

Full biography

‘An artist in the true sense of the word’, concert harpist Richard Allen is currently studying with Letizia Belmondo at the Haute École de Musique de Lausanne (Switzerland), having previously studied with Gabriella Dall’Olio and early harp specialist Frances Kelly as a Trinity College London scholar at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance, London, graduating with Distinction in 2016. Richard was born in 1993 in Belfast, Northern Ireland where he also studied traditional clarinet, piano, and traditional Irish harp.

In 2017 Richard won the 2nd Prize and the *Prix Communauté de Wallonie* at the Concours International Félix Godefroid in Belgium. He also won the First Prize at the prestigious Camac Harp Competition – North London Festival; the largest of its kind in the United Kingdom, and was also awarded the BBC Young Musicians’ Platform award, playing Glière’s *Harp Concerto Op.74* with the Ulster Orchestra and David Brophy. His playing is often noted for its remarkable palette of shades and colours, a depth of expression that is rarely heard on the instrument, and kaleidoscopic programming of pieces that delight the mind and touch the heart.

Richard is a passionate solo artist and regularly performs solo recitals in the UK, Ireland, and abroad. He played in St. Martin-in-the-Fields to great acclaim having won the Trinity Laban John Marson Prize, and his performance in the Teatro della Residenza in Monza (Italy) was described as ‘an incarnation’. Upcoming performances include live recordings, recitals, and opera productions throughout the UK and Europe. He has been one of the lucky few to have taken masterclasses with some of the world’s leading harpists including Marie-Pierre Langlamet, (Berliner Philharmoniker), Fabrice Pierre and Sylvain Blassel (CNSM Lyon), and Germaine Lorenzini (Orchestre National de Lyon).

Richard has a great love of orchestral repertoire and is the proud winner of the Philharmonia Orchestra MMSF Harp Fellowship 2017-18. Being particularly fond of opera and ballet, Richard has recently played Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*, and Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker* in the UK, Switzerland, and Scandinavia with orchestras such as the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Opéra de Baugé, and the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne. He has been invited to play in venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, Cadogan Hall, St. John’s Smith Square, the Ulster Hall, and the Opéra de Lausanne to name a few. He was principal harp of the Ulster Youth Orchestra and City of Belfast Youth Orchestra and in 2014 he was accepted as a reserve player by the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester. He has since played with orchestras such as NI Opera, the Ulster Orchestra, and the Société de Musique Contemporaine Lausanne.

Richard is a Philharmonia Emerging Artist and Harp Fellow (MMSF) and is generously supported by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust, and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Short biography

Concert harpist Richard Allen was born in 1993 in Belfast and is currently studying with Letizia Belmondo at the Haute École de Musique de Lausanne (Switzerland), having previously studied with Gabriella Dall'Olio and Frances Kelly at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance, London.

Richard has recently won the 2nd Prize at the Concours International Félix Godefroid in Belgium, following two prizes in 2016; 1st Prize at the prestigious Camac Harp Competition and the BBC Young Musicians' Platform Award. His playing is often noted for its remarkable palette of shades and colours, and a depth of expression that is rarely heard on the instrument. Richard is a passionate soloist and regularly performs in the UK and abroad, recently playing Glière's *Harp Concerto Op.74* with the Ulster Orchestra and David Brophy. He has a great love of opera and ballet, playing in the UK, Europe, and Scandinavia with orchestras such as the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne and the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra in venues such as Cadogan Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, the Grieghallen, and the Opéra de Lausanne.

Richard is a Philharmonia MMSF Emerging Artist & Harp Fellow and is generously supported by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.