

# 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'David Pickard'.

**David Pickard**  
Director, BBC Proms



# Tonight at the Proms

Dalia Stasevska, Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, launches the 2023 BBC Proms with a programme celebrating her Ukrainian roots and Finnish nationality.

The rousing *Finlandia* by Jean Sibelius (tonight performed in its rarely heard choral version) was a rallying call for Finns clinging on to their national identity while absorbed into the Russian Empire. By contrast, the dramatic *Snöfrid* takes its theme from a poem by Swedish poet Viktor Rydberg evoking a supernatural figure from Scandinavian folklore.

The first of this year's series of Proms commissions and co-commissions, from Ukrainian composer Bohdana Frolyak, explores the idea of a return to light from darkness; and Britten's sunny *Young Person's Guide* ingeniously dismantles the orchestra, section by section, before reassembling it for a thrilling finale. Before the interval, Proms regular Paul Lewis is the soloist in Grieg's stirring, virtuosic and ever-popular Piano Concerto. Enjoy the Proms!



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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 1

FRIDAY 14 JULY • 7.00pm–c9.00pm

### First Night of the Proms 2023

**Jean Sibelius** Finlandia (choral version) 8'

**Bohdana Frolyak** Let There Be Light *BBC commission: world premiere* c5'

**Edvard Grieg** Piano Concerto in A minor 30'

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

**Jean Sibelius** Snöfrid *first performance at the Proms* 14'

**Benjamin Britten** The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra 18'

**Paul Lewis** *piano*

**Lesley Manville** *narrator*

**BBC Singers** Neil Ferris *chorus-master*

**BBC Symphony Chorus** Neil Ferris *chorus-master*

**BBC Symphony Orchestra** Stephen Bryant *leader*

**Dalia Stasevska** *conductor*

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**JEAN SIBELIUS** (1865–1957)

## Finlandia (choral version) (1899, rev. 1900, 1938, 1948)

**BBC Singers**  
**BBC Symphony Chorus**

For text, see page 8

It's appropriate that Finnish conductor Dalia Stasevska leads tonight's forces in this choral version of her compatriot Sibelius's popular symphonic poem *Finlandia*.

In 1809 Sweden's centuries-old control of Finland was finally wrested away by Russia and the territory became a largely autonomous Grand Duchy of the Tsarist Empire. In 1899, acting through his hated placeman, governor-general Nikolay Ivanovich Bobrikov, Tsar Nicholas II's *February Manifesto* sought to crack down on growing nationalist sentiment among Finns and to rein in the territory's autonomy. Among the provisions was a press gag – a standard item on the to-do list of despots then and now; as newspapers closed and journalists were thrown out of work, all levels of society rallied round to take part in a three-day 'Finnish Press Pension Celebration' – the grand title serving as a fig leaf for what was in fact a vigorous, if semi-covert, political protest.

Sibelius's contribution was to conduct the Orchestra of the Helsinki Philharmonic Society (OHPS) in a fundraising concert at the Swedish Theatre, for which he composed an overture and six 'tableaux' illustrating aspects of Finnish history. Perhaps the boldest of these was the 'Great Hate' tableau (No. 6), which depicted the destruction and brutality visited on the Finns by

an earlier Russian invasion. The tableau that followed, 'Finland Awakes' (No. 7), was the original version of what would eventually become *Finlandia*.

Surprised by the warm reception accorded to 'Finland Awakes', Sibelius refashioned the music into a free-standing symphonic poem; in 1900 the conductor Robert Kajanus premiered the new version, again with the OHPS, repeating it in 1901 for the first time under its settled title, *Finlandia*. Sibelius remained bemused by the success of his most internationally famous work, but the ingredients of its success are not hard to discern: the menacing opening in the brass, like an advancing (Russian?) bear; the serene, almost calmative response in the woodwind and strings accelerating into waves of spirited counter-attack; then the noble and stirring 'hymn' episode, its final lines underpinned by triumphant fanfares.

'*Finlandia* is not intended to be sung,' Sibelius complained in the face of the runaway success of numerous subsequent, opportunistic word-settings of the 'hymn': 'It is written for an orchestra.' But he changed his mind in 1940, when the venerable Finnish choir *Laulu-Miehet* (the 'Song Men') commissioned a setting – 'Oi Suomi, katso, sinun päiväs koittaa' – from the poet Veikko Antero Koskenniemi and asked the composer to sanction it, which he duly did: 'If the world wants to sing it, it can't be helped.' Every bit as potent a musical symbol of freedom and liberty as Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*, this is the version of *Finlandia* we hear tonight.

*Programme note* © Graeme Kay

Graeme Kay is a former editor of *Classical Music*, *Opera Now* and *BBC Music* magazines. He contributes news, features and a personal column to *Choir & Organ* magazine and is a digital platforms producer for BBC Radios 3 and 4.



A Finnish woman holds aloft the Finnish flag on a 1906 postcard, symbolising her country's struggle against Russification, a patriotic sentiment displayed in Sibelius's *Finlandia*

Grenville Collins Postcard Collection/Mary Evans Picture Library

### PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

Having earlier befriended Sibelius on his first visit to these shores, Proms founder-conductor Henry Wood gave *Finlandia* its London premiere in the 1906 series. The piece proved so popular that it was heard virtually every year (initially more than once a season) until 1941. Before long Finland and Great Britain were technically at war and it was not until after the Finns had taken an active role in expelling the Germans from Lapland in the autumn of 1944 that *Finlandia* re-entered the lists. Unscheduled between 1959 and 1995, the score has since returned to favour. The patriotic version for chorus and orchestra made its Proms debut at the 2017 Last Night, marking the centenary of Finnish Independence; joined, as tonight, by the BBC Singers and BBC Symphony Chorus, the BBC Symphony Orchestra was conducted on that occasion by its Finnish Chief Conductor, Sakari Oramo.

© 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](http://bbc.co.uk/proms/archive).

“Why does this tone-poem catch on with the public? I suppose because of its open-air style. The themes on which it is built came to me directly. Pure inspiration.”

**Sibelius musing on the popular success of *Finlandia* in his diary, December 1911**



## JEAN SIBELIUS



National hero; nature poet; bardic seer; caring father; careless husband; symbolist visionary; rugged modernist; bilious *bon vivant*; silent enigma. Sibelius embodies all (and more) of these contradictory personas. Few composers have provoked such a

wide – and frequently polarised – range of popular and critical responses. Part of the reason for Sibelius’s wildly divergent reception was his sheer longevity. Born in Hämeenlinna, a garrison town north of Helsinki, in 1865, when Finland was still part of the Russian Empire, he died in 1957, two years after Finland joined the United Nations. Even if at times Sibelius seemed unreachably isolated and remote, his life and work spanned some of the most turbulent and tumultuous events of the past 150 years.

