

Welcome to the 2023 BBC Proms



A very warm welcome to the 2023 BBC Proms. It's thrilling to be sharing in an experience in which tradition and innovation sit side by side, and I hope these concerts continue to delight you with familiar favourites and entice you to discover new composers and artists.

Our composer celebrations reflect both sides of that coin, from the works of Sergey Rachmaninov (born 150 years ago) – whose music has featured regularly at the Proms since 1900 – to the less familiar worlds of Dora Pejačević and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. This summer's extensive opera and choral programme brings you landmark operas by Berlioz and Poulenc alongside the UK premiere of György Kurtág's Beckett-inspired *Endgame* and the first complete performance at the Proms of Schumann's ravishing *Das Paradies und die Peri*. Opera also forms part of our family offering this year, with the *Horrible Histories* team taking an irreverent look at the art form, while a bank holiday concert delves into fantasy, myths and legends from TV, film and video games. And, following our series last year of 'Proms at' chamber music Proms around the UK, this year there are performances by leading soloists, ensembles and chamber choirs in Aberystwyth, Dewsbury, Gateshead, Perth and Truro.

The Proms celebrates genres and artists from around the world. This year we bring Portuguese fado and Northern Soul to the Proms for the first time, as well as a tribute to Bollywood playback singer Lata Mangeshkar. We also welcome four very individual artists in special orchestral collaborations – Rufus Wainwright with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Cory Henry with the Jules Buckley Orchestra, Jon Hopkins with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and – as part of our weekend at Sage Gateshead – Self Esteem with the Royal Northern Sinfonia. Visitors from further afield include orchestras from Berlin, Budapest and Boston. The Proms continues to redefine the boundaries of a classical music festival but one thing remains constant – we seek out and showcase the very best.

Every Prom here at the Royal Albert Hall and in our 'Proms at' series is broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, where the station's expert engineers and presenters bring you the live experience wherever you are – and you can listen again on BBC Sounds. You can also enjoy 24 Proms on BBC TV, all available for 12 months on BBC iPlayer.

David Pickard
Director, BBC Proms

Tonight *at the* Proms

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales makes the first of its four Proms appearances this season, directed by its much-loved Conductor Laureate, Tadaaki Otaka.

We continue our exploration of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who entered the Royal College of Music, just across the road from here, in 1890 aged 15. His richly lyrical Violin Concerto, written for the Norfolk Music Festival in Connecticut, is performed by former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist Elena Urioste, who won a new legion of fans with her online 'Jukebox' performances.

Probably one of the greatest pianists of all time, Sergey Rachmaninov performed at the same Norfolk festival – though he may not have played any of his formidable *Études-tableaux*, five of which were vividly orchestrated by Ottorino Respighi, composer of the cinematically scored 'Roman Trilogy'.

Beethoven's iconic Fifth Symphony is the ever-energising, rhythmically driven climax of the Prom, opening with its furrowed-brow 'Fate' motif but finally emerging into the light in its triumphant finale.



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Please be considerate to the performers and other audience members, while also recognising that listeners may show a variety of responses to the music.



Royal Albert Hall

If you leave the auditorium during the performance, you will only be readmitted when there is a suitable break in the music.



Please do not take photos, or record any audio or video during the performance

Prom 7

WEDNESDAY 19 JULY 7.00pm–c9.10pm



Sergey Rachmaninov, orch. Ottorino Respighi Five Études-tableaux 25'

first performance at the Proms

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Violin Concerto in G minor 34'

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No. 5 in C minor 33'

Elena Urioste *violin*

BBC National Orchestra of Wales Nick Whiting *leader*

Tadaaki Otaka *conductor*

RADIO 3 **FOUR** **SOUNDS** **iPLAYER**

This concert is broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 (repeated on Tuesday at 2.00pm) and shown on BBC Four on Friday at 8.00pm. You can listen on BBC Sounds, and watch on BBC iPlayer for 12 months.

SERGEY RACHMANINOV (1873–1943),
orch. Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)

Five Études-tableaux (1911, 1916–17, orch. 1930)

first performance at the Proms

- 1 **La mer et les mouettes** [The Sea and the Seagulls]
(after Op. 39 No. 2)
- 2 **La foire** [The Fair] (Op. 33 No. 6)
- 3 **Marche funèbre** [Funeral March] (Op. 39 No. 7)
- 4 **Le chaperon rouge et le loup** [Little Red Riding Hood
and the Wolf] (Op. 39 No. 6)
- 5 **Marche** [March] (Op. 39 No. 9)

Rachmaninov's second set of *Études-tableaux*, Op. 39, was completed in the revolutionary turbulence of 1917, just before he emigrated from Russia. The piano-writing is not only highly virtuosic in its figurations but also dense and harmonically complex. There had long been a lively tradition of orchestrating major piano works but the supreme pianism of the *Études-tableaux* made them seem most unlikely candidates. Anyone approaching the challenge of orchestrating them would also have to be capable of equalling Rachmaninov, a brilliant and inventive orchestrator himself.

Even so, this very task was taken up in 1930 by Ottorino Respighi, best remembered for his dazzling 'Roman Trilogy' of tone-poems celebrating respectively the fountains, pines and festivals of the Eternal City. He had already orchestrated other composers' music, including some well-received commissions for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes company. Respighi also had a Russian connection:

in the 1900–02 seasons he had served as principal violist of the Mariinsky Opera Orchestra, and while in St Petersburg he took composition lessons from Rimsky-Korsakov, also famed for his orchestration.

The idea for Respighi's arrangements of *Études-tableaux* originated with the Russian émigré conductor Serge Koussevitzky, who brokered the deal. Rachmaninov sent Respighi a letter listing four études from Op. 39 and another from his earlier set, Op. 33; he also included some private comments on the inspirations or storylines behind the selected pieces. The contents of this letter eventually became public, to the delight of Rachmaninov commentators, who were starved of such information by the reticent composer. The presence of 'tableaux' in the title had suggested some kind of depiction but the specifics had until now been unknown.

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The first of the five is a picture of 'The Sea and the Seagulls', with measured figuration in the left hand punctuated by short haunting motifs appearing above and below in alternation. Rachmaninov did not mention that the figuration contains the *Dies irae* motif – a quotation from the Gregorian Requiem chant that had become a symbol of death in Romantic music, and which Rachmaninov used on many occasions. But Respighi seems to have noticed, and his version of the middle section, where the *Dies irae* is most prominent, is particularly lugubrious.

