

Concert review

John Manning reviews Hertfordshire Philharmonia's concert at St Saviour's Church in St Albans.

Few can doubt that 20-year-old Julian Trevelyan is on the ladder to a shining career as a concert pianist. His long list of prizes and awards speaks volumes for his ability but his performances shout loudly of his great skill and artistry.

On Saturday he was once more in his native St Albans to perform Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No 1* with the Hertfordshire Philharmonia under Lev Parikian and he treated the audience in St Saviour's Church to an outstanding performance.

It came less than a week after Julian had performed at the world renowned Musikverein in Vienna.

By his own choice Julian performed the final version of the work to be published in the composer's lifetime rather the one more usually performed which includes many changes and the resulting performance was outstanding.

If the work is, as often described, a battle with the orchestra, then Julian won. If a little loud for the size of the venue, his performance was

skilled, meaningful and, above all, thrilling.

I particularly like the concerto's second movement where the piano takes over the opening theme from the flute.

Julian's performance was an absolute delight.

To answer the demands of the audience for more after his completion of the concert, Julian went on to play one of Tchaikovsky's last piano works, *Berceuse from his Op 72 18 pieces for solo piano*, completed in April 1883, shortly before his death. This beautiful work, excellently performed, brought Julian more well reserved approval from the audience.

The concerto was sandwiched between two works by Johannes Brahms, his *Tragic Overture* and his fine *Symphony No 3*. As with the piano concerto, I found the orchestra's performance of the overture a little too loud for the size of the performing space, although the balance for the symphony was much better.

For both works the orchestra gave thoroughly competent performances, although I fear it did not have the edge it has shown in the past. Overall this was an enjoyable evening of great works dominated by Julian Trevelyan's outstanding performance.