Sibelius’s music is inextricably bound up with Finland’s struggle for independence and its search for a national creative identity. Although he was born into a Swedish-speaking family, the composer’s songs and choral works responded intensively to the rhythmic patterns and inflections of the Finnish language. One of the primary sources for his work was the *Kalevala*, a collection of Finnish folk tales compiled by the antiquarian Elias Lönnrot and first published in 1835, at the start of the Finnish national awakening. Iconic figures and places from the *Kalevala* recur throughout much of Sibelius’s music, from the tragic hero of his breakthrough work, the brooding choral symphony *Kullervo* (1891–2), to the

windswept domain of the forest god Tapiola, the subject of his final symphonic poem (1926).

Seeing Sibelius’s music solely through a national lens, however, would be a mistake. He was an elegant and highly cultured man of the world, whose imagination ranged far beyond the boundaries of his country villa at Järvenpää. He studied in Berlin and Vienna, and regarded Germany as one of his spiritual homes throughout the 1900s, just as continental European music was moving from the richly allusive Symbolist milieu of the 1890s towards the more aggressively modernist sound-worlds of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. He was lauded in Britain and the USA but almost completely ignored in France (until his ‘discovery’ by a later wave of Spectralist composers). Sibelius was, in this sense, a transitional figure. But his music had a remarkable capacity to harness the energy of the world whirling around him, and his symphonies are driven by an acutely attentive feeling for human emotion, whether in the surging passions of the First (1898–9), the sombre shades of the oblique Fourth (1910–11) or the elliptical grandeur of the single-movement Seventh (1924), which proved to be his last. This vital current can be traced as much in his smaller compositions – incidental music, songs, waltzes, virtuoso showpieces and chamber works – as in his symphonies and tone-poems. It is a potent and irresistible legacy.

*Programme note* © Daniel M. Grimley

Daniel M. Grimley is Head of Humanities at the University of Oxford and Professor of Music at Merton College. His recent books include *Delius and the Sound of Place* (Cambridge, 2018) and *Sibelius: Life, Music, Silence* (Reaktion, 2021).

## MORE SIBELIUS AT THE PROMS

THURSDAY 3 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 26  
**Symphony No. 1 in E minor**

For full Proms listings, and to book tickets, visit [bbc.co.uk/proms](http://bbc.co.uk/proms).

## PROMS Q&amp;A

Dalia Stasevska  
conductor

**This year’s First Night of the Proms features music by composers from Finland, where you live, and Ukraine, where you were born. Do you feel it has your stamp on it?**

I really feel this programme has come together so beautifully. It has, as you say, music from countries important to me, with Finnish music and a premiere from a Ukrainian composer, which I’m so thrilled about. You want to give the audience something new and also something that they love and is popular. Britten’s *Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra* is iconic and I can’t wait to perform it with the one and only BBC Symphony Orchestra, and then of course we have Grieg’s beautiful Piano Concerto. It’s a fantastic programme, with a special festive feeling. You want a spectacular opening to the Proms.

**As well as Sibelius’s famous *Finlandia*, you are conducting the less familiar *Snöfrid*. Can you give us a flavour of this ‘improvisation for narrator, mixed choir and orchestra’?**

I wanted to perform *Snöfrid* at the Last Night of the Proms last year [which was cancelled following the death of Queen Elizabeth II]. Since we were not able to do it then, it was my first wish to conduct it at this year’s First Night – and I was so happy the Proms agreed. It has the most spectacular last five minutes that Sibelius ever wrote. It will knock everyone down. It gives me goosebumps even thinking of the melody sung by the choir and played by the orchestra. It’s some of the most beautiful Sibelius out there.

**Bohdana Frolyak is a Ukrainian composer who will be new to many in the UK. What is her music like?**

I only discovered her music myself about a year ago. My husband [Finnish composer and musician Lauri Porra, Sibelius’s great-grandson] had curated a programme with the London Symphony Orchestra, and they had discovered some music by her. At that time



I was travelling to Ukraine – I’ve been doing a lot of charity work there since the war with Russia began. Last year, I said to an orchestra in Lviv that I wanted to do a programme of living Ukrainian composers and I asked if they knew Bohdana Frolyak’s music. They said, ‘Of course we do – she’s from Lviv.’ So they commissioned a piece from her, and I got to know her better. She’s a really exciting name.

**How do you go about keeping classic pieces like the Grieg and Britten feeling fresh?**

Like with any music, you open the score and listen to it. I always try to fall in love again. The Grieg is one of the first piano concertos I had on CD, so listening to it brings me really warm memories from my childhood. It’s dear music to me. I just have a problem with the second movement, because it’s so beautiful. Grieg somehow manages to stop time – so, when I’m conducting, I always have to make myself concentrate rather than dreaming about things or letting my mind fly away.

*Interview by Rebecca Franks*

JEAN SIBELIUS

## Finlandia

Oi Suomi, katso, sinun päiväs koittaa,  
 Yön uhka karkoitettu on jo pois,  
 Ja aamun kiuru kirkkaudessa soittaa  
 Kuin itse taivahan kansi sois.  
 Yön vallat aamun valkeus jo voittaa,  
 Sun päiväs koittaa, oi synnyinmaa!

Oi nouse, Suomi, nosta korkealle  
 Pääs seppelöimä suurten muistojen,  
 Oi nouse, Suomi, näytit maailmalle  
 Sa että karkoitit orjuuden  
 Ja ettet taipunut sa sorron alle,  
 On aamus alkanut, synnyinmaa!

*Veikko Antero Koskenniemi (1885–1962)*

O Finland, see, your day is dawning,  
 night's threat is already driven away,  
 and the lark sings in the clear morning sky  
 as if the vault of heaven itself were singing.  
 Bright dawn already conquers the powers of night.  
 Your day is dawning, O land of our birth!

O arise, Finland, raise high  
 your head, wreathed in great memories,  
 O arise, Finland, show the world  
 that you have thrown off slavery  
 and that you did not bend under oppression.  
 Your morning has begun, land of our birth!

*Translation by Douglas Stuart © Virgin Classics*

BOHDANA FROLYAK (born 1968)

Let There  
Be Light (2023)

*BBC commission:  
 world premiere*

All the music I write these days is about Ukraine: about its beauty, its uniqueness – and about light, which has to defeat darkness.

