

Edinburgh schoolboy in UK drumming final

A 16-year-old pupil at The City of Edinburgh Music School, Finlay Mackenzie, has reached the final of Young Drummer of the Year 2023.

The Portobello teenager competed against more than 400 other musicians, and was chosen from a video of a solo work he wrote and played to show his skills.

He began drumming lessons when he was just three-years-old at Portobello Music School. He now teaches young drummers on Saturday mornings hoping to give something back. In addition he plays piano and vibraphone, and plays drums in some jazz groups and ensembles.



Finlay Mackenzie

Finlay said: "I got an email saying that I had made it to the top 40, so I was pretty excited about that."

“Then I was Christmas shopping in St James Quarter when I got a call from the competition organiser telling me I had made it to the top ten final. I couldn’t believe it.

“My parents say I started showing an interest in drumming at 18 months old when I combined some upturned milk tins with a toy drum to make a drumkit. Apparently I would bang away on it for ages.

“I’m now on my third drum kit as I develop my sound.

“My drumming influences include jazz legends like Roy Haynes, Elvin Jones and Buddy Rich, but also contemporary Scottish drummers like Alyn Cosker, Graham Costello, and Stephen Henderson,” he said.

“My ambition is to follow in their footsteps to study jazz at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.”

Finlay will now attend the [finals](#) in Poole, Dorset, on 19 February 2023, to compete live in front of judges with nine other finalists. The winner gets a trophy and is likely to be approached by drum and cymbal companies with endorsement deals.



