In 2016, at the age of 17, Jess made history as the first saxophonist to win the Woodwind Final of BBC Young Musician of the Year. She then reached the Grand Final at London’s Barbican Hall, and performed Michael Nyman’s “Where the Bee Dances” with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mark Wigglesworth to widespread critical acclaim.

This season Jess makes her BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall, where she performs as soloist with both the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Concerto highlights include appearances with Southbank Sinfonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Sinfonia Cymru. She gives recitals throughout the UK including a tour of Scotland, performances at the Isle of Man and Beaminster Festivals and a return visit to the Cheltenham Festival. Jess recently gave the premiere of a piece written for her by Jeremy Holland-Smith on BBC Four’s Choir of the Year, and has made a guest appearance with Jools Holland and his R&B Orchestra.

Jess studies with Rob Buckland at the Royal Northern College of Music with an ABRSM Scholarship, and is mentored by John Harle. She has appeared on BBC Radio 3 In Tune, BBC Radio 4 Woman’s Hour and BBC Radio Cumbria, who have made a programme about her. In 2015, Jess was awarded Musician of the Year at the Cumbria Culture Awards presented by Melvyn Bragg. The previous year, she was the youngest of 2,600 delegates to perform at the World Saxophone Congress in Strasbourg, where she gave a recital of world premieres by leading saxophonists Barbara Thompson, John Harle and Rob Buckland as well as one of her own compositions. For the past seven years, Jess has been running an annual concert series in her hometown of Ulverston, Cumbria.

Jess was featured as a Rising Star in BBC Music Magazine, and as the cover story of Music Teacher, Cumbria Life and Clarinet & Saxophone Magazines. She is a Vandoren UK Artist, and became the youngest ever endorsee for Yanagisawa Saxophones aged 13.  Jess is grateful for support from Awards for Young Musicians, and receives career advice and diary management from Young Classical Artists Trust.

Summer 2017

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**Press Quotes**

**“*One of the best young saxophonists in the UK*”**Snake Davis

**“*Life affirming musician*”**Clemency Burton-Hill, BBC Young Musician 2016

***“A true inspiration…she frankly rocks”***   
Huffington Post Entertainment

**“*Jess already has her place in the saxophone hall of fame*”**   
John Harle

**“*The sound of the future*”**Melvyn Bragg

**“*Funny, cool and down to earth…What was not to like*?”**Gramophone

**“*The future of our industry*”**  
Nikki Neave (Manager of Courtney Pine)

**“Jess gave a great show with her hot licks, lustrous tone and winning passion.”**   
The Times

***“…the elfin Jess Gillam, a young woman so full of music that her instrument seemed like some talisman belonging nowhere but in her hands. The way she swayed and played was beguiling, her boots and green tights raising the faintly amusing image of a spectre from the arboreal world.”***Wales Arts Review

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