This single-movement work for symphony orchestra is quite a dynamic composition, symbolising light that takes a path through darkness and back to light. This path is reflected in the musical language of the work. A calm beginning, with lyrical cello and violin solos over a background of colouristic harmonies in strings, and with these solos imitated in woodwinds, leads to a disturbing central section and then a dramatic culmination, at the peak of which we hear a melody in violins and full orchestra with expressive solos for strings.

Before the end of the work, where peace and an atmosphere of light take the lead, the music immerses itself in dissonant intervals and chords, as if to remind us of the darkness that rules the world.

Kateryna Biletina



The hope for light: Ukrainian artist Kateryna Biletina's *Dark Night of the Soul* (2022) echoes the passage from light to darkness and back to light that lies at the heart of Bohdana Frolyak's Proms commission, *Let There Be Light*



The piece closes with a calm, enlightened coda, built on the basis of a clear C major, supplemented with layers of additional intervals and chords which, however, don't interfere with the 'sound' of light and quietness.

*Programme note © Bohdana Frolyak*

“An overwhelming majority of composers have remained determined to continue making music despite unprecedented circumstances – some from the very beginning of the invasion, others after overcoming an initial shock and getting accustomed to the new circumstances.”

Musicologist Oksana Nesterenko describing the resolve of Ukrainian composers following Russia's invasion in February 2022

## BOHDANA FROLYAK



Born in 1968 in the small village of Vydyniv in Western Ukraine, Bohdana Frolyak by her own admission owes her musical career to local teacher Vasyl Kufluk (1912–99), who in the 1930s studied Music at the Warsaw Conservatory and

Mathematics at the University of Warsaw. Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War he returned to his native Vydyniv and settled there for good. His extraordinary pedagogical talent influenced the lives of many students, and Bohdana Frolyak is no exception. She continued her music education in Lviv, first at the Solomiya Krushelnytska School of Music and then at the Mykola Lysenko National Academy of Music (aka Lviv Conservatory), where she studied with the well-known Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk. She graduated in 1991 and since then has been teaching composition at the Conservatory.

Frolyak has been a prolific composer of orchestral, chamber and vocal works. Her music exudes positive vibrations, as if she were attempting to express gratitude through her works for the perceived goodness and beauty in the world. In the aesthetic continuum between Stravinsky and Schoenberg, her artistic sensibility is closer to Stravinsky's approach to timbre and sensuality, as she does not unduly concern herself with building a system or engaging in sonic calculations. Time emerges as an important force in Frolyak's music. It allows for great spaces of sound duration, which are occasionally

broken by bursts of energy, bringing the feeling of catharsis at the end of a well-rounded composed whole.

Ukraine, her homeland, is also important to the composer, especially now with her country fighting for its very existence. In 2014 Frolyak composed an hour-long piece to the poems of Taras Shevchenko, the most venerated Ukrainian poet and national bard. This work, *The Righteous Soul*, was written for the 200th anniversary of the poet's birth, which coincided with the year that the first Russian invasion of Ukraine began in Crimea and the Donbas. Extremely meditative in mood, this beautiful and significant piece perfectly reflects the atmosphere and tension of the poetry.

Her other important compositions include two symphonies, concertos for piano, clarinet, violin and cello, numerous chamber works and works for orchestra and choir. The recipient of a number of scholarships and awards at home and abroad, including Ukraine's prestigious Shevchenko National Prize, Frolyak has participated in contemporary music festivals in Ukraine, Poland, Germany and Switzerland.

Bohdana Frolyak's music is especially well known in Poland, where she held the 'Gaude Polonia' fellowship of the Polish Ministry of Culture and participated in the Warsaw Autumn international festival of contemporary music. Her works are increasingly performed in concert halls around the world.

*Profile © Roman Rewakowicz*

Roman Rewakowicz is a Polish conductor and Artistic Director of the annual 'Days of Ukrainian Music in Warsaw' festival, where last year he conducted Bohdana Frolyak's *The Righteous Soul* (2014).

**EDVARD GRIEG** (1843–1907)

## Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16 (1868, rev. 1907)

- 1 **Allegro molto moderato**
- 2 **Adagio** –
- 3 **Allegro moderato molto e marcato – Quasi presto –  
Andante maestoso**

**Paul Lewis** *piano*

Grieg's only piano concerto is so popular – comedian Eric Morecambe once memorably played 'all the right notes, but not necessarily in the right order' – that it is all too easy to overlook its unique qualities. Even though the first movement owes an enormous debt to the formal patterning of Schumann's concerto, that fact does little to undermine the striking originality and sheer exuberance of the music enshrined within.

Grieg was only 25 when, during a holiday in Denmark, he put the finishing touches to this, his first real masterpiece and the work that put Norway on the musical map. Inspired by his recent marriage to his cousin, the singer Nina Hagerup, the concerto was composed in a single creative sweep. Grieg could hardly have wished for a more distinguished seal of approval than that of the world's most famous living pianist, Franz Liszt. Having played through the work perfectly at sight, the great virtuoso enthusiastically described it as an 'intoxicating liqueur'.

Norway, needless to say, loved it, but critical reaction was decidedly mixed elsewhere. Despite Grieg having

recently spent several years as a student in Leipzig, the 1872 German premiere there was a lukewarm affair. Europe's publishing houses hardly fell over one another to rush the work into print – indeed the first edition was issued by the relatively small firm of Fritsch, who, having declared it 'not very interesting', only took it on at the insistence of its leading Norwegian composer, Johan Svendsen.

Grieg himself had doubts about the orchestration. Following a massive overhaul in the early 1880s, he was still tinkering with it in July 1907 – only a month and a half before his death – when the young Percy Grainger spent some time studying the concerto under Grieg's supervision. The alterations the old master made that summer (expanding the scoring to include four horns, among other things) were then incorporated into the 'definitive' 1919 edition.

One of the reasons for the enormous popularity of the concerto is Grieg's seemingly unquenchable dramatic flair. The opening immediately arrests the listener's attention with the timpani crescendoing straight into the soloist's all-conquering first entry – no wonder Grieg recalls this *coup de théâtre* to round things off at the end of the movement. The uncontrollable flow of ideas is such that no fewer than seven distinctive thematic strands vie for attention along the way. But the real masterstroke comes in the finale, where the seemingly innocent second subject returns right at the very end as a massive peroration (clearly anticipating the trump card that Rachmaninov played so effectively in his Second and Third Piano Concertos). Incidentally, it was this passage that Liszt particularly admired: 'He suddenly stopped playing, rose to his full height, left the piano and paced theatrically around the great hall of the monastery bellowing out the theme,' Grieg recalled in an excited letter to his parents. It follows a radiant central Adagio movement,



Ronald Grant Archive/Mary Evans Picture Library

'I'll give you that, sunshine': phony pianist Eric Morecambe (*centre*) finally acknowledges his rendition of Grieg's Piano Concerto is at best unconventional, in the iconic 1971 *Morecambe and Wise Show* sketch, featuring André Previn (*right*); the conductor later recalled: 'Eric was very worried that I wasn't a comedian. He said, "If anyone thinks we're trying to be funny, we're finished."'



which was composed as an enraptured response to the recent birth of Grieg's baby daughter Alexandra.

