

63 COMPETITORS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 20TH LEEDS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

Pianists, aged between 20 and 29 and representing 28 countries, have been carefully selected to compete in the first ever Virtual International First Round, taking place in London, Berlin, Paris, Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul, New York, 6-10 April 2021

Second Round, Semi-Finals & Finals of the 2021 Leeds International Piano Competition to be held in Leeds, 8-18 September 2021

The Leeds International Piano Competition today announced that 63 pianists have been shortlisted for the First Round of the 20th edition of the competition.

The pre-selection Jury, chaired by Artistic Director Adam Gatehouse, listened to 264 applicants – a 43% increase in applications from the last Competition in 2018. Jurors commented on the challenges of choosing the 63 due to the “exceptionally high quality of applicants.” The 63 pianists represent 28 nationalities, with 44% selected from East Asian countries. Four British nationals have been selected as well as competitors from Morocco, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Iran, Israel and Peru.

The First Round Jury, chaired by Adam Gatehouse and including Simone Dinnerstein (USA), Noriko Ogawa (Japan) and Martin Sauer (Germany), will hear a 25-minute recital from each of the 63 pianists before selecting 24 to go through to the Second Round in Leeds in September 2021.

‘The Leeds’, with its defining qualities of excellence and musical integrity, has long attracted some of the world’s most exciting young pianists.

Detailed safety measures are in place at all venues with a local film crew deployed in each venue, centrally directed and produced from London, to capture the performances in high-definition sound and vision that The Leeds is known for via its partnership with [medici.tv](#).

All the performances from the International First Round will be made public in the Summer, and the Leeds rounds will be streamed by [medici.tv](#) on their dedicated platform, which is free to watch in 190 countries around the world.

Adam Gatehouse, Artistic Director of The Leeds said:

“It is of paramount importance that our artists and jurors are able to take part as safely as possible, whilst maintaining the integrity of the Competition experience. This means we have decided to make the First Round ‘virtual’, by filming Competitors’ performances in a small selection of venues closest to them. With the amazing support and enthusiasm of conservatoires and venues around the world, we can ensure the pianists have the shortest possible journey to their First Round performance. Our partners also enable us to make sure that all our pianos are of the world-leading standard we demand and that we can capture the highest quality performances for our remote Jury to hear.”

With the speedy rollout of vaccines in the UK, The Leeds organisers are very confident that the September rounds will be a live celebration in their spectacular venues at the University of Leeds and Leeds Town Hall. All rounds will be streamed worldwide by [medici.tv](#) and BBC Radio 3 and BBC Four TV will cover the Finals. The Concerto Final performances, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, will be conducted by Andrew Manze, their Principal Guest Conductor.

The stakes are higher than ever with cash prizes worth over £90,000 and a prize package which has redefined what a competition can offer young artists. It includes artistic management with Askonas Holt, one of the world's most renowned music management agencies; concerts and engagements with some of the world's premiere venues and orchestras, including London's Wigmore Hall, South Bank Centre and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra; concert and recording engagements with BBC Radio 3, a media partner of The Leeds; a European tour organised with partners Steinway & Sons; a studio recording with Warner Classics; a programme of recital engagements in Yorkshire and other UK venues; and mentoring from Artistic Director Adam Gatehouse and other members of the performer-led Jury, chaired by Imogen Cooper (England), which includes Adam Gatehouse (England), Inon Barnatan (Israel/ USA), Adrian Brendel (England), Gaetan Le Divelec (France), Ingrid Fliter (Argentina), Ludovic Morlot (France/ USA) and Steven Osborne (Scotland).

Adam Gatehouse said:

"It is clear from the large increase in the number of applicants we've received that musicians have a strong need to be heard and connect with their audiences. We are here to support all our pianists on their Leeds journey, and will provide a programme of advice, masterclasses and industry insights to help build their careers, no matter how far the journey with the Competition takes them. We aim for everyone to be transformed by the experience of coming to our city and taking part, whether that's through the friendships they make or the opportunities they find."

A full list of Competitors can be viewed [here](#).

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