

# The First Lynsey de Paul Prize

By **Alexander Baron** - Aug 29, 2015



Lynsey de Paul back in 1974 (Image Credits: Rex Features )

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Lynsey de Paul died last October at the age of 66, and this June a special prize was set up **in her memory** by the leading music body PRS and its sister organisation. If you are not *au fait* with Lynsey de Paul, if one excludes **Candice Night**, she was arguably the loveliest creature **ever to sit at a keyboard**; she was also a songwriter *par excellence*. It was probably too much therefore to expect any youthful recipient of this inaugural award to show the same promise as its figurehead, and Emma McGrath **falls far short** of such expectations.

Apart from pointing out that she is not to be confused with the genuinely talented classical violinist of the same name, allowance should be made for this girl, she is only fifteen. Noël

Coward's **first published song** was complete rubbish, but he got over it, and the rest is history. Miss McGrath has a long way to go, and while one should not be so unkind as to tell her not to give up the day job, she should certainly not give up school.

Her YouTube account consists overwhelmingly of covers, some of which sound a bit like Tracy Chapman, except *Talkin' 'Bout A Revolution*, which sounds like no one on this Earth. Fortunately, she doesn't look like Tracy Chapman, although she does look rather stern.



As well as her own website, some of her original material can be found on Soundcloud. One of these is a song called *Yesterday*, which is of course nothing like as classic as **that song**. The final track at the moment is called *Don't* – not a bad idea.

Seriously, her prize includes mentorship, which is something she needs even more seriously, but again we should not judge her too harshly on account of her age. There are three runners up: Emma McGann is certainly unpretentious and somewhat tongue-in-cheek, but she is unquestionably the girl most likely to. If she doesn't make it big in music she'll make it big somewhere, either in film or as a billionaire's wife.

Runner up Niomi O'Rourke doesn't have that much of a portfolio, but she is a far more interesting character. A graduate of Goldsmiths, she says she wants to combine ye olde with the new, something that has been done many times before of course, but she does appear to have her own style.

Finally, like Emma McGann, Saachi Sen is not to be taken too seriously. She too has a presence on Soundcloud, and records with a band as well as playing solo guitar, but although she is no Emma McGrath, she is no Lynsey de Paul either. Sadly, there was and only ever will be one Lynsey, but although she is now dead and gone, her music lives on. Check back in forty years to see if you can the same thing about any of these four.

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