Although Chopin had previously featured Polish dance rhythms – most notably the mazurka and krakowiak – in his piano concertos, Grieg's was the first to draw upon a native folk-song tradition in order to conjure the atmosphere of his homeland. Although not a direct quotation, the first movement's luxuriant second melody sounds for all the world as if it might have been heard echoing around the fjords, while the finale's main theme is consciously derived from the Norwegian halling, a distant cousin of the Scottish reel, brilliantly transformed into a triple-time springdans in the final coda.

*Programme note* © Julian Haylock

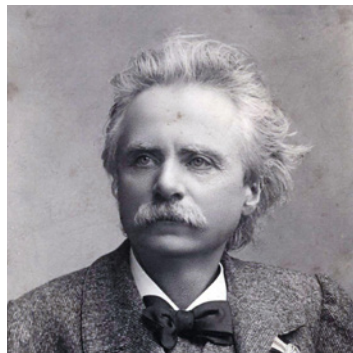
Julian Haylock is a former editor of *CD Review* and *International Piano* magazines and the author of biographies of Mahler, Rachmaninov and Puccini, and writes extensively for a wide variety of publications, including *BBC Music Magazine* and *The Strad*.

## PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

Staple fare since 1898, this evergreen score was sometimes programmed more than once a season in the cash-strapped early days. Rehearsal time was at a premium, with Henry Wood essentially the only conductor engaged. In his autobiography, Wood recalled Grieg with affection: 'We were all so taken with this shy, refined, delicate little man whose wife spoke such excellent English.' Maverick composer-pianist Percy Grainger was among the concerto's most ardent champions. His interpretation, experienced live in 1909, was heard again at the 1988 Last Night by means of piano roll technology, with Grainger himself coming on to take a bow in the form of a large cardboard cut-out. In 2010 it was the turn of the much-missed Lars Vogt, appearing (in person) for the second time in the piece with which he had made his Proms debut. Other recent advocates? Alice Sara Ott (2011), Steven Osborne (2012), Zhang Zuo (2014), Gabriela Montero (2016) and Khatia Buniatishvili (2018).

© David Gutman

## EDVARD GRIEG



Well over a century after his death, Edvard Hagerup Grieg (born in Bergen) remains the foremost of Norwegian composers.

His surname was actually of Scottish derivation: his great-grandfather changed his name from

Greig to Grieg when he took Norwegian nationality in 1779. But Grieg's sense of Norwegian nationhood was increasingly central to his work. Many melodies presumed to be Norwegian folk songs were really composed by Grieg. In fact, he rarely used original folk music in his works but he understood its language, its moods, inflections and thinking so deeply that creating original 'folk' tunes became almost a reflexive action for him.

Initially he was thoroughly schooled in the Romantic German repertoire. Hearing the teenage Grieg at the piano, the violinist and composer Ole Bull persuaded his parents to send him to the Leipzig Conservatory, where he studied with the Schumann enthusiast E. F. Wenzel and heard Schumann's widow Clara playing her husband's Piano Concerto, which left a lasting impression. But Grieg was unhappy in Leipzig and the strain probably contributed to an attack of pleurisy in 1860, which left him with lifelong respiratory problems.

After Leipzig, Grieg studied in Copenhagen with the Danish composer Niels Gade, on whose instruction he composed a symphony – which, however, he later withdrew. Far more successful was the now famous

Piano Concerto (1868, rev. 1907), in which Grieg's lyrical gifts find magnificent early flowering. Thereafter he found worldwide fame chiefly as a miniaturist – especially in the songs and 10 books of *Lyric Pieces* for piano – and in chamber works: outstanding among these is the G minor String Quartet (1877–8), which strongly influenced Debussy's only work in the genre.

Grieg's immersion in Norwegian folk music began in earnest when he discovered Lindeman's pioneering collection *Norwegian Mountain Melodies* and befriended Rikard Nordraak (1842–66), composer of the Norwegian national anthem. In 1867 Grieg married his cousin, Nina Hagerup, a singer for whom he wrote many of his songs. Setting the poetry of his great compatriots Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and Henrik Ibsen led to productive relationships with both men, resulting in theatre music for Bjørnson's *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (1872) and the score for Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* (1874–5), one of Grieg's crowning achievements.

As his understanding of Norwegian folk music deepened, he strove less and less to 'domesticate' its astringencies, and late compositions such as the *Slåtter* ('Norwegian Dances', 1902–3) for piano can sound strikingly modern for their time. Years later, the great Hungarian modernist and ethnomusicologist Béla Bartók acknowledged Grieg's importance as innovator and renewer: 'He was the first of us who threw away the German yoke and turned to the music of his own people.'

*Profile* © Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson is the author of books on Bruckner, Mahler and Wagner, and a regular contributor to *BBC Music Magazine*.

**MORE GRIEG AT THE PROMS**  
MONDAY 28 AUGUST, 7.00pm • PROM 57  
**Peer Gynt – In the Hall of the Mountain King**

“Now, I hope, sir, you understand all these squiggly lines [*looks at sheet music*]. Because the reason I ask is, the second movement is very important to me. You see, in the second movement – not too heavy on the banjos.”

Comedian Eric Morecambe to the bemused studio guest, conductor André Previn, in the famous *Morecambe and Wise Show* sketch (Christmas 1971), which immortalised Morecambe's line, 'I'm playing all the right notes, but not necessarily in the right order.'

## INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

*Now playing on BBC Radio 3 ...*

Radio 3's Georgia Mann and Petroc Trelawny look forward to the Proms season ahead.

*Available on BBC Sounds*





## JEAN SIBELIUS

## Snöfrid, Op. 29 (1900)

*first performance at the Proms*

Leslie Manville *narrator*  
 BBC Singers  
 BBC Symphony Chorus

For text, see page 18

Unlike *Finlandia*, *Snöfrid* was not written for an explicitly patriotic purpose, despite the common understanding of its subject matter as a political metaphor for the Finnish fight for independence from the Russian Empire. Instead, it was written – in ‘more or less one sitting’, as Sibelius later claimed – for a rather more practical purpose: a lottery fundraising event that successfully paid off debts incurred by the Philharmonic Society of Helsinki’s recent European tour of Sibelius’s First Symphony.

