

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

March 31 and April 3 programme complementary content

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic presents two concerts of works which span a 140-year period but were nearly all composed in the shadow of conflict - from Napoleon's hostile occupation of Vienna to the final months of the Second World War.

You can learn more about what to expect in our programme notes which this year are being presented in a new and accessible way.

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.

Domingo Hindoyan

Domingo Hindoyan (<https://www.askonasholt.com/artists/domingo-hindoyan/>) was born in Caracas in 1980 to a violinist father and a lawyer mother and started his musical career as a violinist in the ground-breaking Venezuelan musical education programme El Sistema.

He studied conducting at **Haute Ecole de Musique in Geneva** (<https://www.hesge.ch/hem/en/school/>), where he gained his masters, and in 2012 was invited to join the Allianz International Conductor's Academy, through which he worked with the London Philharmonic and the Philharmonic Orchestra and with conductors like Esa-Pekka Salonen and Sir Andrew Davis.

He was appointed first assistant conductor to **Daniel Barenboim** (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Daniel-Barenboim>) at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin in 2013, and in 2019 he took up a position as principal guest conductor of the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra.

In the same year, he made his debut with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and was appointed as successor to Vasily Petrenko in 2020, taking up his position last September.

María Dueñas

Yehudi Menuhin Prize (<https://menuhincompetition.org/about/>) winner **Maria Dueñas** (<https://www.mariaduenasviolin.com/en/bio>) makes her Royal Liverpool Philharmonic debut performing Sibelius's *Violin Concerto*.

The 19-year-old Spanish virtuoso swept all before her at the prestigious 2021 contest which is the world's leading international competition for violinists and has been dubbed the 'Olympics of the violin'.

Not only did she win the competition, but she also took away the Audience Prize.

Dueñas, who studies with Boris Kuschmir at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz and MUK in Vienna, has a host of other prizes and awards to her name and is currently a **BBC New Generation Artist**.

((<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/3jX17G12hFyt6l7WPTxKCx/about-the-ngas>))

The **Granada-born musician** ((<https://www.sfcv.org/articles/artist-spotlight/violinist-maria-duenas-clears-field#>)) started playing at five and made her concert debut aged 15 at the Vienna Musikverein.

Along with two appearances in Liverpool, Dueñas's 2021/22 concert commitments include debuts with the Pittsburgh Symphony, Dresdner Philharmonie, Oslo Philharmonic, NHK Symphony and Danish National Symphony Orchestra. In May she is due to join the Los Angeles Philharmonic and conductor Gustavo Dudamel to give the world premiere of a concerto by Gabriela Ortiz.

She plays the 1724 Nicolò Gagliano violin and also on the Guarneri del Gesù 'Muntz' 1736, and is a founding member of the Hamamelis Quartet.

Watch Maria Dueñas perform in the finals of the 2021 Menuhin Competition.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVpkTD5q_p8

Carl Nielsen

Denmark's foremost composer **Carl Nielsen**

((<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/nielsen/reasons-to-love/>)) was born on the island of Funen and started his life playing violin in his village band.

At 14 he joined a military band where he learned a wide range of instruments, and five years later enrolled in the Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen.

He later became a violinist in the court orchestra, a theatre kapellmeister and conductor of the Copenhagen Musical Society.

Nielsen's earliest compositions were dance tunes, and although he went on to become renowned as a symphonist his songs based on **Danish folk songs**

((<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkUnj-FXpRY>)) were also well regarded.

Nielsen composed the charming symphonic poem *Pan and Syrinx* in 1918, not long after he had finished his *Fourth Symphony – The Inextinguishable*, and in time to premiere it in a concert of his works in Copenhagen.

It was inspired by **Ovid's *Metamorphoses*** (<https://interlude.hk/changing-the-unattainable-nielsen-pan-and-syrinx/>) and the composer wrote it in the space of a fortnight. The work tells how Pan, the Greek god of nature and fertility, created the eponymous Pan flute or pipes when he pursued the nymph Syrinx who was transformed into hollow water reeds.

Listen to Nielsen's *Pan and Syrinx*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b96x8FilyDM>

Ludwig van Beethoven

The year 1806 (<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/beethoven/guides/beethovens-life-timeline-part-2/>) was a busy one for **Beethoven** (<https://www.bl.uk/people/ludwig-van-beethoven>) who completed his *Fourth Symphony*, *Piano Concerto No 4 in G major*, his only *Violin Concerto*, three string quartets and *32 Variations in C minor* for solo piano.

