FRIDAY AFTERNOONS

Press information, October 2015

Friday Afternoons singing project inspires thousands of young people across UK

Thousands across the country to take part in the Friday Afternoons 'Big Sing' on Friday 20 November.

Friday Afternoons is a UK-wide and international singing project led by the Suffolk-based arts organisation Aldeburgh Music which has got more than 70,000 young people singing since its launch in 2013. On **Friday 20 November 2015** thousands of young people across the country will sing new songs especially written for the project by American composer Nico Muhly.

Taking its name from the set of simple songs the composer Benjamin Britten wrote for his brother's school to sing every Friday, and originally conceived as the culmination of the worldwide 2013 Britten centenary celebrations, Friday Afternoons is now an annual project championing the joy of collective singing and encouraging as many young people as possible to join in.

Each year Friday Afternoons commissions a new set of songs, over time creating a significant resource of songs especially written for young people's voices. All the resources to learn the songs, including scores, recordings, teaching resources and interactive guides, are available to download free of charge from the Friday Afternoons website, www.fridayafternoonsmusic.co.uk. This year Aldeburgh Music

has commissioned American composer Nico Muhly to write eight new songs, which schools, choirs and music groups across the country are learning.

Friday Afternoons is a year-round project culminating in a Big Sing day, when performances take place across the UK. This year's Big Sing takes place on Friday 20 November and events will include performances in individual school classrooms as far apart as Yately in Hampshire and Rochdale in Yorkshire; multi-school performances in association with the county music hubs of Cornwall, Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland; a London Youth Choir performance with young people from the London Boroughs of Hackney, Camden and Southwark; and large-scale gatherings of up to 20 schools each at Snape Maltings Concert Hall in Suffolk and Saffron Hall in Essex.

Viewers will be able to watch a selection of the performances taking place across the UK live-streamed at www.fridayafternoonsmusic.co.uk.

"What's impressive about Friday Afternoons is of course the scale of the singing the project has inspired and realised and the thousands of voices that we'll hear. More importantly, it's the continuation of Britten's legacy in the shape of the new repertoire the project has produced, and which Aldeburgh has given, for free, to anyone who wants to perform them in the future." **The Guardian, 27/11/2014**

Friday Afternoons is made possible by an Arts Council England Exceptional Award.

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For more information:

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