In *Snöfrid* Sibelius set to music his own, heavily abridged version of a poem by Swedish writer Viktor Rydberg



The Swedish poet Viktor Rydberg (portrait by Anders Zorn, 1860–1920); it was from Rydberg’s poem about the shore nymph Snöfrid that Sibelius took his text to create a melodrama for narrator, choir and orchestra

(1828–95). In tonight’s performance, the spoken part has been specially translated and adapted into English by Edward Kemp, though the choirs still sing the original Swedish. Unlike many of Sibelius’s early works, which are inspired by the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, Rydberg’s poem is loosely based on figures in disparate Nordic sagas and supernatural beings in Scandinavian folklore.

...

Somewhat ambiguously subtitled an ‘improvisation’, the piece opens with an introduction typical of Sibelius’s later storm music in *The Tempest* (1925–6) or as heard at the culmination of the tone-poem *Tapiola* (1926). Thereafter choral episodes alternate with orchestral interludes.

“Unlike many of Sibelius’s early works, which are inspired by the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, Rydberg’s poem is loosely based on figures in disparate Nordic sagas and supernatural beings in Scandinavian folklore.”

Interlocking string patterns, ominous brass swells and flute/piccolo flourishes bring to mind the howling gale that provided the setting for Snöfrid’s call to the warrior Gunnar at the opening of Rydberg’s poem. Though these lines are omitted in Sibelius’s lyrics, their content is depicted by the orchestra.

After the introduction’s final flourish and a stately chorale, the choir enters and Gunnar addresses Snöfrid – the shore nymph and ‘bride of his dreams’, as they sail

through moonlit waves. A stormy orchestral interlude then precedes a series of temptations offered to the hero in exchange for his soul. Firstly, dwarfs offer him fortune. Secondly, the ‘Wild Hunt’ – a rampaging nocturnal horde of spectres in Northern European folklore – tempts him with fame and glory. Thirdly, in an ethereal episode for sopranos, altos and solo violin, a siren offers him the corporeal comforts of a life with her on the shore.

At the heart of the work, Snöfrid’s words are rhythmically recited over elegiac wind chords in a passage of melodrama. She implores Gunnar not to give in to such temptations and to remember the virtues of honour and duty, even in the face of danger. The choir reprises Snöfrid’s sentiment in a final march and Sibelius’s last chords reassure us that, by the end, Gunnar will choose Snöfrid, ‘the tempest’ and perhaps the struggle for freedom.

*Programme note* © Sarah Moynihan

Sarah Moynihan is a musicologist and music analyst. Her research explores the cultural history, reception and musical structures of Sibelius’s works. She is a Lecturer in Twentieth-Century Music at the University of Manchester and a trustee of the UK’s Society for Music Analysis.

JEAN SIBELIUS

# Snöfrid

## Chorus

Snöfrid, hur fager du är i din silverskrud!  
Snöfrid, vi gunga på våg, mina drömmars brud.

Gunnar! Gunnar! vi syna guld, i månljus natt,  
Kom gosse, tag din lycka fatt!  
Vi skola dig friar från armod's skam!  
Giv oss din själ, då får du vår skatt!

Gunnar, där kommer Utgård's vilda jakt.  
Giv oss din själ, och i minnets värld,  
Gunnar, ditt namn skall stråla med ärans prakt!

Gunnar, vänd hit din stäv!  
Dig väntar en hydda i lundens sköt,  
En trohet, som aldrig sitt löfte bröt,  
Där drömme du ljuvt vid strandens säv!  
Den vänaste arm, som en famntag knöt,  
Gunnar, skall väva med kärlek din levnads väv.

## Snöfrid

Better to battle, poor but with honour,  
Than doze like the dragon hoarding his riches;  
Better death in a ditch  
In the service of virtue,  
Than fanfares obtained  
In pursuit of a name.  
Better than peace  
Is danger's caress.

Choose me, you choose the tempest.

Snöfrid, so beautiful in your silver robes.  
Snöfrid, we ride upon the waves, bride of my dreams.

Gunnar! Gunnar! See the gold in the moonlit night,  
come, boy, grasp your fortune,  
we will free you from the shame of poverty!  
Give us your soul and you will gain our tribute!

Gunnar, here come Utgård's wild huntsmen.  
Give us your soul and your name, Gunnar,  
will resound forever in the halls of fame!

Gunnar, turn this way!  
A cottage awaits you in the shelter of a grove,  
and a heart forever faithful,  
there you can dream beside the shore.  
The fairest arm that ever embraced man,  
Gunnar, will weave love into the weft of your life.

Heed the harsh runes of the hero's calling:

'Draw your sword against the ogre,  
Bleed bravely for the orphan,  
Forget gladness,  
Forgo regret,  
Wage the unwinnable war  
And die a nameless death.'

That's the true end of the hero's quest,  
Don't ache for the islands of the blest.

## Chorus

Gunnar! Gosse  
Många vågar öppna sig till griften;  
Om bland dem du väljer kämpens stig,  
Genom oro, kval och hårda skiften,  
Genom tvivlets töcken för han dig.  
Trött och ensam  
Kämpe i sitt blod den man, som lyfte  
Sköld till värn får denna världens små,  
Och ju himlen närmare hans syfte,  
Desto tyngre fjät han måste gå  
Dock, du gosse,  
Är du dina bästa drömmar trogen,  
Återser dig huldran någon gång,  
Leker med dig som vi lekt i skogen,  
Sjunger för dig tröstlig runosång,  
Öppnar för dig  
Dina barndomsminnens blomstergårdar,  
När från strid du längtar dit igen,  
Där på Idavallen noman vårdar  
Morgonlivets gyllne tavlor än.

Original Swedish text by Viktor Rydberg (1828–95), translated and adapted  
by Edward Kemp (born 1965)

Gunnar! Boy!  
There are many paths to the grave;  
if you choose the path of war,  
it will lead through suffering and strife,  
through mists of doubt.  
He who raises his shield  
for the weak of the world  
fights weary and alone,  
and the closer to heaven his goal,  
the heavier his footsteps must fall.  
But, boy,  
if you keep true to your best dreams,  
your forest-spirit will see you again one day,  
to play as we played in the woods,  
to sing you songs of comfort,  
to open the way  
to the gardens of your childhood,  
when you long to return after battle  
to Idaval, where the Norn still nurses  
golden shadows of a new dawn.



