

LEEDS PIANO FESTIVAL 2019

2018 Competition Winner Eric Lu joins world-renowned artists Steven Osborne and Barry Douglas for annual celebration of piano in Leeds and London

28 March – 7 April 2019

Leeds College of Music, Leeds | LSO St Luke's, London



Eric Lu © Simon Wilkinson; Barry Douglas © Benjamin Ealovega; Steven Osborne © Benjamin Ealovega

Extensive learning and engagement activities take piano out of the concert hall and into communities

Outstanding young scholars from Lang Lang International Music Foundation also perform

“Artistry of that kind is rare in pianists of any age; to find it in a 20-year-old is simply astounding.” The Daily Telegraph

Following his win at the Leeds International Piano Competition in September 2018, 21-year-old pianist **Eric Lu** returns to ‘The Leeds’ for **Leeds Piano Festival**, with recitals in Leeds and London. World-renowned pianists **Steven Osborne** and **Barry Douglas** also perform recitals, with Osborne leading a masterclass with Young Scholars from the **Lang Lang International Music Foundation**, building on the ongoing relationship between the Foundation and The Leeds.

The Festival continues the much-enriched programme of events that surrounded the 2018 Competition, allowing audiences to engage with the piano and The Leeds beyond the triennial

Competition. As part of The Leeds' commitment to developing new and exciting ways of bringing the piano to as wide an audience as possible, the Festival – successfully inaugurated in 2018 – will again comprise many learning and engagement activities, including the return of the *'Discover the Piano: Piano Fantasia'* on 28 March - The Leeds' biggest primary school event to date, reaching more than 1,000 schoolchildren. The Young Scholars also participate in learning activities in primary schools and adult care settings in both Leeds and London – the latter once again in partnership with Wigmore Hall's learning and participation programme – inspiring music lovers young and old with their prodigious talents.

Leeds Piano Festival recitals

Eric Lu's return to The Leeds is part of the revolutionary prize package at The Leeds last year, designed with career development in mind. The prize also included world-wide management with Askonas Holt, a release of his Leeds-winning performance on major label Warner Classics (released to much acclaim in November 2018), opening the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's 2018/19 season, mentoring with jury members and more. Lu performs Chopin's Piano Sonata No. 2 – a piece he performed in the Competition semi-finals and released as a single on Warner Classics following his win – as well as works by Mozart, Brahms and Handel.

Former Royal Philharmonic Society 'Instrumentalist of the Year' Steven Osborne explores Beethoven's final three piano sonatas. Osborne is a renowned interpreter of Beethoven's music, not least from his critically-acclaimed recordings of the composer's piano sonatas on the Hyperion label, and these recitals offer a rare opportunity to see him perform in an intimate setting.

Internationally-renowned pianist Barry Douglas pairs miniatures with more expansive works in both halves of his programme for the Festival, contrasting Tchaikovsky's vignettes *The Seasons* with his Grande Sonata in G major, before pairing Rachmaninov's *Six Moments Musicaux* with Schubert's intense Sonata in A minor.

The Festival also showcases three Young Scholars from the [Lang Lang International Music Foundation](#), developing the continuing relationship between the Foundation and the Leeds. Three exceptional young pianists, Aliya Alsafa, Jasper Heymann and Shuheng Zhang – handpicked and mentored by Lang Lang, the Competition's Global Ambassador – perform recitals at both Festival venues, as well as participate in a masterclass led by Steven Osborne at Leeds College of Music.

Speaking at the Finals of the 2018 Competition – where he also presented prizes and was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Leeds – Lang Lang stated: *"I'm extremely proud of my association with the city of Leeds, and with the Piano Competition – which is doing so much to unite excellence and accessibility"*.

Closing the Festival, celebrity pianist **Alistair McGowan** returns to The Leeds with *Introduction to Classical Piano* at Besbrode Pianos. An alumnus of the University of Leeds, McGowan previously performed at The Leeds during *Piano +* events at the 2018 Competition, and his 2017 recording *The Piano Album* reached Number One in the UK Classical Album Charts.

Learning and Engagement

In addition to their recitals and masterclass, the Young Scholars participate in many external learning and engagement activities, following the success of similar events at last year's Festival. As well as performing in the Piano Fantasia to over 1,000 primary schoolchildren, they also visit local primary schools in both Leeds and London, as well as adult care settings.

The University of Leeds, a principal partner of the Competition, hosts a 'Steinway Experience' on 30 March as part of *Be Curious*, the University's research open day, where families can enjoy these wonderful instruments. Steinway & Sons, also a partner of The Leeds, has provided the pianos for the Competition since its beginnings in 1963.

Coinciding with Piano Day on 29 March, pop-up performances take place on the Leeds Piano Trail, in partnership with Leeds Business Improvement District (BID). These Besbrode pianos, decorated by local artists, were a popular feature of last year's Competition and encouraged the public to play and experience the pianos at high-profile locations around Leeds city centre; most of the trail pianos stayed in place after the Competition due to the huge popularity of the initiative.

Adam Gatehouse, Artistic Director of the Leeds International Piano Competition, said: *"After winning over both the jury and audiences at the 2018 Competition, we're delighted to welcome Eric Lu back to The Leeds for the second annual Leeds Piano Festival. We're thrilled too that Steven Osborne, Barry Douglas and the extraordinary Lang Lang Scholars will join him in both Leeds and London, allowing audiences to experience their remarkable talent and help us share in wonderful performances of great piano music. Deepening our roots in our communities by developing fun, diverse and inclusive events to enable more people to discover and fall in love with the piano is also crucial to our mission, and the Festival continues its inspiring work to attract ever-wider audiences."*

Tickets for the Leeds recitals and the masterclass can be booked [here](#), and the London recitals [here](#).

Leedspiano.com

[@leedspiano](https://www.instagram.com/leedspiano)

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Notes to Editors

Leeds Piano Festival 2019 - Full list of events

28 March 2019

'Discover the Piano: Piano Fantasia'

Will Pickvance and Young Scholars of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation

Further details TBC

29 March 2019

Piano Day

Performances on Leeds Piano Trail, in partnership with Leeds BID

30 March 2019

Be Curious - 'Steinway Experience'

University of Leeds

Further details TBC

30 March 2019

Eric Lu

The Venue, Leeds College of Music, 7.30pm

Mozart – Rondo in A Minor, K.511

Brahms – 6 Klavierstücke, Op. 118

Chopin – Ballade No. 4, Op. 52

Handel – Chaconne in G major, HWV 435

Chopin – Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35

1 April 2019

Lang Lang Scholars – Aliya Alsafa, Jasper Heymann, Shuheng Zhang

The Venue, Leeds College of Music, 7.30pm

Jasper Haymann

Mendelssohn - Fantasie in F-sharp minor op. 28

Chopin - Ballade No. 3 in A flat op. 47

Chopin - Polonaise in F-sharp minor op. 44

Shuheng Zhang

Haydn - Sonata in E Major Hob.XVI:31

Debussy - Préludes Book 1

IV. Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir (4:00)

V. Les collines d'Anacapri.

Debussy - Préludes Book 2

V. Bruyères

XII. Feux d'artifice

Scriabin - Piano Sonata No. 2 in G-sharp Minor Op. 19

Aliya Alsafa

Mozart - Piano Sonata no 17 in B-flat major K570

Ravel - Jeux d'eau

Ravel - Oiseaux Tristes - from Miroirs

Liszt - Hungarian Rhapsody no 2 in C-sharp minor

2 April 2019

Masterclass with Steven Osborne and Lang Lang Scholars

The Venue, Leeds College of Music, 11am

3 April 2019

Steven Osborne

The Venue, Leeds College of Music, 7.30pm

Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major, Op. 109

Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 31 in A-flat major, Op. 110

Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111

4 April 2019

Lang Lang Scholars - Aliya Alsafa, Jasper Heymann, Shuheng Zhang

Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's, 1pm

Mendelssohn - Fantasie in F-sharp minor op. 28

Chopin - Ballade No. 3 in A flat op. 47

Shuheng Zhang

Haydn - Sonata in E Major Hob.XVI:31

Debussy - Préludes Book 1
IV. Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir (4:00)
V. Les collines d'Anacapri.
Debussy - Préludes Book 2
XII. Feux d'artifice

Aliya Alsafa

Ravel - Jeux d'eau
Ravel - Oiseaux Tristes - from Miroirs
Liszt - Hungarian Rhapsody no 2 in C-sharp minor

4 April 2019

Eric Lu

Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's, 7.30pm

Mozart – Rondo in A Minor, K.511
Brahms – 6 Klavierstücke, Op. 118
Chopin – Ballade No. 4, Op. 52
Handel – Chaconne in G major, HWV 435
Chopin – Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 3

5 April 2019

Barry Douglas

The Venue, Leeds College of Music, 7.30pm

Tchaikovsky – Movements from The Seasons, Op. 37a
Tchaikovsky – Grande Sonata in G major, Op. 37
Schubert – Sonata in A minor, D537
Rachmaninov – 6 Moments Musicaux, Op. 16

5 April 2019

Steven Osborne

Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's, 7.30pm

Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major, Op. 109
Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 31 in A-flat major, Op. 110
Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111

6 April 2019

Barry Douglas

Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's, 7.30pm

Tchaikovsky – Movements from The Seasons, Op. 37a
Tchaikovsky – Grande Sonata in G major, Op. 37
Schubert – Sonata in A minor, D537
Rachmaninov – 6 Moments Musicaux, Op. 16

7 April 2019

Alistair McGowan

Besbrode Pianos, Leeds, 7.30pm

Introduction to Classical Piano

The Leeds International Piano Competition

'The Leeds' is one of the world's foremost music competitions. Since the first Competition in 1963, it has attracted the world's finest young pianists, drawn by the opportunities offered by the outstanding prize package, the challenge of demanding repertoire, a stellar jury – and a warm welcome from the city. A new vision for 2018 has seen The Leeds spread its wings. Internationally, First Rounds were held in Berlin, New York and Singapore. Locally, the first annual Leeds Piano

Festival took place and partnerships were built and strengthened. The Competition's Leeds roots have been deepened with Piano+, an imaginative programme of city-wide activity, and there is also a year-round Learning & Engagement programme.

The Leeds is led by Artistic Director Adam Gatehouse, and is honoured to have the support of Murray Perahia as Patron and Lang Lang as Global Ambassador.

<https://www.leedspiano.com/>

The Lang Lang International Music Foundation

Based on the belief that all children should have access to a music education, regardless of their background, the Lang Lang International Music Foundation strives to educate, inspire, and motivate the next generation of music lovers and performers. Its unique programmes encourage music performance at all levels as a means of social and emotional development for today's youth.

More details: www.langlangfoundation.org

The University of Leeds

The University of Leeds is one of the largest higher education institutions in the UK, with more than 38,000 students from more than 150 different countries, and a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities. It is a top 10 university for research and impact power in the UK, according to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, and in the top 100 of the QS World University Rankings 2019. Additionally, the University was awarded a Gold rating by the Government's Teaching Excellence Framework in 2017, recognising its 'consistently outstanding' teaching and learning provision. Twenty-six of our academics have been awarded National Teaching Fellowships – more than any other institution in England, Northern Ireland and Wales – reflecting the excellence of its teaching.

The Leeds International Piano Competition and the University have worked together since the earliest days of the Competition, with the heats and events hosted on campus since the inaugural contest in 1963.

www.leeds.ac.uk