

# Edinburgh student singer competes in West End Gala competition.

✘ Edinburgh born **Izuka Hoyle** competes with some of the UK's outstanding young singers aiming to win the coveted **Student Performer Of The Year Competition 2017**. Each finalist will perform a Sondheim song together with one chosen from a shortlist of 'best new songs'.

Originally from Edinburgh, **Izuka** moved to London in 2014 to attend Arts Educational Schools London on the Andrew Llyod Webber Scholarship. Due to graduate in September, she is currently appearing in *Working* at the Southwark playhouse and will shortly after begin shooting her first feature film; joining an A list cast, this project will mark her professional screen debut. No stranger to competitions, she was successful in winning the **Young Scottish Musical Theatre Performer of the Year back in 2015**.

**Izuka** is beyond thrilled to be a SSSSPOTY (pew!) finalist and would like to thank the Stephen Sondheim Society for granting the opportunity, but also Chris Hocking (ArtsEd Director) and Dane Preece (ArtsEd Head of Music) for the past three years of love and support.



Izuka Hoyle

**The Stephen Sondheim Society and Mercury Musical Developments** have announced the 12 finalists for the annual **West End Gala for The Stephen Sondheim Society Student Performer of the Year and The Stiles + Drewe Prize**. The 12 finalists from performing arts schools around the country have been selected to perform at the 2017 competition being staged

at the Noël Coward Theatre on Sunday 11 June at 3pm, hosted by Olivier Award winner Clive Rowe. The finalists are Tom Blackmore, Verity Blyth, Katie Buchholz, Oscar Conlon-Morrey, Georgia Frost, **Izuka Hoyle**, Rob Peacock, Emma Rendell, Georgia Richardson, Shaq Taylor, Jack Whittle and Joe Wiltshire Smith.

The gala will also include a special performance by Olivier Award winner and guest judge **Janie Dee** – soon to be seen as Phyllis in *Follies* at the National Theatre and writer and broadcaster **Edward Seckerson** returns to Chair the Student Performer judges as does legendary Sondheim interpreter **Julia McKenzie** to present the prize.

This year the annual gala will again be directed by **Chris Hocking**, with musical direction by **Stephen Ridley** and will also feature comedy double act Dominic Ferris and Martin Milnes who will be reprising their medley '33 Sondheim Numbers in 5 Minutes'.

The **Stiles + Drewe Prize** supports and develops new musical theatre writing via its two distinct arms. Recognising an outstanding song from a new musical, the winner of **Best New Song** receives £1,000 to put towards developing their work. Judging the Best New Song finalists with Stiles and Drewe will be songwriter **Dan Gillespie Sells** (*The Feeling & Everyone's Talking About Jamie*) and actor **Giles Terera** (soon to star as Aaron Burr in *Hamilton*).

The Edinburgh Reporter, wishes Izuka the very best of luck, and we will be keeping a close ear on the proceedings and will announce the results in due course.

## **Noël Coward Theatre**

St Martin's Lane, London, WC2N 4AU

**Box Office:** 0844 482 5140

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