**BENJAMIN BRITTEN** (1913–76)

## The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra – Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Henry Purcell, Op. 34 (1945)

**Theme:** Allegro maestoso e largamente

**Variation A:** Presto (flutes and piccolo)

**Variation B:** Lento (oboes)

**Variation C:** Moderato (clarinets)

**Variation D:** Allegro alla marcia (bassoons)

**Variation E:** Brillante: alla polacca (violins)

**Variation F:** Meno mosso (violas)

**Variation G:** (cellos) –

**Variation H:** Cominciando lento ma poco a poco accel. al Allegro (double basses)

**Variation I:** Maestoso (harp)

**Variation J:** L'istesso tempo (horns)

**Variation K:** Vivace (trumpets)

**Variation L:** Allegro pomposo (trombones and tuba)

**Variation M:** Moderato (percussion)

**Fugue:** Allegro molto

During the first recording of *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, in the year after its completion, Britten, who was conducting, was reportedly so delighted with his own creation that he bounced up and down with excitement. It was, certainly, a happy composition for him, combining a number of his musical preoccupations: music that is 'useful' and accessible to all; the form of

theme and variation; and the chance to show off his genius at counterpoint (multiple musical lines played together) across a vast orchestral palette. The piece was composed at the tail end of 1945, when Britten was riding high from the professional triumphs of the past 12 months. His opera *Peter Grimes* had been premiered to critical and popular acclaim, and he had marked the 250th anniversary of Henry Purcell's death through a series of powerful works, including the *Holy Sonnets of John Donne* and his String Quartet No. 2. *The Young Person's Guide* was subtitled 'Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Henry Purcell', taking as its main theme the Rondeau from Purcell's incidental music (1695) to *Abdelazer*, a play by Aphra Benn.

As it says on the tin, the piece is a thoroughgoing tour of the modern orchestra, explicit in its aims of exploring both collective orchestral sound and the individual characteristics of instruments. While nowadays it is most commonly heard in the concert hall, it was originally commissioned for a film by the Ministry of Education. Simply entitled *Instruments of the Orchestra*, the piece showcased the immaculately turned out London Symphony Orchestra, conducted and narrated by Sir Malcolm Sargent (making the most of his starring role). Sargent's script was written by Montagu Slater (author of the *Peter Grimes* libretto), while for early concert performances a slightly different text was provided by Eric Crozier, another of Britten's regular collaborators.

As in Slater's version, Crozier's script introduces the piece, then each section of the orchestra in turn as it progresses. Many famous voices have delivered this

Same orchestra, same venue, different time: *The BBC Symphony Orchestra Rehearsing at the Royal Albert Hall* (1952) by Paul Ayshford Methuen (1886–1974)



Bonhams, London/Bridgeman Images



script, including Sean Connery in 1966; and a somewhat modified version was performed by the late Dame Edna Everage ('The composer has written this gorgeous piece of music especially to introduce you to the instruments of the orchestra, possums ...'). Britten himself took on the role during concert performances in Amsterdam in 1946, in his best 'Noël Coward voice', as he put it. Several alternative scripts have been commissioned in recent years.

...

In the more standard concert version, after the theme is played for the first time, the orchestra then breaks into its constituent parts (or 'teams', as Dame Edna put it): wind, brass, strings and a full artillery of percussion. In the variations that follow, individual instruments get their chance to shine and Britten exploits the particular qualities that appealed to him: the melancholy of the oboe, the liquid versatility of the clarinet, the 'lusingando' or flattering beauty of the cello. He also enjoys himself by writing for unusual combinations of instruments, such as a jaunty tuba accompaniment to the clarinet, the harp paired with gently clashing cymbals and ceremonial gong, and the percussion taking solo spots over a Spanish-guitar-like string band. Despite the same theme being, technically, repeated time and again, Britten goes to great lengths to create variety across the variations, giving each a distinctive mood. The oboe variation is swooningly romantic, the viola one dark and troubled, while the horns are given hunting-style fanfares.

The dazzling finale consists of an elaborate fugue (a melody appearing in sequence across multiple parts)

beginning with piccolo and flute, then becoming more and more complex, until Purcell's original theme emerges, triumphantly, from the brass. In Britten's manuscript draft the exuberance of the music is visible, his swift, neat handwriting almost flying off the page. It is an astounding orchestral achievement, and absolutely exhilarating in performance. No wonder he was delighted.

*Programme note © Lucy Walker*

Lucy Walker is a musicologist, writer and public speaker. She studied the operas of Francis Poulenc for her PhD and she has edited two books on Benjamin Britten. She is currently co-editing a book of essays on Elizabeth Maconchy.

## PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

*The Young Person's Guide* arrived at a Winter Prom in January 1947. Basil Cameron and Adrian Boult then shared conducting duties, with this piece allocated to Cameron. Most summer seasons between 1947 and 1966 found Malcolm Sargent on the podium. He had, after all, been in at the start of the music's cinematic life although Britten, in common with other contemporary composers, was scarcely a fan. A second 1966 performance was occasioned by the visit of a foreign orchestra for the first time in Proms history. The ensemble then billed as the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra gave four concerts in all, Gennady Rozhdestvensky placing *The Young Person's Guide* in the company of Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto and Tchaikovsky's *Manfred*. Serially included in First and Last Night programmes, not least Sargent's own, the score's most recent appearance came 50 years after his death, in 2017. This was a gala occasion on which Sir Andrew Davis and the BBC SO recreated the Brylcreemed maestro's own 500th Prom.

© David Gutman

## BENJAMIN BRITTEN



In June 1976, at the beginning of the 29th Aldeburgh Festival, Benjamin Britten hosted a party in the gardens of the Red House, his home since 1957. He was desperately ill (he would die six months later) but *The Times* had announced that morning

that he was now Baron Britten of Aldeburgh, in the County of Suffolk, and celebrations were in order. He was grateful for the recognition, feeling himself eclipsed by a vibrant, emerging generation of British composers.

Britten could not have predicted either the highs or the perceived lows of his remarkable career. Born in 1913 into an upper-middle-class family in Lowestoft, he wrote works throughout childhood of great commitment if not startling originality. Yet studies with Frank Bridge from 1927 exposed him to the techniques of Continental modernism and instilled real discipline in his music – ideas and qualities he thought lacking in his studies at the Royal College of Music from 1930 to 1933.

