

RLPO November 4 programme complementary content

Luscious and lyrical tunes are paired with an engaging micro-symphony in this evening which transports the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall audience from Hope Street to the Ringstrasse.

You can learn more about it in our programme notes which this year are being presented 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.

Kevin John Edusei

Kevin John Edusei makes his Liverpool debut in this evening of magical Viennese music.

The award-winning German-born conductor started his musical life as a percussionist and studied sound engineering before turning to conducting full time.

In 2022 he will step down as chief conductor of the Munich Symphony Orchestra after eight years there during which time he has embarked on recording a Schubert symphony cycle. Elsewhere, he has recorded Korngold's violin concerto with soloist Caroline Goulding and the Bern Symphony Orchestra.

His maternal grandmother, Antonie Wingels, was an opera singer and a great influence on the young Edusei.

In a **2017 interview** he revealed: "We had a very close relationship, she often sang for me or we would listen to recordings, preferably Der Rosenkavalier.

"She passed away before my professional career took off and never saw me conducting on the podium. I'm sure we would have had great conversations about music. I think of her whenever I walk on stage."

Watch Kevin John Edusei conducting at the Proms in 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOKGBo84Hv4>

Schubert Symphony No.9

In a letter of 1824, the prolific and prodigiously talented **Franz Schubert** told a correspondent he was about to write a 'grand symphony'.

The result – his Ninth Symphony in C major - would later be nicknamed not grand but **the Great**, and while it was finished it was never performed in full during his short lifetime.

Instead, after his death in Vienna in November 1828, the unseen manuscript remained in the hands of the Schubert family – until in 1838 Schubert’s brother Ferdinand showed it to the young Robert Schumann who was on a visit to the city.

Schumann returned home to Leipzig with the score, and within a year it had been given a proper premiere in a concert **conducted by Mendelssohn**.

While Schubert is best known for his lieder, or songs, he actually composed works in many different genres and was hugely productive. In 1815, still aged 18, for example his output included 145 songs and both his Second and Third Symphonies.

Did you know? Franz Schubert was one of the torch bearers at the funeral of Beethoven in March 1827.

Korngold Violin Concerto

Erich Wolfgang Korngold remains best known as the man behind some of the most glorious sweeping cinematic scores of 1930s and 40s Hollywood.

But the Moravia-born pianist, composer and conductor - whose father was a leading music critic and early champion of Mahler - started his musical career writing sonatas, sinfoniettas, songs and operas.

Korngold was in fact a child prodigy who was just 11 when his ballet *The Snowman* became a hit in Vienna. Mahler later called the teenage Korngold a ‘musical genius’ and Richard Strauss also recognised his youthful talent.

He first set foot in **Hollywood in 1934** when he was invited to adapt Mendelssohn’s score for a film version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* for Warner Brothers.

His first original cinematic score came the following year when he was persuaded to write for Errol Flynn swashbuckler **Captain Blood** and he would go on to score six more movies starring the Australian actor.

Hollywood both made the composer’s name in the wider musical world, and **probably saved his life** with the Jewish Korngold and his family finding themselves in Los Angeles in 1939 as the Nazis over-ran Europe.

Korngold continued to compose orchestral works and in 1945 he completed his dazzling **Violin Concerto** dedicating it to Alma Mahler and describing it as a work “contemplated more for a Caruso than a Paganini.”

Listen to a performance of the Violin Concerto by Nicola Benedetti.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_sSGr8z5VM

Watch a fascinating short film about Erich Wolfgang Korngold’s life and work.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRrmWe-r9cI>

Did you know? The world may have still been at war, but 1945 still proved a prolific one for classical music with new works including Tippett's First Symphony, Prokofiev's Fifth and Shostakovich's Ninth, along with Barber's Cello Concerto and the premiere of Britten's Peter Grimes.

Simone Lamsma

Dutch violin virtuoso **Simone Lamsma** last appeared with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in November 2019 when she performed Bruch's Violin Concerto.

Now, two years on, Lamsma returns to Hope Street, this time with Korngold's richly textured and lyrically luxurious **Violin Concerto**.

Lamsma, who has a repertoire of around 60 concertos, first picked up a violin at the age of five and at 11 she moved to Britain to study at the Yehudi Menuhin School and later at the Royal Academy of Music from where she graduated with first class honours and a clutch of awards.

She plays the 1718 '**Mlynarski**' **Stradivarius** crafted during what is known as the 'golden period' of Antonio Stradivari's career.

Watch Simone Lamsma answering 20 questions about life, the universe and everything...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N74pg8kCLMA>

Kurt Schwertsik Shrunken Symphony

Kurt Schwertsik proved a big hit with Liverpool Philharmonic Hall audiences when he appeared on stage – in blue velvet frock coat - to take a bow at the **world premiere of his flute concerto** almost 10 years ago.

The 86-year-old, once a horn player in the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, composed his Schrumpf Symphonie, or Shrunken Symphony earlier, in 1999, and muses on the meaning of its title in these **composer notes**.

Watch a short documentary on Kurt Schwertsik.

<https://www.boosey.com/podcast/Schwertsik-on-Schwertsik/100074>

Listen to an audio clip of the Schrumpf Symphonie.

<https://www.boosey.com/audio-clip/Kurt-Schwertsik-Schrumpf-Symphonie-1999/10247>