The second piece, 'The Fair', lies at the opposite end of the emotional spectrum – it is a bustling fairground scene, joyous and energetic. Respighi is marvellously inventive in recasting the piano figurations into patches of orchestral colour and his high, blazing trumpets are particularly memorable.



'Out set Riding Hood, so obliging and sweet': Little Red Riding Hood meets the big bad Wolf in an illustration by Walter Crane for one of his 'toy books' (1875); Rachmaninov claimed the tale was the inspiration for his Étude-tableau Op. 39 No. 6, one of the five that Respighi orchestrated

Rachmaninov described the 'Funeral March' as beginning with the march (which returns at the end) and continuing with the sounds of choral singing, light rain and church bells. There is a great dramatic moment when the scene sinks into a sombre hopelessness: suddenly the bells ring out gloriously and the sun breaks through the clouds.

There is a magically circular quality in the alternation of the snapping Wolf and the timid Red Riding Hood themes in the fourth piece, and Respighi's orchestra heightens the contrast further.

Finally, the March completes the cycle, with another deft rendition of pianistic textures through a variety of exciting spatial effects. The mood is festive, like the second piece, but with strange and even slightly sinister touches.

Programme note © Marina Frolova-Walker
Marina Frolova-Walker is Professor of Music History at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of Clare College. She is the author of *Russian Music and Nationalism from Glinka to Stalin* (2007) and *Stalin's Music Prize: Soviet Culture and Politics* (2016, both Yale UP).

SERGEY RACHMANINOV



Born in the environs of Novgorod on 1 April 1873, Rachmaninov had piano lessons locally before entering the St Petersburg Conservatory. In 1885 he came under the wing of the celebrated teacher Nikolay Zverev in Moscow, while also studying counterpoint

with Taneyev and harmony with Arensky. He graduated in piano from the Moscow Conservatory with highest honours in 1891, and in the following year excelled in his composition finals with his one-act opera *Aleko*, given its premiere at the Bolshoi Theatre in 1893 – an occasion on which Tchaikovsky, the most potent influence on Rachmaninov's early music, applauded heartily.

The disastrous 1897 premiere of the First Symphony, however, severely undermined his confidence. With composition at a low ebb, Rachmaninov consulted Dr Nikolay Dahl, who had been experimenting with forms of hypnosis. This has led to wildly exotic speculation as to what his treatment involved, but it seems likely that Dahl, as a cultured man and skilled musician, simply had a series of morale-boosting conversations with the composer, the outcome being that ideas formed for Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto, the work that fully released his personal creative voice. The next two decades saw a steady stream of major scores, including the piano Preludes and *Études-tableaux*, the mature songs, the Second Symphony (1906–7) and Third Piano Concerto (1909), together with two more operas, *Francesca da Rimini* (1900, 1904–5) and *The*

Miserly Knight (1903–5), and key choral works including the Edgar Allan Poe-inspired *The Bells* (1912–13) and the Russian Orthodox *All-Night Vigil* (1915).

Following the 1917 October Revolution, Rachmaninov and his family emigrated from Russia, settling at different times in the USA and Switzerland, where he concentrated more on his concert career than on composition. For the next 25 years he was lionised as one of the finest pianists the world has ever known. If later works such as the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (1934), the Third Symphony (1935–6) and the *Symphonic Dances* (1940) have more recourse to incisive rhythms, clarity of texture and piquancy of orchestration than earlier ones, his entire output mines deep seams of the Russian character, shot through as it is with a sense of fatalism and with a richness of language that can encompass intense brooding, vigorous energy and passionate sincerity of soul. Rachmaninov died at his home in Beverly Hills on 28 March 1943, shortly before his 70th birthday.

Profile © Geoffrey Norris

Geoffrey Norris's study of Rachmaninov (OUP) was last reprinted in 2001. He is on the editorial board of the new Collected Edition of Rachmaninov's works being prepared by Russian Music Publishing/Bärenreiter. From 2011 to 2022 he lectured at the Gnesin Music Academy in Moscow.

MORE RACHMANINOV AT THE PROMS

WEDNESDAY 26 JULY, 7.30pm • PROM 16
The Bells

WEDNESDAY 2 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 24
Symphony No. 2 in E minor

THURSDAY 3 AUGUST, 11.30am • PROM 25
Symphony No. 2 in E minor – Allegro vivace (4th mvt)

FRIDAY 4 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 27
Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

SUNDAY 6 AUGUST, 3.00pm • PROMS AT DEWSBURY*
Vocalise (arr. R. Wallfisch); Cello Sonata

SUNDAY 6 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 30
Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor

WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST, 7.00pm • PROM 33
Symphony No. 1 in D minor

THURSDAY 31 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 60
Symphony No. 3 in A minor

FRIDAY 8 SEPTEMBER, 7.30pm • PROM 70
Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor

*at Dewsbury Town Hall, as part of the 'Proms at' Chamber Concerts
 For full Proms listings, and to book tickets, visit bbc.co.uk/proms.

OTTORINO RESPIGHI



Born and educated in Bologna, Ottorino Respighi first studied to be a violinist before taking composition lessons with Giuseppe Martucci, one of Italy's most important non-operatic composers in the late 19th century. The young Respighi worked as a violinist

in Russia, where he met Rimsky-Korsakov, studying orchestration and composition with him. The influence of the great Russian was a lasting one, particularly in terms of Respighi's colourful orchestral writing.

In 1913 he was appointed professor of composition at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome and it was during this period that he composed *Fountains of Rome*, the first of his 'Roman Trilogy'. During the summer of 1916, Respighi met the impresario Serge Diaghilev and was commissioned to write the ballet that became *La boutique fantasque*, based on music by Rossini, brilliantly reimagined by Respighi for orchestra. The new ballet (given its premiere in London in 1919) and numerous performances of *Fountains* brought Respighi international success, which was further enhanced by *Pines of Rome*, first performed in 1924. It was composed at a turbulent time in Italy's history. Mussolini, appointed prime minister in 1922, was known to like Respighi's music and the two were on friendly terms in the early 1920s. But the enthusiastic advocacy of Respighi by the fiercely anti-Fascist Toscanini suggests that he, for one, saw no troubling connections.

