

News Release



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Leeds Conductors Competition Announces Contestants

After receiving over 50 applications from all over the world, the sixteen competitors for the Ninth Leeds Conductors Competition (30 June - 4 July) have been announced. Following two preliminary rounds, the jury will face the difficult task of selecting three finalists to conduct the Orchestra of Opera North in Leeds Town Hall on 4 July.

Of the sixteen hopefuls, all UK citizens under the age of 35, there are two female competitors, **Matilda Hofman** and **Rebecca Miller**, hoping to follow in the footsteps of the Competition's first winner, Siân Edwards in 1984. The shortlist also includes sixteen year old **Alexander Prior**, who is the great grandson of the Russian theatre practitioner Constantine Stanislavsky and has been studying conducting for 5 years.

The **Gala Final Concert** on 4 July will see entrants conduct works by Sibelius, Elgar and Beethoven and the audience will vote for the winner of the Audience Prize. Tickets are priced from £9.50 (concessions available) and are available from the Box Office on 0113 224 3801. Admission to the first and second rounds of the competition is free.

****ENDS****

Notes for Editors

The full list of contestants is:

Hugh Brunt
Thomas Carroll
Jessica Cottis
Robert Dick
Ben Gernon
Dominic Grier
Kevin Griffiths
James Grossmith

Tom Hammond
Matilda Hofman
Courtney Lewis
Rebecca Miller
Geoffrey Paterson
Simon Phillippo
Alexander Prior
Daniele Rosina

The ninth Leeds Conductors Competition is organised by **Leeds City Council in association with Opera North** and is one of only a few of its kind in the UK, existing to support young British conductors at the start of their careers. The Competition puts young conductors through their paces with the Orchestra of Opera North, with heats taking place at Leeds Town Hall.

The Jury will be chaired by **David Whelton**, Chief Executive of the Philharmonia, who will be joined by Opera North's Music Director, **Richard Farnes**, Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales,

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Jac van Steen, and British violinist **Tasmin Little**. £12,000 is available in prize-money and a string of professional engagements with the country's finest orchestras awaits the winner.

Winners of previous competitions include Martyn Brabbins (Associate Principal Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra), Garry Walker (Associate Conductor, Royal Scottish National Orchestra), Paul Watkins (Associate Conductor of the English Chamber Orchestra) and most recently, Alexander Shelley, who will become Principal Conductor of Nuernberger Symphoniker in September 2009.

Diary listings:

- First round (12 contestants): Wednesday 1 & Thursday 2 July, Leeds Town Hall – free entry
- Second round (6 contestants): Thursday 2 & Friday 3 July, Leeds Town Hall – free entry
- **Gala Final Concert:** Saturday 4 July, 7.30pm, Leeds Town Hall. Tickets £9.50 - £27.50 (concessions available). Box Office 0113 224 3801.

For more information visit www.leedsconductors.com.

For further information, photos and full listings contact:

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