

RLPO September 23 programme complementary content

The 2021/22 season is underway, with our full symphony orchestra back on stage and ready to deliver a busy programme of joyous music-making.

This year not only do we have a new Chief Conductor but we're presenting our popular programme notes in a new and accessible way.

And in addition, this companion page draws together a range of complementary content which we hope will help shine additional light on the pieces, the people who composed them and the performers bringing them to life here in Hope Street.

Leeds International Piano Competition

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic's partnership with the **Leeds International Piano Competition** continues for 2021.

Not only is the Orchestra accompanying the finalists at the competition in Leeds (under the baton of our principal guest conductor **Andrew Manze** but there is a chance during September for Philharmonic audiences to enjoy performances here from both this year's winner and the pianists placed second and third.

The triennial competition was founded by the late **Dame Fanny Waterman** in 1963 and remains one of the world's most prestigious launch pads for the next generation of leading concert pianists.

Its 'transformative' prize package includes a management deal, recording contract, top recital venues in London, European and Asian tours, and extensive engagements in Britain and abroad - including here in Liverpool.

In 2021, the competition features **24 shortlisted pianists** from 18 countries – from China to Bulgaria and Peru, and Iran to Kazakhstan to Japan.

Watch the second-round performances here: <https://leedspiano.medici.tv/en/>

Case Scaglione

Rising star conductor **Case Scaglione** makes his Liverpool debut in this Leeds International Piano Competition winner concert.

The 37-year-old Texan is, according to one reviewer, 'relaxed, likeable, unpretentious, reflective, clear-cut – and is highly inspiring and demanding of his musicians.'

Scaglione's passion for conducting started when he was a boy and he found himself unexpectedly at the opera with his parents – unexpectedly because his babysitter had failed to turn up.

"I remember being completely transfixed by the men in the pit," he recalls of the 'transcendental' experience. "I was really interested in the communication between this person at the front through hand motions and what the orchestra gave in return.

“And I just remember having this revelatory experience of music cutting right to the core of my soul. I remember getting chills listening to Tristan and Isolde, even though I didn’t completely know what was going on.”

Hear more about this talented young music maker’s views on conducting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVBj8KNQGgE>

Tannhäuser Overture

Richard Wagner inspired a young Case Scaglione, so perhaps it’s apt that the programme opens with one of the German composer’s great operatic overtures.

Not, in this case Tristan and Isolde, but the mythological **Tannhäuser** – one of Wagner’s earliest operas, composed during his time in Dresden and premiered at the city’s Königliches Hoftheater in 1845.

The overture appears to have been a particular favourite of the American screenwriter and film director Preston Sturges who sneaked it into the background on his 1941 film *The Lady Eve* starring Henry Fonda and Barbara Stanwyck before placing it centre stage in the 1948 black comedy *Unfaithfully Yours*.

The film stars none other than Huyton-born Rex Harrison – an alumnus of the Liverpool Repertory Theatre, better known now as the Liverpool Playhouse – as a jealous symphony orchestra conductor.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7x1OcxlZw>

Did you know? Rex Harrison’s brother-in-law was the former Liverpool barrister and MP for West Derby (and later Home Secretary) David Maxwell-Fyfe, who was one of the lead prosecutors at the Nuremberg Trials.

Dvořák’s Symphony No 8

Antonín Dvořák said himself that he wanted his **Eighth** to be “different from other symphonies”, and with its bright, ebullient and lyrical tone and its unusual structure you might say he succeeded.

The Ninth may be the more famous, but its predecessor is packed with delicious melodies both inspired by Bohemian folk tunes and straight out of the imagination of its 48-year-old creator.

Enjoy listening to a performance of Symphony No 8 by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, recorded with Vasily Petrenko in 2016.

<https://www.liverpoolphil.com/the-orchestra/live-from-liverpool-philharmonic-hall/works-by-brahms-and-dvorak/>

Did you know? Before he became a world-famous composer, Dvořák was a jobbing musician playing principal viola in the Provisional Theatre

orchestra in Prague where conductors included Wagner – whom he greatly admired - and Smetana.