In 1928 it was Toscanini and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra who gave the first performance of *Roman Festivals*, the final and most audacious piece in the Roman trilogy. Respighi's other orchestral works range from the breezy neo-Classical arrangements of *Ancient Airs and Dances* to the exquisite restraint of the *Trittico botticelliano* (1927), inspired by three Botticelli paintings, and the *Concerto gregoriano* (1921), both of which make use of plainchant melodies. Alongside his orchestral compositions and some impressive chamber music (notably the *Quartetto dorico* and the Violin Sonata in B minor), Respighi wrote extensively for voices: as well as songs and small-scale vocal pieces, there are also several operas including *La campana sommersa* (1924–7), *Maria egiziaca* (1929–31) and *La fiamma* (1931–3). Respighi's stage works include some of his most inventive music, but they have only occasionally emerged from undeserved neglect. While Respighi's music was clearly influenced by the likes of Strauss and Debussy, he remained a distinctively Italian voice. From his student days he had admired the old masters such as Monteverdi, and he later drew on Gregorian chant to give his music its characteristic flavour, combining this with a dazzling gift for orchestral colour.

Profile © Nigel Simeone

Nigel Simeone is a musicologist and critic. He has published several books on 20th-century composers and conductors including Janáček, Bernstein, Messiaen and Charles Mackerras. His latest project is a study of the musical friendship between Vaughan Williams and Adrian Boult.

“Mon cher Maître! La Société Anonyme des Grandes Éditions Musicales [Serge Koussevitzky's firm] informs me that you have agreed to orchestrate certain of my *Études-tableaux*. This good news gives me great joy, for I am sure that in your masterly hands these *Études* will be made to sound marvellous. Will you permit me, Maître, to give you the secret explanations of their composer? These will certainly make the character of these pieces more comprehensible and help you to find the necessary colours for their orchestration. Here are the programmes of these *Études* [...]”

Rachmaninov in a letter dated 2 January 1930, describing to Respighi the character of the five *Études-tableaux* he selected for the Italian composer to orchestrate

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR
(1875–1912)

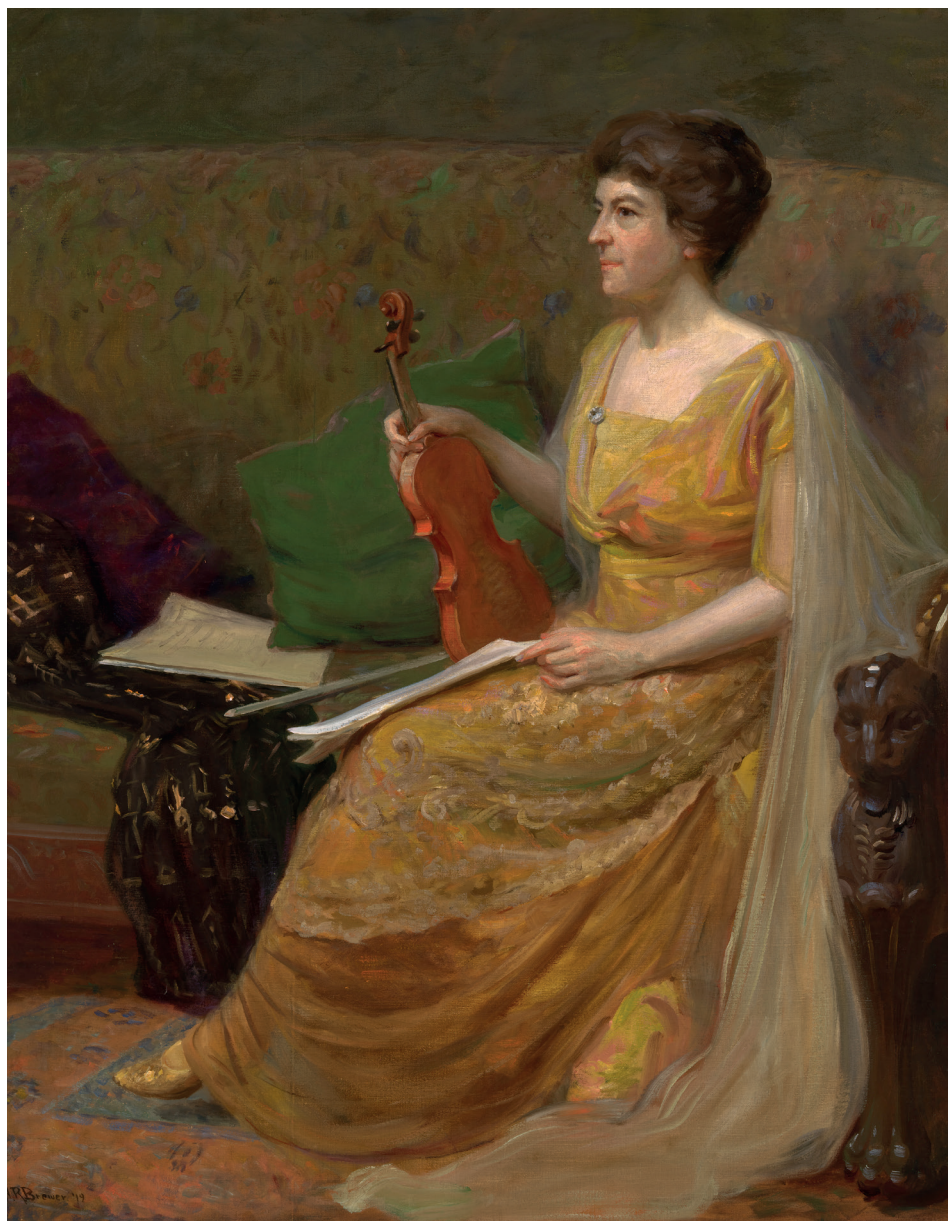
Violin Concerto in G minor, Op. 80 (1912)

- 1 Allegro maestoso – Vivace – Allegro molto
- 2 Andante semplice – Andantino
- 3 Allegro molto – Moderato

Elena Urioste *violin*

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's Violin Concerto is a highly individual work, composed during a period of flourishing Romantic and late-Romantic music and significant cultural shifts. Coleridge-Taylor's musical language blends European classical traditions with African American influences, which played a significant role in shaping his musical identity. He was deeply inspired by African American spirituals and it was within this context that the original idea of the Violin Concerto took shape.

During a trip to the USA in 1910 to conduct at the Litchfield Festival in Connecticut, Coleridge-Taylor re-encountered violinist Maud Powell



The violinist Maud Powell (portrait by Nicholas Richard Brewer, 1857–1949), who gave the premiere of Coleridge-Taylor's Violin Concerto, and claimed that 'when [Coleridge-Taylor] was on his deathbed he sat up suddenly and, making a heroic effort, sang a part of the beautiful second movement of the violin concerto, at the same time conducting an imaginary orchestral accompaniment with great animation'.

and musical philanthropists Carl and Ellen Stoeckel, and the idea of a violin concerto based on spirituals was conceived. However, upon completion, neither he nor Powell was happy with the work; Coleridge-Taylor immediately set about creating a new concerto, based entirely on original material, and everyone was excited about the new version.

The premiere was given by Powell at the Norfolk Music Festival, Connecticut, on 4 June 1912; the concert was nearly cancelled as the orchestral parts went astray in transit to the USA but, luckily, a hasty reconstruction saved the day. Tragically, due to ill health, the composer was unable to attend the premiere; he died less than three months later, aged just 37. The formal British premiere was given at the Proms at Queen's Hall later that year, conducted by Henry Wood.

The work is on a grand scale, almost operatic in style, with bold orchestral statements of the themes, conversational details in the woodwind, contrasting episodic passages in each movement and rich harmonies. It follows the traditional three-movement concerto structure and is beautifully written for the violin, the long sweeping themes allowing plenty of scope for lyricism with contrastingly virtuosic passages.

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The concerto begins with an energetic orchestral introduction, setting the stage for the solo violin's grand entrance. After a semi-improvisatory opening, the soloist introduces the two main themes of the movement: the first soulful and lyrical, the second a jaunty and dance-like theme characterised by a dotted rhythm. The latter is developed throughout the rest of the movement, notably in the cadenza (solo passage), which falls near the end of the movement, underpinned by a drumroll

in the timpani, after which the movement closes with an expansive version of the first theme played by soloist and orchestra.

The second movement, by contrast, is intimate and expressive, the solo violin's soulful lines intertwining with the orchestra's lush textures. Two aspects of this movement are reminiscent of Puccini's compositional style – the doubling of the main theme in both the violin and cello sections, and the harmonies in the triumphant full-orchestral *tutti* in the central section. The movement ends with a pensive and more decorative version of the main theme, drifting gently to a peaceful close.

The final movement bursts forth with rhythmic drive and infectious energy. Coleridge-Taylor infuses this first theme with energetic syncopated rhythms and virtuosic runs, creating an exuberant feel. The second idea is more melancholic and lyrical, and a further theme is uplifting, with march-like rhythms in the orchestra punctuated by woodwind interjections. The movement builds to a tremendous climax, culminating in a passionate return of the opening G minor theme of the concerto and ending triumphantly in the major key.

Thankfully, there has been a resurgence of interest in Coleridge-Taylor's music in recent years. His Violin Concerto, with its amalgamation of diverse musical influences and its undeniable emotional power, has affirmed its place in repertoire and remains a testament to his remarkable artistry.

Programme note © Tasmin Little

Violinist Tasmin Little has performed all over the world, giving 20 performances at the BBC Proms, including two at the Last Night of the Proms. She now broadcasts, presents documentaries and gives masterclasses. Her new series for BBC Radio 3, Backstage Pass, is a set of conversations with BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists. She was appointed CBE in last month's King's Birthday Honours.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

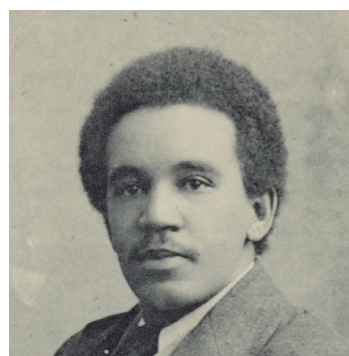
Tonight's concerto was in at the start of the ongoing Coleridge-Taylor revival. Given its London premiere by Arthur Catterall at a 1912 Prom a few weeks after the composer's untimely death, the score was reintroduced here in 2005 by Philippe Graffin with Barry Wordsworth's BBC Concert Orchestra. Three years later the composer's Clarinet Quintet in F sharp minor was championed by the Nash Ensemble at a lunchtime Cadogan Hall concert. Both pieces were also commercially recorded by their respective advocates. In 2021 Kalena Bovell and the Chineke! Orchestra revived two more Coleridge-Taylor works: a Symphony No. 1 in A minor, mostly written when Coleridge-Taylor was a student over the road from the Royal Albert Hall, at the Royal College of Music, and *The Song of Hiawatha* Overture, last aired at the Proms in 1959. The *Ballade* championed earlier this week by Anja Bihlmaier and the BBC Philharmonic had not been heard since 1929.

© David Gutman

David Gutman is a writer and critic who since 1996 has contributed extensively to the BBC Proms programmes. His books cover subjects as wide-ranging as Prokofiev and David Bowie, and he reviews for *Gramophone* and *Classical Source*.

Delve into Proms history for yourself by searching the online database of all Proms performances at bbc.co.uk/proms/archive.

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR



Referred to as the 'Black Mahler' and 'Black Dvořák' during his lifetime, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor – composer, teacher and musician – represented a new era in British music. He was born in Holborn, London, in 1875 but was raised mainly in Croydon.

His father, Daniel Peter Hughes, was a Krio from Sierra Leone who attended medical school in London, and his mother, Alice Hare Martin, was an Englishwoman who named her first child after the celebrated poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. There is no evidence that Hughes had knowledge of his son's existence, since he returned to West Africa prior to his birth. Nevertheless, Coleridge-Taylor's appearance bore the physical hallmarks of his African heritage.

In 1877 Samuel's mother married George Evans, who taught his stepson the fundamentals of music and also to play the violin. At the age of 15 Coleridge-Taylor was awarded a scholarship to the Royal College of Music. There his focus shifted to composition and he studied under Charles Villiers Stanford.

