

Sunday 15 June 12pm & 5pm Peter Pears Recital Room

Ruby Colley and EXAUDI: Hello Halo

Ruby Colley violin, composer
James Weeks conductor

EXAUDI:
Cressida Sharp soprano
Jess Gillingwater mezzo-soprano
Tom Lilburn countertenor
David de Winter tenor
Michael Hickman baritone
Eoghan Desmond bass

Rod Morris

Film:

Documentary about 'Hello Halo', and a view into the world of Paul Colley and his unique collaboration with his sister Ruby. The film also runs continuously as an installation between performances

13'

Ruby Colley

Hello Halo (2025)

25'

Duration: approx 40'
no interval

Ruby Colley: Hello Halo

Hello Halo is inspired by Ruby Colley's brother Paul, who is neurodivergent and non-speaking. The work is shaped by Ruby's own (a neurodiverse musician) and her brother's lived experience, but is aimed at both neurodiverse and neurotypical audiences.

Despite being termed 'non-verbal', Paul uses a rich repertoire of sounds and gestures. This composition transcribes these communication methods, using live voice and recordings of Paul, to make a vocal map of Paul's life and relationships. It is an intimate examination of communication, both subtle and nuanced, and asks questions of what it means to be human.

The title 'Hello Halo' is inspired by a painting by the late Jonathan Westlake Cole and refers to a key word of Paul's – 'hello' – that he's used his whole life. It is the one word he has not lost. It is his means of connection and saying how he feels.

1. *Hello Halo*

The variations on 'hello' are all about context – how Paul says it, and to whom:

'Whispered' is a gentle invitation for connection and eye contact. It can also be a shyness. Usually reserved for people he likes the most or a way to inspire quiet connection.

'Spoken clearly' is when confident and in a good mood: 'I am here and feeling good!'

'Shouted' as above but more! Usually when excited. Can be heard when Paul is out on a good walk in nature!

'Loh' – a lazy hello.

'Hellooooo...?' Genial and almost sung with upward inflection. This is reserved for his most loved people like his Mum.

2. *What Is It*

What is it?: This is a fundamental question that gets asked to one's self or to Paul. We try to understand. To connect. How is Paul trying to tell us what he needs? This movement was developed

from a recording in Project Artworks (Hastings) during an art making session. It traverses Paul's moods, process and the ways in which the people around him attempt to support and connect.

Featuring Kate Adams, Magda Patza,
Paul Colley & Ruby Colley.

Hee-hoo = variation on 'Hello'

Ooo bee = 'Ruby'

Eee! – Can be 'Ruby' or 'food please'!

Aum, Om = 'Home'

Ohm = 'More'

AAN = Dan – support worker

3. *Duet 1*

The duets feature recordings of Paul and his carers/ family that are placed through a midi patch that generates tonal responses to his vocalisations. The violin and voice respond to these, starting together in the same tonal range. They gradually move apart, ending at highest (violin) and lowest (alto) range. The duets are a study on what it is to respond to Paul much like the people in Paul's life, such as his family and support workers. Paul often encourages a kind of duet of 'call and response' that is song like in nature.

4. *Echoes*

This movement is all about words/sounds Paul used as a child but has subsequently lost. It is an archive of his lost words and a means to remember.

'Hup' was used with a *point* to the sky. It was for the birds, planes and stars. Like 'Up'. 'Hup -pee-lau' is a variation of this. Meaning unclear.

The quote of 'Twinkle Twinkle' comes from a moment when he was roughly seven years old. He sung by surprise, in the back of the car, pitch perfect.

I learnt 'Twinkle Twinkle' from the age of three on the violin, but Paul managed to sing it years later. It is sung using the word 'Hup' referring to the stars above. It was a lesson that Paul knew and understood far more than we realised. It also told me that his processing time, may just take a little longer than the rest of us.

He sang it for about a year. Then ever again. As yet ...

5. Duet 2: Now

Like Duet 1, the Bass and Violin respond to the vocalisations and midi cues within the score. This time, we start at our highest and lowest ranges and gradually move towards one another, ending on the same note.

Mum-Mah = Mum

Uhnuya unu yuuh nah = Unknown

Le i-ha Yaa = Form of singing or family Friend Yaa

Att-d! = Dad or Bus

6. Cosmology

Lyrics are inspired by the drawing

'Cosmology of Care' by Kate Adams.

The Cosmology of Care drawing represents the possibilities and barriers of health and social care systems in England. These bureaucratic systems are

spoken in their acronyms, gradually getting more dense and chaotic is the movement develops.

In the centre is the individual alongside their family or caregiver. Around them, in the second circle, are different types of 'home'.

In the outer open zone of this 'cosmology' is life, hopes and dreams and all the freedoms we may take for granted such as acting on free will, choosing who we live with, being in wild places, being able to change our minds and choosing how we spend our time.

The drawing opposite is Paul's cosmology – the various elements that make his life function and have meaning.

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