This burst of creativity came off the back of an unsuccessful first performance of what would turn out to be his only opera, **Fidelio** (<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/beethoven/guides/beethovens-music-opera/>).

Ironically the work, whose plot centres around a heroic struggle for freedom and justice, was premiered in November 1805, just days after Napoleon's invading army occupied Vienna, so perhaps it's not surprising didn't meet the acclaim it might have done.

The opera was originally titled *Leonore* after its heroine, and Beethoven worked and re-worked its overture to create no fewer than **four separate versions**. (<https://thelistenersclub.com/2017/01/02/the-struggle-of-fidelio-beethovens-four-overtures/>)

Beethoven returned to the opera's score early in 1806, dramatically fleshing out the work and composing what became the third iteration of its overture.

He would eventually reject this and pen a fourth.

But what remains is a **symphonic sonata-style stand-alone work** (<https://interlude.hk/perfect-but-too-strong-beethoven-leonore-overture-no-3/>) which embraces all the main musical themes from the opera in a powerful, richly-developed 13-minutes of music.

Listen to a performance of Beethoven's *Leonore Overture No 3*.

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

Jean Sibelius

During his career **Jean Sibelius**

((<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/sep/09/sibelius-where-to-start-with-his-music>)) produced seven symphonies, more than a dozen symphonic poems, two operas (one unfinished), and numerous cantatas, songs, orchestral and chamber pieces – but just one concerto.

Still, while the ***Violin Concerto in D minor***

((<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/sibelius/music/violin-concerto-d-minor/>)) may stand alone in his extensive musical output, it remains one of the Finnish composer's most popular works.

No one who attended the premiere in Helsinki in February 1904 would probably have predicted that popularity however, as the evening turned out to be a complete disaster.

Sibelius, conducting his own work, had barely finished the demanding score and soloist Victor Nováček – a teacher from Helsinki University – was under-rehearsed as a result.

The composer went back to the drawing board, revising the work and it's this revised version that entered the violin repertoire – with only a handful of performances of the original in the last 30 years.

The work itself is **symphonic in structure**

((<https://theimaginativeconservative.org/2018/01/finnish-perfection-jean-sibelius-violin-concerto-terez-rose.html>)) with the soloist and orchestra each having an equal voice.

It opens with a haunting melody on violin, echoed by a single clarinet, while an extended cadenza in the middle of the movement also acts as a developmental passage.

Clarinets and oboes open the lyrical adagio before the violin enters over pizzicato strings. And rhythmic percussion heralds the final movement, a fizzing allegro which is one of the most exciting and technically demanding passages written for violin.

Did you know? A young Sibelius yearned to become a virtuoso violinist but a late start learning the instrument coupled with stage fright meant he never realised his dream.

Watch Hilary Hahn perform Sibelius' *Violin Concerto*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0w0t4Qn6LY>

Sergei Prokofiev

Sergei Prokofiev's ((<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/prokofiev/guides/facts-gallery/>)) *Fifth Symphony* was composed in the midst of the Second World War and dedicated "to the greatness of the human spirit".

Its composer had been evacuated from Moscow when Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, first moving to the Caucasus and then to Almaty in southern Kazakhstan.

He continued writing, with wartime works including his dark and brooding *Violin Sonata No 1*, his ballet *Cinderella* and a film score for Sergei Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O33rkKmpVsk>)

It was the summer of 1944 – by which time Prokofiev and his second wife Mira were ensconced in a 'house of rest and creativity' north of Moscow - when what would become his *Symphony No 5 in B flat major* (https://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/dw.asp?dc=W17074_318549) was composed, against a backdrop of Allied successes in Europe which heralded the tide finally turning against the Axis powers.

Prokofiev conducted the premiere in Moscow in January 1945 as artillery fired outside.

The work is in four movements, opening with a lyrical melody – one of three themes in the first movement - on flute and bassoon and with the movement coming to a thrilling conclusion. The second movement is a speedy and jagged scherzo, while the third, a dreamy adagio, features a tortured climax.

And while the finale appears to be playful and exuberant, it can also be interpreted as bordering on the manic.

Did you know? Prokofiev was an excellent chess player who not only defeated his fellow composer Ravel but also future world champion, the Cuban José Raúl Capablanca, whom he played in 1914.

Listen to the allegro marcato second movement from Prokofiev's *Symphony No 5 in B flat major*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT7YgZ8J-PA>