After graduation Britten wrote incidental music for film, stage and radio, which served as his apprenticeship as an opera composer. For the film *Coal Face* (1935) he collaborated with the poet W. H. Auden, who broadened his literary taste and political engagement, as evinced by their orchestral song-cycle *Our Hunting Fathers* (1936). Disenchanted by the critical response to his serious music, in early 1939 he followed Auden and Christopher

Isherwood to America. There he hit his stride in works such as the Violin Concerto (1938–9), *Sinfonia da Requiem* (1939–40) and *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo* (1940), written for his partner, the tenor Peter Pears.

America helped define him as a person and a composer but his roots remained in Suffolk, the county to which he returned in 1942 and in which he spent the rest of his life. There, registered as a conscientious objector, he wrote the opera *Peter Grimes*, which in 1945 launched his international career. There was no ingrained operatic culture in mid-20th-century Britain, a fact that made the dozen or so stage works that followed – from *The Rape of Lucretia* (1946) to *Death in Venice* (1973) – all the more remarkable.

As a peerless pianist and conductor Britten engaged with the music of his heroes – Schubert, Mozart and Mahler – and as a composer he explored the deep, destructive currents of humanity. 'I feel ... with Mozart,' he said in 1960, 'that he is writing about Figaro and his relationship with Susanna and the Countess, and is not always quite clear of the tremendous moral significance that these pieces are going to have for us.' The same applies to Britten's own works, the moral significance and popularity of which have only increased in the years since his death.

*Profile © Paul Kildea*

Paul Kildea is a conductor and author whose books include *Selling Britten* (2002) and, as editor, *Britten on Music* (2003). His biography *Benjamin Britten: A Life in the Twentieth Century* was published in 2013.





# 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).



## Dalia Stasevska *conductor*

Finnish conductor Dalia Stasevska studied violin and composition at the Tampere Conservatory and then violin, viola and conducting at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Her conducting teachers include Jorma Panula and Leif Segerstam.

Chief Conductor of the Lahti Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Director of the International Sibelius Festival, she is also Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. She made her BBC Proms debut in 2019 and conducted the Last Night of the Proms in 2020. In 2021 she conducted the First Night of the Proms and opened the 2021 Edinburgh Festival with the BBC SO.

This season includes engagements with the Chicago, Cincinnati, Montreal, San Francisco and Toronto Symphony orchestras, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia and Minnesota orchestras and the National Symphony Orchestra, Washington DC. She made her Glyndebourne debut earlier this month conducting *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in May she returned to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, following her Hollywood Bowl debut with the orchestra last summer. Other recent highlights include concerts with the Baltimore and Seattle Symphony and Oslo Philharmonic orchestras, Orchestre National de France, National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa), Tongyeong Festival Orchestra and tours with the BBC SO to the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival in Germany and to Japan for a six-concert tour.

Dalia Stasevska was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's Conductor Award in 2020 and *BBC Music Magazine's* Personality of the Year Award earlier this year.



## Paul Lewis *piano*

British pianist Paul Lewis studied with Joan Havill at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama before going on to study privately with Alfred Brendel. He was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, 1999–2001.

A foremost interpreter of the Central European piano repertoire, he has become a specialist in the music of Beethoven and Schubert. He took part in the BBC's three-part documentary *Being Beethoven* and performed the composer's five concertos at Tanglewood last summer. He has performed the cycle all over the world and in 2010 was the first pianist to present all five concertos in a single season at the BBC Proms. From 2022 to 2024 he presents a four-programme Schubert piano sonata series at more than 25 venues and festivals around the world.

He appears regularly at the Wigmore Hall, having performed there more than 100 times, and gives song recitals around the world with tenor Mark Padmore, with whom he has recorded the three Schubert song-cycles.

Alongside Beethoven and Schubert, his recordings include music by Brahms, Haydn, Liszt, Mussorgsky and Schumann, and he has won three *Gramophone* Awards, two Edison Awards and a *Diapason d'Or de l'Année*. In 2003 he was named Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist of the Year.

Paul Lewis is Co-Artistic Director of Midsummer Music, an annual festival in Buckinghamshire. He was appointed CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2016.



## Lesley Manville *narrator*

PROMS DEBUT ARTIST

Award-winning British actor Lesley Manville has a wide-ranging career, working across television, film and theatre.

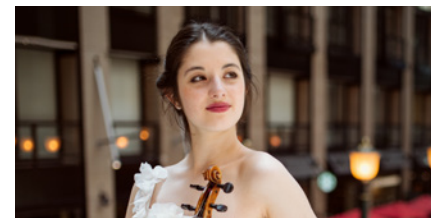
Notable television credits include *Mum* (winning an RTS Award

and two BAFTA nominations), Princess Margaret in *The Crown* (Netflix) and the BBC's *Sherwood* (BAFTA nomination). She can currently be seen in *Citadel* (Prime Video) alongside Richard Madden and Stanley Tucci. Other highlights include *I Am Maria*, *River* (BAFTA nomination), *Save Me Too*, *Talking Heads*, *World on Fire* and *Harlots*. Forthcoming TV projects include the thriller series *Disclaimer* directed by Alfonso Cuarón.

Notable films include *Phantom Thread* (Oscar and BAFTA nominations, Critics' Circle Award), the title-role in *Mrs Harris Goes to Paris* (Golden Globe nomination), *Let Him Go*, *Ordinary Love* and *Misbehaviour*. Forthcoming film appearances include *Back to Black*, *Cold Storage* (with Liam Neeson), *The Critic* (with Mark Strong and Gemma Arterton) and *Queer* (with Daniel Craig). She is also known for her collaborations with Mike Leigh, including in *Grown-Ups*, *High Hopes*, *Topsy-Turvy*, *All or Nothing* and *Another Year*.

Lesley Manville's theatre credits include *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *Ghosts* (Olivier Award and Critics' Circle awards) and *Three Sisters*, in addition to *Six Degrees of Separation* and *All About My Mother* at the Old Vic, and *Some Girls* and *The Cherry Orchard* in the West End.

# Coming up at the Proms



MARÍA DUEÑAS

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*.



RODERICK WILLIAMS

SATURDAY 29 JULY

## PROM 19 MENDELSSOHN'S 'ELIJAH'

6.30pm–c9.20pm • Royal Albert Hall  
The Scottish Chamber Orchestra presents Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. Full of earthquakes and hurricanes, fiery chariots, wicked queens and holy visions, this intensely dramatic oratorio is brought to life by the SCO's exciting young Music Director Maxim Emelyanychev alongside soloists including Roderick Williams and Carolyn Sampson.



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.



