

PRESS RELEASE

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Jess Gillam launches third Virtual Scratch Orchestra project in time for Christmas

Following an overwhelming response to the first two projects, Classic BRIT award-winning saxophonist **Jess Gillam** today launches the third **Jess Gillam Virtual Scratch Orchestra**, inviting singers and instrumentalists of any standard from around the world to once again join her in mass virtual music-making.

The third track will be *Sleigh Ride*. Written in 1948 by Leroy Anderson and recorded by The Ronnettes, Ella Fitzgerald and Bing Crosby, the track is a firm Christmas favourite. Today Jess launches the call-out for musicians young and old to film themselves performing the piece using parts made available on her website. There are parts available for complete beginners, those who don't read music and advanced musicians too - her aim is to bring together musicians of all abilities from across musical worlds to collaborate and share some Christmas joy. Participants are encouraged to get creative for their videos and don their best festive costumes and sparkle! The entries will then be stitched together into a final video, with Gillam performing the solo. The deadline for video submissions is 7pm on Wednesday 18 November and the video will be premiered on Jess's [YouTube channel](#) on Friday 11 December at 6pm. Audio from all videos will be useful in the final video.

The Orchestra's first two projects were David Bowie's *Where Are We Now?* and The Beatles' *Let it Be*. Around 2,000 entries from musicians were received across the two projects, with participants performing on a huge range of different instruments, from nearly 30 different countries and with an age range of 6 to 81.

Jess Gillam said: I am so excited to launch this Christmas Virtual Scratch Orchestra Project! At a time where, unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly difficult to physically make music together, I hope that this will provide a fun and exciting way to bring people together with the power of music. As Christmas concerts, school plays and gatherings are cancelled and we face what may be a difficult winter, I hope that this will bring smiles and joy to those taking part and to those who watch. Right now, we need hope and light and music making can bring that in abundance!

Taking part is easy:

- [Take a look](#) at the parts available and download the music from Jess' website. The instruments are not prescriptive, find a part that works for you and participate.
- Video yourself playing your part playing along to the click track. Submissions can be recorded on a smartphone or video recorder but please use headphones so only you can be heard.
- Please upload your video to www.virtualscratchorchestra.co.uk and fill in the required details on the website including your name, email and the part you played before 7pm GMT on Wednesday 18 November.
- Sign up to the mailing list to make sure you see the final results.
- More information on Jess Gillam's website [here](#)

Parts available to download:

Flute 1
Flute 2
Oboe
Clarinet/Soprano Saxophone 1
Clarinet/Soprano Saxophone 2
Bassoon
Alto Saxophone 1
Alto Saxophone 2
Tenor Saxophone
Baritone Saxophone
Horn in F 1
Horn in F 2
Trumpet 1
Trumpet 2
Trombone
Bass Trombone
Tuba
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Piano
Guitar (Chord Chart)
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello
Double Bass/Bass Guitar
Beginner Flute, Oboe, Violin
Beginner Soprano Saxophone, Clarinet, Trumpet
Beginner Alto Saxophone
Beginner Bassoon, Cello
Vocals

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About Jess Gillam

"Gillam...spreads joy" *The Times*

“Gillam is the real thing, deserving serious attention” *Artsdesk*

Hailing from Ulverston in Cumbria, Jess Gillam is animating the music world with her outstanding talent and infectious personality.

After performing at the prestigious Last Night of the Proms in 2018 and having her performance described as “the indisputable highlight” by *BBC News*, Gillam continues to grow her international career. This season, she will perform at the Last Night of the BBC Proms Japan, with the Minnesota Orchestra, at the Lucerne Festival, with Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. She also continues to perform throughout the UK in recital as well as with the Hallé, Manchester Camerata and the European Union Chamber Orchestra.

Gillam is the first ever saxophonist to be signed to Decca Classics and recently released her debut album “Rise”, which shot to No.1 in the Official UK Classical Charts. Featuring a selection of her favourite pieces ranging from Marcello and Shostakovich to David Bowie and Kate Bush, it was highly celebrated and received rave reviews.

She is also a presenter on TV and Radio. She became the youngest ever presenter for BBC Radio 3 and hosts her own weekly show and podcast called “This Classical Life” where she chats to musical guests to swap tracks and share the music they love. The show has been very well received by audiences and critics alike, with *The Guardian* stating “there are many more established presenters who lack Gillam’s warmth and impressive ability”. She also presented five BBC Proms live on television alongside Katie Derham and Tom Service.

She has been the recipient of a Classic BRIT Award (in the Sound of Classical Poll), was the first ever saxophonist to reach the final of BBC Young Musician of the Year, and in 2019, performed live at the BAFTAs (British Academy of Film and Television Awards) to millions of viewers at home.

A free spirit in style and character, Gillam is a passionate advocate for the power of music in society, often combining her concert engagements with educational and social projects. She is a patron for Awards for Young Musicians and a trustee for the newly formed HarrisonParrott Foundation, working towards full inclusivity of all ethnicities, genders, disabilities and social backgrounds with equal access to the arts.

She studies with acclaimed saxophonist and composer John Harle. She is a Vandoren UK Artist and became the youngest ever endorsee for Yanagisawa Saxophones aged just 13. She is a lover of live music and continues to promote her own concert series, bringing international talent to her hometown of Ulverston.

About Jess Gillam’s second album, TIME

Gillam’s second album, *TIME*, entered the Official Classical Artist Chart at No.1, following its physical release on Decca Classics on Friday 25 September. *TIME* mirrors the arc of energy in a passing day and the constant orbit of our existence. With a huge range of styles, moods and influences, the music offers the listener a space to immerse themselves in an oasis of sound and reflection.

At the heart of the album is *Where the Bee Dances*: minimalist pioneer Michael Nyman’s 20-minute masterpiece for saxophone and orchestra. The incredibly electrifying and technical concerto is one of Gillam’s signature pieces and the work she performed in the final of BBC Young Musician in 2016, launching her career at the age of 17. Played on the album with the Aurora Orchestra and conducted by Nicholas Collon, recorded at Abbey Road, it is a piece that has inspired her from a young age. Nyman is also well known for his multi-platinum soundtrack album to Jane Campion’s *The Piano* (1993).

With a passion for pushing the boundaries of the saxophone and always looking to the next chapter of classical music, Gillam has also specially commissioned two new works for the album: *Dappled Light* by Luke Howard and *Orbit* by Goldfrapp's Will Gregory. The rest of the record features vivid contrasts between the intense rhythmic groove of Anna Meredith, the lilting, hypnotic patterns of Brian Eno as well as the hard-edged romanticism of Nyman and the gentle, melancholic whispers of Radiohead's Thom Yorke. There are also arrangements of works from multi-faceted and genre-breaking alternative artists including Björk and James Blake alongside familiar classical names such as Philip Glass, Max Richter and Joby Talbot.

To listen to TIME click [here](#). To view a 10-minute mini-documentary charting the making of the album click [here](#).