

# Theme of the concert

## Music, Identity and Legacy: the Philharmonia's 80th Birthday!

The theme of the 2025/26 concert is centered around the history of the Philharmonia Orchestra, which was founded in 1945 by Walter Legge and is 80 years old in 2025. Legge worked for a company called EMI, which was responsible for making recordings of classical music.

Many of you will listen to music on a daily basis – perhaps through the radio, television, games or online, depending on your age. Sites like Spotify, Apple Music and Youtube have millions of users

across the globe, giving you instant access to so many different artists. Before these online systems were invented, music of all genres could be bought physically – initially on an LP disc, then cassette tape, then CD. It is amazing to think how much this area of life has changed in the last 80 years!

The theme of the concert is 'Music, Identity and Legacy' – or in other words 'It's Our 80th Birthday!' The pieces have been chosen to take us on a journey through time linking to the exciting history of the Philharmonia, from 1945 to today – a history you are all part of by being part of the *Orchestra Unwrapped* project!

The pieces in this concert all have special meaning to the Philharmonia during its 80-year history and these are outlined below:

Composer	Piece title	Date composed	Link to Philharmonia
Mozart	Don Giovanni (Overture)	1787	Performed at the first Philharmonia concert in 1945.
Beethoven	Symphony No. 5 (Movement 1)	1804-08	The Philharmonia's recording of this piece is on the Voyager Golden Records which were sent into space in 1977.
Stravinsky	The Firebird Suite (Finale) (1919 version)	1910 with revisions in 1911, 1919, 1945	Performed in Leicester's De Montfort Hall for the first performance there by the Philharmonia in 1995.
Elgar	Enigma Variations (Theme, IV, XI, VII)	1898-99	Performed at Bedford Corn Exchange for the first performance there by the Philharmonia in 1995.
Ortiz	Papalotes	2012	Gabriela Ortiz is the Philharmonia's Featured Composer for the 2025/26 season.
Shigihara	Grasswalk from Plants vs. Zombies	2009	Music in gaming points to the future and how classical music plays a key role in new technologies.
Silvestri	Theme to the Avengers	2012	The Philharmonia has recorded over 150 film soundtracks, and this piece from <i>The Avengers</i> is a good example of their work in this area. The Philharmonia were the orchestra performing much of the music to the <i>Avengers: Age of Ultron</i> film. <a href="#">Check out more here ►</a>
Bizet	Carmen Suite (Les toréadors)	1875	This piece was played in the first <i>Orchestra Unwrapped</i> concert in 2012.