Despite garnering a reputation for his compositional prowess, Coleridge-Taylor endured acts of racism during his time at the RCM. He was called derogatory names and once classmates attempted to set his hair on fire. Nevertheless, in 1898, at the suggestion of Edward Elgar, he was commissioned to write for the Three Choirs Festival. The result was his *Ballade* in A minor, which

helped establish his career in England and abroad. His other great early success was *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, the first in a trilogy of cantatas (1898–1900) based on Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1855 epic poem.

Though its subject matter held no direct connection to Black culture, *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* was adopted as an anthem of the movement to advance racial and social justice in America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1901 the Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Society was founded in Washington DC, and throughout the first two decades of the 20th century a number of schools and community centres were named after the Afro-British composer. Coleridge-Taylor toured the USA three times – in 1904, 1906 and 1910 – each time garnering new audiences. It was during one of these trips that he was invited to the White House by President Theodore Roosevelt. For the Black intelligentsia, Coleridge-Taylor embodied the type of Black excellence and intellectuality that underscored the earliest manifestations of Pan-Africanism. This spawned a cultural dialogue between the composer, Afro-American, Afro-Caribbean and African intellectuals that significantly influenced his compositional output. This is evident in such works as *24 Negro Melodies* (Op. 59), *African Romances* (Op. 17), *Four African Dances* (Op. 58), *The Bamboula* (Op. 75) and the *African Suite* (Op. 35).

Despite the popularity of his works, Coleridge-Taylor endured cycles of poverty and financial uncertainty, breeding a lifestyle of overwork that is believed to have contributed to his premature death in 1912 at the age of 37.

Profile © Tammy Kernodle

Tammy L. Kernodle is a musicologist whose scholarship focuses on African American music with an emphasis on the contributions of women musicians. She is University Distinguished Professor of Music at Miami University (OH) and is the Past President of the Society for American Music. :

MORE COLERIDGE-TAYLOR AT THE PROMS

SATURDAY 26 AUGUST, 2.00pm • PROM 54
Three Impromptus

SUNDAY 27 AUGUST, 2.00pm • PROMS AT TRURO*
Nonet in F minor

FRIDAY 1 SEPTEMBER, 7.30pm • PROM 61
Four Noveletten

SATURDAY 9 SEPTEMBER, 7.00pm • PROM 71
Deep River (arr. S. Parkin)

*at Hall for Cornwall, Truro, as part of the 'Proms at' Chamber Concerts
For full Proms listings, and to book tickets, visit bbc.co.uk/proms.

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

Now playing on BBC Radio 3 ...

Pianist and musicologist Samantha Ege talks to Radio 3's Penny Gore about Coleridge-Taylor and the pan-African conference he attended in 1900.

Available on BBC Sounds

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67 (1807–8)

- 1 **Allegro con brio**
- 2 **Andante con moto**
- 3 **Allegro –**
- 4 **Allegro**

Beethoven's Fifth is at once the world's most famous symphony and, with the Ninth, the blueprint for so many minor-to-major, darkness-to-light narratives of the Romantic era. The composer left no clue as to what the symphony was 'about'. Yet, like the mighty 'Eroica' (No. 3), the Fifth combines a remorseless symphonic logic with an extramusical aura. Whatever the truth of Beethoven's secretary Anton Schindler's claim that the opening 'da-da-da-dah' motto represents 'Fate knocking at the door', the symphony does seem charged with an ethical and political dimension: the conquering of adversity through sheer willpower and, beyond that, an assertion in musical terms of the Enlightenment ideals of human progress and perfectability. For the Victorians the Fifth Symphony was morally edifying. Although today we are more likely to find it elementally thrilling, they may have had a point.

Beethoven began to sketch the work early in 1804, immediately after the 'Eroica', but then deflected into other projects. Only in the autumn of 1807, after his patron Count Franz von Oppersdorff had nudged him with an advance of 200 florins, did he return to the symphony. Early the following year he assured Oppersdorff that 'your symphony has long been ready',



'Da-da-da-dah' – a Second World War postcard showing the 'V for Victory' sign, along with the flags of Allied countries, and the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which happened to spell out 'V' in Morse code

adding: 'If you take it, then cheer me up as soon as possible with the 300 florins still due to me.' He also alerted Oppersdorff to the novel use of three trombones and a piccolo in the finale, promising 'more noise than six kettledrums, and better noise at that'. But, rather than dispatching the score to the Count for his final payment,

Beethoven disingenuously sold it to the publisher Breitkopf & Härtel. When the Count eventually received the score, the symphony had already been performed in the famous gargantuan benefit concert in Vienna's Theater an der Wien on 22 December 1808: surely the greatest showcase of new works in the history of music.

In a celebrated review of the Fifth Symphony, that weaver of fantastic tales E. T. A. Hoffmann wrote that it 'irresistibly sweeps the listener into the wonderful spirit-realm of the infinite'. Less poetically, the French composer Jean-François Le Sueur was so overwhelmed by the symphony that, on trying to put on his hat, he was unable to find his head. Others experienced variously shock, terror, excitement, bafflement. Louis Spohr, never Beethoven's greatest fan, called the finale's C major blaze a 'meaningless Babel'.

The epic scope of the 'Eroica' had already put Beethoven beyond the pale for his more conservative contemporaries. Now listeners had to contend with the terrifying assault of the Fifth Symphony's first movement; a scherzo by turns spectral and savage – no symphonic scherzo before Bruckner's Ninth is less jokey; and the claustrophobic passage, underpinned by eerily beating timpani, before the finale erupts in an incandescent C major. Until the finale's reinforcements Beethoven uses the same forces as Haydn in his last symphonies, but seems to make it twice as loud.

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The first movement's unique power derives from its mixture of ferocious rhythmic concentration, courtesy of the all-pervasive four-note motto, and passages that conjure up vast musical spaces. In the development, Beethoven progressively fragments the motto, first to two notes, then to a shadowy sequence of single chords. When the recapitulation is battered into existence by the full

orchestra, an oboe cadenza introduces a brief note of human pathos, all the more moving for the remorseless rhythmic activity surrounding it.

In a brilliant analysis of the Fifth Symphony, Donald Tovey described the second-movement *Andante con moto* as having the 'same courage, the same beauty of goodness, and the same humour as Shakespeare's women'. Beethoven here puts his own gloss on Haydn's favourite 'double-variation' form, in which the variations – on a pair of related themes – tend to become more mysterious and improvisatory as the movement proceeds. With hindsight, we can hear the martial bursts of C major in the second theme as a pointer to the finale's C major triumph.

