanfare is written in five movements and draws on the unique potential of professional and nonprofessional singers. The fanfare will be rehearsed and performed with a community choir composed of mental health service users and professionals.

For more information about the New Music Biennial visit www.newmusicbiennial.com

NOTES

**PRS for Music Foundation** is the UK's leading charitable funder of new music and talent development across all genres. Since 2000 PRS for Music Foundation has given more than £22 million to over 5,200 new music initiatives by awarding grants and leading partnership programmes that support music sector development. Widely respected as an adventurous and proactive funding body, PRS for Music Foundation supports an exceptional range of new music activity – from composer residencies and commissions to festivals and showcases in the UK and overseas. www.prsformusicfoundation.com

**Hull UK City of Culture**

**Hull UK City of Culture 2017** is a 365 day programme of cultural events and creativity inspired by the city and told to the world. Hull secured the title of UK City of Culture 2017 in November 2013. It is only the second city to hold the title and the first in England.

**Divided into four seasons**, this nationally significant event draws on the distinctive spirit of the city and the artists, writers, directors, musicians, revolutionaries and thinkers that have made such a significant contribution to the development of art and ideas.

The Culture Company was set up to deliver the Hull 2017 programme and is an independent organisation with charitable status. It has raised £32 million, with over 60 partners supporting the project, including public bodies, lottery distributors, trusts and foundations and local and national businesses. Key contributions are coming from: **Host City** – Hull City Council; **Principal Partners** - Arts Council England, BBC, Big Lottery Fund, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, KCOM, KWL, Spirit of 2012, Yorkshire Water and the University of Hull; **Major Partners** –Associated British Ports, Arco, BP, the British Council, Green Port Hull, Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, MKM Building Supplies, P&O Ferries, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Sewell Group, Siemens, Smith & Nephew and Wykeland Group.

68 per cent of the funding is dedicated to public facing activities, including the widest range of cultural events in every corner of the city, with a further 11 per cent for legacy and contingency. More than £5 million is being invested in volunteering, learning and community engagement. £1.6 million is being invested to ensure a legacy after 2017. This includes capacity building, such as supporting existing events so they can grow, staging curtain-raiser events, developing future programming for after 2017 and building a new platform to support a unified ticketing system for the city.

Hull 2017’s International Partners are: Aarhus, Denmark, which is European Capital of Culture 2017; Reykjavik, Iceland; Rotterdam, The Netherlands; and Freetown, Sierra Leone (twinned with Hull). These relationships are reflected in a number of events throughout the year.

For information go to [www.hull2017.co.uk](http://www.hull2017.co.uk)

**Southbank Centre** is the UK’s largest arts centre, comprising three iconic buildings (Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Hayward Gallery) and occupying a 21-acre site that sits in the midst of London’s most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Building on this rich heritage, Southbank Centre offers an extensive artistic and cultural programme including annual and one-off themed festivals and classical and contemporary music, performance, dance, visual art and literature and spoken word. www.southbankcentre.co.uk

**BBC Radio 3 broadcasts** high-quality, distinctive classical music and cultural programming, alongside regular arts and ideas programmes, jazz and world music. The station features more live classical music programming than any other and is the home of the BBC Proms -broadcasting every Prom live and more than 600 complete concerts a year - alongside daily speech programming, 90 full-length operas, over 25 drama commissions and over 20 new BBC music commissions a year. Radio 3 is the most significant commissioner of new musical works in the country and is committed to supporting new talent, from composers to writers and new young performers, through schemes such as New Generation Artists and New Generation Thinkers. www.bbc.co.uk/radio3

**NMC Recordings** is a registered charity record label devoted to the promotion of contemporary British classical music. The first organisation to be heralded with the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Leslie Boosey Award for “its outstanding contribution to the furthering of contemporary music in Britain” NMC is a member of Arts Council England’s National Portfolio and is the proud digital partner of New Music Biennial 2017, providing a permanent digital home to the recordings of the works featured in the festival. www.nmcrec.co.uk

**Arts Council England** champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people’s lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to col lections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk