

SONG ACADEMY

An academy for young songwriters

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For Immediate Release:

Award winning judging panel announced for Song Academy Young Songwriter (SAYS) Competition 2014

Songwriters **Eg White** and **Fraser T Smith** return to the judging panel, alongside *One Direction* writer/producer **Jamie Scott** and the *Original Artful Dodger* **Mark Hill**

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On Saturday 1st February the **2014 Song Academy Young Songwriter Competition** is officially open for entries from across UK and Ireland. This exciting platform for aspiring young songwriters gives young people aged 7-18 years the opportunity to have their songs heard by industry professionals, and the chance to release their own professionally recorded single at **Universal Music's** recording studio in London. Entry is free.

The winners will also win a professional photo shoot with **John Cassidy**, *The Headshot Guy*, and the 13-18 year olds category winner will win a **PreSonus AudioBox Studio, Notion 4** songwriting software and £ 500 of **Shure** audio equipment. And if that's not enough, selected winners and finalists will have their song released on the *SAYS 2014* compilation album distributed through **AWAL** (Artists Without A Label).

As well as the opportunity to win these amazing prizes, entrants will have their songs heard by this year's star studded industry panel of judges, including: **Eg White** (written for Adele, Florence + the Machine, Chloe Howell, Tom Odell), **Fraser T Smith** (written for James Morrison, Sam Smith, Taio Cruz, Pixie Lott), **Barry Mason** (written for Tom Jones and Elvis Presley), **Rob Davis** (written for Spiller and Kylie Minogue), **Lyn Goddard** (songwriter and producer), **Denzyl Feigelson** (advisor to Apple and iTunes and founder of Artists Without A Label), **Jamie Theakston** (radio DJ at Heart FM), **Nicky Cox** (editor of First News), **Amy Studt** (singer-songwriter), **Lou Rhodes** (singer-songwriter), **Mark Hill** (the original Artful Dodger, written for Ed Sheeran and Craig David), **Lili Tarkow-Reinisch** (written for Ellie Goulding) and **Jamie Scott** (written for One Direction).

Founder and Manager of Song Academy, Rowena Atkins said: "The SAYS competition is a unique initiative championing young people's creativity, individuality and powers of expression. It's a great privilege to be a spring board for young people to show their greatness and connect with the world".

Director at PRS for Music, Myles Keller said, "The Song Academy's 2014 competition offers young songwriters a golden opportunity to showcase their music and get invaluable feedback at a really formative time in their development. PRS for Music is absolutely delighted to support such a positive and exciting competition, particularly during the same year we are celebrating a century of songwriting. Music is integral to our nation's identity and it is crucial that we nurture the next generation of songwriters now to ensure a creative future where music continues to play a key role in society. "

Children can enter the competition individually or in collaboration with friends, school class or family. Songs can be easily recorded/uploaded with the smart Audioboo app via the Song Academy website. This competition will be separately judged for 7-12 years olds and 13-18 year olds. The deadline to enter the competition is 6 April 2014 and entry is free. For more information, please visit www.songacademy.co.uk/says14/



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Managing director of Dawsons, Mark Taylor said: "We are proud to be working with Song Academy on SAYS 2014. There's so much quality and talent out there, and awards like this one do a superb job of raising the profile of aspiring musicians, as well as teaching them the extra skills they require to make a career in music." **Harry Leckstein, Head of Music Business said:** "Tech Music School are delighted to be a part of SAYS 2014. We are passionate about supporting new British songwriters, composers, performers, producers and entrepreneurs and we look forward to hearing the output from this year's Academy."

Previous judges had nothing but praise for the competition:

Eg White, award-winning songwriter/producer, said: "Normally upon listening to the results of a songwriting competition, what comes across is how the competitors are trying to write commercial sounding music or impress with their cleverness or catchiness, but listening to these songs, I just really enjoyed the music, and could actually feel the people behind the songs, which has to be pretty close to the whole point of writing!"

Amy Studt, international singer-songwriter, said: "I think this is a fantastic way of young talent getting recognised and showcasing some of their work. I was in a songwriting competition when I was 12 and it really boosted my confidence and my belief in what I was doing. The talent this year had been fantastic and I have loved being a part of it".

Denzyl Feigelson, founder of AWAL, said: "I found the quality of songwriting to be surprisingly creative and quite advanced, yet refreshingly young and vibrant. The general and combined subject matter also gives one an indication of what 7-18 year olds are experiencing in their lives, and also the challenges they are having in today's modern society. I also found some of the musicianship and raw talent to be exceedingly good. What a wonderful outlet for communication".

Tom Robinson, from BBC Introducing and BBC 6 Music, said: "It was most impressive to hear young writers singing or rapping about their own lives without any outside input or help from adults. It bodes well for the future of music in this country."

Nicky Cox, editor of First News said: "I was so impressed by the standard of the entries and know that Britain's musical future is in safe hands."

Ed Vaizey, Government Minister for Creative Industries, said: "I am impressed and delighted by the outstanding young talent which Song Academy has discovered across the UK. This leading competition ensures that every child has the opportunity to be heard by music industry professionals and live their dream. Song Academy's fresh approach is set to enrich music education in the UK."

Jamie Theakston said: "I support anything that encourages children to find their way into the world of music, especially something like Song Academy which requires no formal training and their emphasis is on fun and self-expression."

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Song Academy

Song Academy is a young people's singing & songwriting academy – for both experienced and novice singers & songwriters. It's a unique and creative outlet for musical children to express themselves writing songs that matter to them and the world's waiting to hear! Members develop rapidly their musicality, creative writing, composition and performance skills, plus gain a host of vital life skills.

After-school sessions (plus holiday workshops and birthday parties) for 7-16 year olds are run across West London, with plans for expansion. Members learn how to write, perform & record their own songs, expressing themselves in a vibrant group of like-minded young people. The end of term Gig is a unique chance to perform their own songs with a professional band at one of London's top live music venues.

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