But the C minor scherzo, beginning, in Berlioz's phrase, with 'the gaze of a mesmeriser', revives the opening movement's stark rhythmic obsessiveness with a nightmarish quality of its own. The horn theme that blares out *fortissimo* is an obvious allusion to the first movement's motto. In the galumphing trio, initiated by grotesquely prancing cellos and basses, the key of C major seems more mocking parody than liberation.

When the forces of light explode in the finale, the effect is as overwhelming today as it must have been at the 1808 premiere. This is the music of French Revolutionary hymns and marches raised to the level of the sublime. In one of Beethoven's most inspired strokes, the scherzo makes a ghostly, flitting reappearance at the height of the jubilation: a distant memory, or a reminder that the threat of C minor terror still lurks? But the demons are exorcised once and for all by the recapitulation's renewed peal of C major. Beethoven then crowns and resolves the whole symphony with a vast, speeded-up (*Presto*) coda that hammers out the basic chords of tonic and dominant from here to eternity: a triumphant parade of liberated humanity that echoes the cathartic final scene

of Beethoven's opera *Fidelio* and prefigures the Dionysian frenzy of the Ninth. Whether or not Beethoven could fully believe in the ideals of the Enlightenment by 1808, his vision rings true in a way that millions of listeners have intuitively grasped.

Programme note © Richard Wigmore

Richard Wigmore is a writer, broadcaster and lecturer specialising in the Viennese Classical period, and in lieder. His publications include *Schubert: The Complete Song Texts* and *The Faber Pocket Guide to Haydn*.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

The professionalism of the first and for many years essentially the only conductor of these concerts was something new in British musical life. Henry Wood's autobiography relates how orchestral players reacted with disbelief to their youthful chief. 'And look how he works us! Why, in the old days, the conductor would say: "Fifth Symphony, Beethoven, gentlemen! We don't need to rehearse that! We all know it!"' Wood insisted that music be properly prepared although, with so many old-style Friday-evening Beethoven nights to fill, scores might be programmed more than once. The Fifth's Proms debut took place in the typically extended 30th concert of his inaugural season of 1895. The show began with two overtures, *Egmont* and *The Creatures of Prometheus*; Frederick Dawson played the 'Emperor' Concerto and the symphony came next, with Beethoven songs (piano-accompanied) sandwiched between the major items. There followed a 'grand selection' from Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* and a sequence of popular ballads interrupted by the return of Dawson in a Liszt solo. The proceedings closed with the *Radetzky March* by Johann Strauss I. For Arthur Hugh Sidgwick in *The Promenade Ticket: A Lay Record of Concert-Going* (1914), the Fifth was already 'much the most important element in the Promenade culture', welding Promenaders of all kinds into 'a single mass'. During the Second World War the Fifth's opening rhythmic figure became synonymous with 'V for victory' (Morse code's three dots and a dash), a call sign used by the BBC. Its broader iconic role in the development of Western art music was acknowledged in 1999, when Kurt Masur and the London Philharmonic made it a highlight of One Thousand Years of Music in a Day. Last year the work was (twice) given from memory and (mostly) from a standing position by Nicholas Collon's Aurora Orchestra.

© David Gutman

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN



Ludwig van Beethoven was at the forefront of the major developments that took place in the musical world during his lifetime. He began his career in the employment of the Archbishop-Elector of Cologne in Bonn at a time when professional music-making was primarily

cultivated within the courts of the European aristocracy. By the end of his life Beethoven had achieved great public success with works that posed unprecedented challenges for both performers and listeners, and lived as an independent artist – a status that was unimaginable for previous generations of musicians.

Beethoven moved from Bonn to Vienna at the age of almost 22, initially to study composition with Joseph Haydn (Mozart having died the previous year), and soon made his name as a virtuoso pianist and composer in all the major instrumental genres. A high point in his career was the public concert organised for his own benefit in December 1808, which included the premieres of his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and his Fourth Piano Concerto with himself as soloist.

Beethoven's performing career was cut short by the onset of deafness, which began when he was in his late twenties and grew increasingly severe until the end of his life, leading him to focus his creative energies on composition. His seriousness of purpose with regard to his art is demonstrated by his laborious process of composing: he could devote upwards of six months to a

single symphony, whereas Haydn sometimes produced six such works for a single season. His only opera, *Fidelio*, underwent two major revisions before achieving its final form in 1814, and his monumental *Missa solemnis* (completed in 1823) was the product of several years' work.

Much of Beethoven's music has remained in the core performing repertoire since the 19th century, particularly the 32 piano sonatas and the nine symphonies. Among his most influential and celebrated works are those in his so-called 'heroic' style, characterised by their expanded scale, an emphasis on thematic development and dramatic overall trajectory leading to a triumphant conclusion. Such works are mostly concentrated in Beethoven's middle period, exemplified by the odd-numbered symphonies from No. 3 (the 'Eroica', 1803) onwards, the *Egmont* overture and the Fifth Piano Concerto. Nevertheless, an immense variety of expression is found across Beethoven's works, from the lyrical and introspective, notably the 1816 song-cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* ('To the Distant Beloved'), to the comical and bombastic (as in the Symphony No. 8 of 1812). His late style grew increasingly esoteric, and works such as the five late string quartets (1824–6) appealed mainly to musical connoisseurs, being considered incomprehensible by some early listeners.

Profile © Erica Buurman

Erica Buurman is Director of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies and Assistant Professor in the School of Music and Dance at San José State University, California. She has contributed to *The Cambridge Companion to the Eroica Symphony* (CUP, 2020) and *The New Beethoven* (University of Rochester Press, 2020), and has appeared on BBC Radio 3 and Radio 4. She is editor of *The Beethoven Journal* and *The Beethoven Newsletter*.

MORE BEETHOVEN AT THE PROMS

SUNDAY 23 JULY, 7.30pm • PROM 12
Symphony No. 9 in D minor, 'Choral'

TUESDAY 25 JULY, 7.00pm • PROM 14
Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor

SUNDAY 13 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 39
Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, 'Eroica'

TUESDAY 15 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 41
Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major

WEDNESDAY 30 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 59
Overture 'The Consecration of the House'

FRIDAY 1 SEPTEMBER, 7.30pm • PROM 61
Symphony No. 4 in B flat major

For full Proms listings, and to book tickets, visit bbc.co.uk/proms.



