



"A true inspiration... she frankly rocks" – Huffington Post

JESS GILLAM

TRAILBLAZING SAXOPHONIST ANNOUNCES DEBUT ALBUM 'RISE'

Following stunning performance at the BAFTA Awards



Released on Decca Classics: Friday 26th April 2019

After her sensational performance at last night's **BAFTAs**, inspiring young classical saxophonist **Jess Gillam** announces the release of her debut album '**Rise**' on **26th April** on **Decca Classics**. It is a collection of pieces which showcase her phenomenal talent and diverse musical taste, ranging from **Marcello** and **Shostakovich** to **David Bowie** and **Kate Bush**. Fans can also relive her BAFTA performance as she releases '**Theme from Love Story**' as a brand new digital single (out now) – watch the music video [HERE](#).

20 year-old **Jess says**: *"To record an album has been a huge ambition of mine for a very long time so I can't believe it's actually happening! I've learned a lot through the recording process and the whole album consists of music I love so I am very excited to share it; I really hope you enjoy listening!"*

Jess Gillam is not only renowned for her musicianship, but also her passion for music education. Yesterday, she wrote an [open letter](#) in *The Guardian*, calling on politicians to support music tuition in schools, as funding cuts continue to threaten the opportunities for children to learn an instrument and develop a greater understanding of the arts. "Music has changed my life," wrote Jess. "I feel I have a duty to help ensure that others can benefit from its magic."

Jess Gillam's new album '**Rise**' reflects her own musical journey and the pieces which have inspired her in her career. She recorded it with the **BBC Concert Orchestra** and chamber musicians, as well as celebrated guitarist **MILOŠ**, who features on the track '**Flow My Tears**' – a transcription of the familiar Renaissance lute song by John Dowland.

The album includes beautiful cover versions of songs by two of Jess's biggest heroes: **Kate Bush's** ballad 'This Woman's Work' and **David Bowie's** timeless 'Where Are We Now?'. There are also familiar hits from the world of film, such as 'Closing In' by **John Williams** (as featured in Steven Spielberg's 2002 film *Catch Me If You Can*), **Michael Nyman's** 'If' (from *The Diary of Anne Frank*) and the bonus track, **Francis Lai's** 'Theme from *Love Story*'.

The recording also features two of Jess' signature pieces: 'Pequeña Czarda' by Pedro Iturralde, which she played in **BBC Young Musician 2016** wind category final, and Darius Milhaud's 'Brazileira' from *Scaramouche*, which she performed to great acclaim at the **Last Night of the Proms** – described by BBC News as the "indisputable highlight" of last year's spectacular event at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

There is a **brand new commission** on the album from Jess' teacher and mentor, **acclaimed saxophonist John Harle**, who also produced the recording. He has written a new piece for Jess called 'RANT!' which is based on traditional folk tunes from her home county, Cumbria. John says: *"'RANT!' is a portrait of Jess Gillam – her energy, her sound and her presence, painted in music from her own part of England. A 'rant' in the tradition of English Folk music is an energetic dance, and means 'to make merry', which is exactly what Jess does, both in her fearless live performances and in the exuberance she has brought to the recording studio for this album. Jess is a completely unique phenomenon on the music scene, and 'RANT!' is an endeavour to try to capture some of her power, panache and pizzazz at this very early stage of what will surely be a glittering career."*

'Rise' also features virtuosic encores and popular classical works, such a saxophone version of **Marcello's Adagio** from his well-known oboe concerto, Wiedoeft's charming *Valse vanité* and a new arrangement of **Shostakovich's Waltz No.2** from his second jazz suite – as featured in **Stanley Kubrick's** 1999 film *Eyes Wide Shut*. Plus there are two popular songs: the traditional Russian folk tune '**Dark Eyes**' in a new version by John Harle; and **Kurt Weill's** impassioned *Je ne t'aime pas*.

Hailing from Ulverston in Cumbria, Jess Gillam is blazing a trail in the music world with her outstanding talent and infectious personality. She is the **first saxophone player** to sign an exclusive recording deal with **Decca Classics** and has already released a series of digital singles on the label.

Jess first caught the public eye during BBC Young Musician 2016 when, at the age of 17, she made history as the first saxophonist to reach the final of the competition. She made her BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall in 2017 and returned the following year as part of the BBC Young Musician 40th Anniversary Prom. She also performed at Proms in the Park in Hyde Park before dashing across to the Royal Albert Hall to perform in the Last Night of the Proms.

Jess' concert career continues to go from strength to strength. She started 2019 by making her **US debut** in Washington DC and was also named one of WQXR's '19 for 19' Artists to Watch, playing at the launch event in New York. Her international dates include performances with Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra (Sweden), L'Auditori Barcelona (Spain), Argovia Philharmonic (Switzerland), Tampere Philharmonic (Finland) and the Lucerne Festival. She also appears extensively in recital throughout the UK and performs with orchestras including the BBC Philharmonic, BBC Concert Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia and Manchester Camerata. She is a champion of new music for saxophone and there will be a number of new commissions written for her over the coming years.

Hooked on saxophone from a young age, Jess is keen to give people from all backgrounds access to classical music and has set up **her own concert series** in Ulverston, bringing world-renowned musicians from across the world to her hometown. She is also a patron for **Awards for Young Musicians**, a charity which offers promising young performers support to progress their musical talent. Jess continues to be mentored by internationally-renowned saxophonist and producer John Harle.

Jess talks eloquently about music and has already made a number of high profile media appearances in the UK. She contributes to programming and presenting on TV and radio, and hosts the BBC Young Musician podcast alongside bassist Sam Becker and pianist Zeynep Özsucu. She also featured in a TV documentary celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the BBC Young Musician competition. Throughout the 2018 Proms season, Jess appeared in a weekly slot on BBC Radio 4's Today programme alongside broadcaster James Naughtie, and she has presented an episode of Saturday Classics on BBC Radio 3.

A free spirit in style and character, Jess Gillam is constantly seeking new opportunities for the saxophone and is always pushing musical boundaries. With her debut album 'Rise', there looks to be no stopping this bright and adventurous young musician as she reaches the latest milestone in her flourishing career.



Jess Gillam at the BAFTAs

Rise – Track listing:

1. Pedro Iturralde - Pequeña Czarda
2. Kate Bush - This Woman's Work *
3. Alessandro Marcello - Adagio (from Oboe Concerto in D Minor) *
4. Darius Milhaud - Brazileira (from *Scaramouche*)
5. John Williams - Escapades I. Closing In (From *Catch Me If You Can*) *
6. Michael Nyman - If (from *The Diary of Anne Frank*) *
7. John Harle - RANT! *
8. David Bowie - Where Are We Now? *
9. Kurt Weill - Je ne t'aime pas
10. John Dowland - Flow, my tears (feat. MILOŠ)
11. Rudy Wiedoeft - Valse vanité
12. Dmitri Shostakovich - Waltz No.2 (from Jazz Suite No.2)
13. Trad. - Dark Eyes
14. BONUS: Francis Lai - Theme from Love Story

* BBC Concert Orchestra play on the following tracks: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

<https://decca.lnk.to/JessGPR>

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Jess Gillam is managed by HarrisonParrott/Polyarts and remains grateful to the Young Classical Artists Trust for their support. She is a Vandoren UK Artist, and became the youngest ever endorsee for Yanagisawa Saxophones aged 13.