The Proms Listening Service

As Radio 3's *The Listening Service* revisits earlier episodes reflecting some of this summer's Proms programming, presenter **Tom Service** takes a wide-angle view of the common themes in this weekly feature

Week 1 Orchestral Manoeuvres

What are you really looking at up there? Those serried ranks of string players all facing the centre of the stage, and the expectantly empty podium for the conductor; the woodwind and brass players behind the strings staring directly out at us in the audience, while the percussionists – the potentially noisiest noise-makers – are all the way at the back. Together, they all make the sonic society of – the orchestra!

But merely identifying the instruments doesn't tell us what an orchestra actually is. Is it a body of individual brilliant musicians or a larger creative collective? Is an orchestra a realisation of a sonic ideal attained over centuries of development in instruments, acoustics and concert halls, or is it an idealised version of society: a musical reflection of what the world could be if we could only put into practice the simple idea of working towards a goal that's bigger than all of us?

An orchestra is all of that – and more. Every orchestral concert is a celebration of a centuries-long dance between tradition and innovation, in which the technical and expressive brilliance of musicians has exponentially improved, pushing composers to go further. That's a journey from the chamber-orchestra bands of courtly and churchly entertainment and liturgy, from the 16th to the 18th centuries, to the bourgeois orchestral behemoths needed by composers like Strauss and Stravinsky at the end of the 19th and the early 20th centuries, and the renewed visions of orchestral possibility that 21st-century

composers are dreaming up right now, including all of the commissions at this year's Proms.

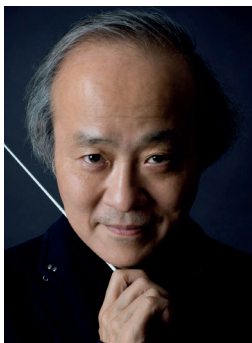
But, as well as carriers of all that repertoire, orchestras are reservoirs of power: sonic, cultural and political. They're bigger, more virtuosic and more expensive than ever. So who do orchestras belong to?

They're yours. If you're a licence-fee payer or a taxpayer in the UK, you are directly supporting the majority of orchestras in the country, and so are all you here at the Royal Albert Hall tonight, since money from ticket purchases – alongside sponsorship and private donations – is what sustains the entire orchestral ecology, nationally and internationally. That's a seismic shift from the orchestra's beginnings in aristocratic and political circles. But we're facing a different challenge today, one that the BBC Proms can be an answer to: namely, the collapse in free music education in this country, and the perception by some that orchestras exist for a privileged few, not the many who actually hear them and who pay for them. Orchestras need their audiences now more than ever. Join them this summer, and be part of the unique and priceless orchestral community of the Proms.

As well as symphony orchestras, the Proms features chamber orchestras (eg Manchester Collective, 19 August; Britten Sinfonia, 6 September), period-instrument orchestras (eg Les Siècles, 20 August; The English Concert, 25 August) and a jazz band (NYO Jazz, 1 August).

→ Next week: **What Makes the Organ so Mighty?**

Join Tom Service on his Proms-themed musical odysseys in *The Listening Service* on BBC Radio 3 during the season (Sundays at 5.00pm, repeated Fridays at 4.30pm). You can hear all 220-plus editions of the series on BBC Sounds. Tom's book based on the series was published last year (Faber).



Tadaaki Otaka *conductor*

Tadaaki Otaka's relationship with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales spans almost four decades and he has appeared with the orchestra each season since his debut. Now Conductor Laureate, he was the orchestra's Principal Conductor from 1987 to 1995.

He was appointed Music Director of the Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra in April 2018 and in Tokyo holds the title of Permanent Conductor of the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Laureate of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Honorary Guest Conductor of the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra and Honorary Conductor Laureate of the Kioi Hall Chamber Orchestra. He has been associated with the Sapporo Symphony Orchestra for four decades, leading it on European tours and establishing it as one of Japan's leading ensembles; since 2015 he has served as its Honorary Music Director. He was Principal Guest Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra between 2009 and 2012 and Artistic Director of the New National Theatre, Tokyo, from 2010 to 2014.

Tadaaki Otaka continues to conduct extensively in Japan and is also in demand as a teacher of young conductors, holding posts as Honorary Professor at the Tokyo University of the Arts, Visiting Professor at Soai University and the Kyoto City University of Arts, and Guest Professor at the Kunitachi College of Music. In 2000 he became the first Japanese person to be awarded the Elgar Medal and in 2010 he was appointed an honorary CBE.



Elena Urioste *violin*

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Elena Urioste studied at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and the Juilliard School in New York. Since first appearing with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the age of 13 she has performed concertos with major orchestras throughout the USA, Europe and the Far East. She was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, 2012–14.

She is the founder and Artistic Director of Chamber Music by the Sea, an annual festival on Maryland's Eastern Shore, and founder of Intermission, a programme combining music, movement and mindfulness. With her husband, pianist Tom Poster, she formed the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective in 2017 with a commitment to celebrating diversity of all forms and a desire to unearth lesser-known gems of the repertoire; the group became Associate Ensemble at Wigmore Hall in 2020. During the pandemic, she and Poster created daily videos over 88 consecutive days of lockdown, reaching worldwide audiences through social media. Many of these performances feature on *The Jukebox Album*, issued in 2021. Since then they have recorded *To the Spring*, a disc of violin sonatas and songs by Grieg, and *From Brighton to Brooklyn*, an album exploring and celebrating their British and American backgrounds.

Elena Urioste made her BBC Proms debut last summer, performing Ethel Smyth's Concerto for Violin and Horn with Ben Goldscheider and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Kazuki Yamada. She plays an Alessandro Gagliano violin from c1706 with a bow by Nikolaus Kittel.

Coming up at the Proms

Highlights of the next few days



MARÍA DUEÑAS

Tam Lan Truong



MARIZA

Carlos Ramos

THURSDAY 20 JULY

PROM 8

FALLA, LALO, DEBUSSY & RAVEL
7.30pm–c9.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
Josep Pons and the BBC Symphony Orchestra present a Spanish-themed Prom with a French accent. María Dueñas is the violin soloist in Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*, performed alongside Debussy's *Ibéria*, Ravel's *Boléro* and music from Falla's tragic opera *La vida breve*.



HORRIBLE HISTORIES

SATURDAY 22 JULY

PROMS 10 & 11 HORRIBLE HISTORIES:

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2.00pm–c4.00pm & 6.00pm–c8.00pm
Royal Albert Hall

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FRIDAY 21 JULY

PROM 9 MARIZA SINGS FADO

8.00pm–c9.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
Make a date with destiny at this Proms celebration of fado, the musical soul of Portugal. Mariza, one of the tradition's greatest living exponents, together with her band, performs favourite songs from her 20-year career as well as offering a glimpse of her forthcoming album.



RYAN WIGGLESWORTH

SUNDAY 23 JULY

PROM 12 HELEN GRIME & BEETHOVEN

7.30pm–c9.25pm • Royal Albert Hall
Beethoven's epic 'Choral' Symphony, with its famous 'Ode to Joy' finale, is performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and new Chief Conductor Ryan Wigglesworth. Opening the concert is Helen Grime's Proms commission *Meditations on Joy*, whose three movements are each inspired by a different poem and facet of joy.

On Radio, TV and Online

SOUNDS

Every Prom at the Royal Albert Hall and all 'Proms at' chamber concerts broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and on BBC Sounds

Most Proms repeated in *Afternoon Concert* (weekdays, 2.00pm)

iPLAYER

BBC TV and iPlayer will broadcast 24 Proms, including the First Night and Last Night, available to watch on iPlayer for 12 months

BBC National Orchestra of Wales

For over 90 years the BBC National Orchestra of Wales has played an integral part in the cultural landscape of Wales, occupying a distinctive role as both broadcast and national symphony orchestra. It performs a busy schedule of live concerts throughout Wales, the rest of the UK and the world.

The orchestra is an ambassador of Welsh music as well as of contemporary composers and musicians, and its concerts can be heard regularly across the BBC: on Radio 3, Radio Wales and Radio Cymru. BBC NOW works closely with schools and music organisations throughout Wales and regularly undertakes workshops, side-by-side performances and young composer initiatives to inspire and encourage the next generation of performers, composers and arts leaders. Last year alone the orchestra reached over 18,000 young people across Wales through workshops and live performances.

Forthcoming highlights include the launch of a new season of concerts in Wales from October and a new series of concerts dedicated to Welsh composer Grace Williams, to be performed at the orchestra's home, BBC Hoddinott Hall (at Wales Millennium Centre). BBC Hoddinott Hall also acts as a broadcast centre for the orchestra, from where it also continues its series of live-streamed concerts and prerecorded content as part of its popular Digital Concert Series.

Soundtrack recordings taking place this year include the theme tune to the new *Doctor Who* series, a new natural history series with Apple TV and an array of CD recordings with record labels around the world.

Principal Conductor

Ryan Bancroft

Conductor Laureate

Tadaaki Otaka CBE

Composer-in-Association

Gavin Higgins

Composer Affiliate

Sarah Lianne Lewis

First Violins

Nick Whiting

associate leader

Martin Gwilym-Jones

sub leader

Cecily Ward

Terry Porteus

Suzanne Casey

Carmel Barber

Anna Cleworth

Juan Gonzalez

Yuriko Matsuda

Laura Embrey

Gary George-Veale

Barbara Zdziarska

Patrycja Mynarska

Second Violins

Anna Smith*

Ros Butler

Sheila Smith

Vickie Ringguth

Joseph Williams

Michael Topping

Katherine Miller

Beverley Wescott

Sellena Leony

Lydia Caines

Ilze Abola

Jane Sinclair

Violas

Rebecca Jones*

Tetsuomi Nagata

Peter Taylor

Ania Leadbeater

Robert Gibbons

Catherine Palmer

Laura Sinnerton

Dave BaMaung

Lowri Thomas

Ben Norris

Cellos

Alice Neary*

Keith Hewitt‡

Jessica Feaver

Sandy Bartai

Carolyn Hewitt

Rachel Ford

Alistair Howes

Kathryn Graham

Double Bases

Alexander Jones‡

Christopher

Wescott

Elen Roberts

Thea Sayer

David F. C.

Johnson

Claire Whitson

Flutes

Matthew

Featherstone*

John Hall†

Lindsey Ellis

Piccolo

Lindsey Ellis†

Oboes

Steven Hudson*

Amy McKean†

Sarah-Jayne

Porsmoguer

Cor Anglais

Sarah-Jayne

Porsmoguer†

Clarinets

Thomas Verity[‡]
Hannah Morgan
Lenny Sayers

Bass Clarinet

Lenny Sayers[†]

Bassoons

Jarostaw
Augustyniak*
Louise Watson
David Buckland

Contrabassoon

David Buckland[†]

Horns

Tim Thorpe*
Meilyr Hughes
Neil Shewan[†]
John Davy
Tom Taffinder

Trumpets

Philippe Schartz*
Robert Samuel
Corey Morris

Trombones

Donal Bannister*
Adam Hanna

Bass Trombone

Darren Smith[†]

Tuba

Daniel Trodden[†]

Timpani

Matthew Hardy[‡]

Percussion

Mark Walker[†]
Phil Girling
Andrea Porter
Harry Lovell-Jones

Harp

Valerie Aldrich-
Smith[†]

* *Section Principal*

[†] *Principal*

[‡] *Guest Principal*

[‡] *Assistant String
Principal*

*The list of players
was correct at
the time of going
to press*

Director

Lisa Tregale

**Head of Artistic
Production**

Matthew Wood

**Artists and
Projects Manager**

Victoria Massocchi

**Orchestra
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Vicky James

**Assistant
Orchestra
Manager**

Nicholas Olsen

**Orchestra
Co-ordinator,
Operations**

Kevin Myers

**Orchestra
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Eleanor Hall

Music Librarian

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Steve Brown

**Head of Marketing
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Mike Sims

**Broadcast
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Jacob Perkins

**Senior Radio
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Supervisors**

Andrew Smillie
Simon Smith

**Education
Producer**

Beatrice Carey

**Education
Producer and
Chorus Manager**

Rhonwen Jones

**Production
Business Manager**

Lisa Blofeld

Business**Co-ordinators**

Christine Holliday
Caryl Evans

**BBC Early Careers
Apprentices**

Analese Thomas-
Strachan
Jordan Woodley

RWCMD**Placement Student**

William Forrest

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