ISATA KANNEH-MASON

TUESDAY 1 AUGUST

## PROM 22 PROKOFIEV & TCHAIKOVSKY

7.00pm–c8.40pm • Royal Albert Hall  
Isata Kanneh-Mason makes her Proms solo debut in Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Principal Conductor Ryan Bancroft. Closing the evening is Tchaikovsky's deeply moving Fifth Symphony.

## 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 Symphony Orchestra

For over 90 years the BBC Symphony Orchestra has been a driving force in the musical landscape, championing contemporary music in its performances of newly commissioned works and giving voice to rarely performed and neglected composers. It plays a central role in the BBC Proms, performing regularly throughout each season, including the First and Last Nights.

Highlights of this summer's Proms include the First Night with Principal Guest Conductor Dalia Stasevska, Mahler's Third Symphony with Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo and concerts conducted by Jules Buckley and Semyon Bychkov, as well as the Last Night of the Proms with cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason under Marin Alsop.

The BBC SO is Associate Orchestra at the Barbican, where its distinctive annual season of concerts includes Total Immersion days devoted to a single composer or theme. Sakari Oramo launches the 2023/24 season with Mahler's Fifth Symphony. Themes of voyage and storytelling run through the season, which includes Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, and world and UK premieres by Detlev Glanert, Tebogo Monnakgotla, Outi Tarkiainen and Lotta Wennäkoski. Most of the orchestra's performances are broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and regular studio concerts are free to attend.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – alongside the BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Singers and BBC Proms – offer innovative education and community activities and take a lead role in the BBC Ten Pieces and BBC Young Composer programmes, including work with schools, young people and families in East London ahead of the BBC SO's move in 2025 to its new home at London's East Bank cultural quarter in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford.

**Chief Conductor**  
Sakari Oramo

**Principal Guest Conductor**  
Dalia Stasevska

**Günter Wand Conducting Chair**  
Semyon Bychkov

**Conductor Laureate**  
Sir Andrew Davis

**Creative Artist in Association**  
Jules Buckley

**First Violins**  
Stephen Bryant  
*leader*  
Cellerina Park  
Jeremy Martin  
Jenny King  
Celia Waterhouse  
Colin Huber  
Shirley Turner  
Ni Do  
Molly Cockburn  
James Wicks  
Emma Purslow  
Thea Spiers  
Esther Kim  
Iain Gibbs  
Haim Choi  
Clare Hoffman

**Second Violins**  
Heather Hohmann  
Dawn Beazley  
Rose Hinton  
Daniel Meyer  
Vanessa Hughes  
Patrick Wastnage  
Danny Fajardo  
Lucy Curnow  
Tammy Se  
Caroline Cooper  
Victoria Hodgson  
Lucica Trita  
Dania Alzapiedi  
Caroline Bishop

**Violas**  
Ben Roskams  
Philip Hall  
Joshua Hayward  
Nikos Zarb  
Audrey Henning

Natalie Taylor  
Michael Leaver  
Carolyn Scott  
Mary Whittle  
Peter Mallinson  
Matthias Wiesner  
Bryony Mycroft

**Cellos**  
Alice Neary  
Tamsy Kaner  
Graham Bradshaw  
Mark Sheridan  
Clare Hinton  
Michael Atkinson  
Morwenna Del Mar  
Alba Merchant  
George Hoult  
Deni Teo

**Double Basses**  
Nicholas Bayley  
Richard Alsop  
Anita Langridge  
Michael Clarke  
Beverley Jones  
Elen Pan  
Peter Smith  
Martin Ludenbach

**Flutes**  
Daniel Pailthorpe  
Tomoka Mukai

**Piccolo**  
Rebecca Larsen

**Oboes**  
Tom Blomfield  
Imogen Smith

**Clarinets**  
Richard Hosford  
Jonathan Parkin

**Bass Clarinet**  
Thomas Lessels

**Bassoons**  
Guylaine Eckersley  
Graham Hobbs

**Horns**  
Nicholas Korth  
Michael Murray  
Elise Campbell  
Nicholas Hougham  
Chris Pointon

**Trumpets**  
Philip Cobb  
Martin Hurrell  
Joseph Atkins

**Trombones**  
Helen Vollam  
Dan Jenkins

**Bass Trombone**  
Robert O'Neill

**Tuba**  
Sam Elliott

**Timpani**  
Antoine Bedewi

**Percussion**  
David Hockings  
Alex Neal  
Fiona Ritchie  
Joe Cooper

Joe Richards  
Oliver Lowe

**Harp**  
Sally Pryce

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

**Acting Co-Director/ Planning Manager**  
Tom Philpott

**Acting Co-Director/ Orchestra Manager**  
Susanna Simmons

**Orchestra Personnel Manager**  
Murray Richmond

**Orchestra and Tours Assistant**  
Indira Sills-Toomey

**Concerts Manager**  
Marelle McCallum

**Tours Manager**  
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## BBC Symphony Chorus

Founded in 1928, the BBC Symphony Chorus is one of the UK's leading choirs. It performs, records and broadcasts a distinctive range of large-scale choral music with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and internationally acclaimed conductors and soloists.

The BBC Symphony Chorus's early performances included Mahler's Symphony No. 8, Stravinsky's *Perséphone* and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* and, under Director Neil Ferris, this commitment to contemporary music remains at the heart of its performances today.

In addition to the First and Last Nights, appearances at this year's BBC Proms include Mahler's Symphony No. 3 and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* under Sakari Oramo and Klaus Mäkelä respectively. Other performances include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Ryan Wigglesworth and Rachmaninov's *The Bells* with the Hallé under Sir Mark Elder. In the first part of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's forthcoming 2023–24 season at the Barbican, the chorus gives the London premiere of Ryan Wigglesworth's *Magnificat*, alongside soprano Sophie Bevan.

Most of the chorus's performances are broadcast on BBC Radio 3, for which it also appears in special studio recordings. The chorus has also made a number of commercial recordings, including a Grammy-nominated release of Holst's *First Choral Symphony* and a *Gramophone* Award-winning disc of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* conducted by Sir Andrew Davis.

Forthcoming releases include premiere recordings of Vaughan Williams's *The Future* and *The Steersman* conducted by Martin Yates and Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* conducted by Davis.

**Director**  
Neil Ferris

**Deputy Director**  
Grace Rossiter

**Accompanist**  
Paul Webster

**Manager**  
Wesley John

**President**  
Sir Andrew Davis

**Sopranos**  
Helena Ballard  
Elizabeth Bird  
Stella Bracegirdle  
Lydia Burling-Smith

Georgia Cannon  
Katharine Chadd  
Kate Chudakova  
Louise Clegg  
Jenna Clemence  
Clara Coslett

Erin Cowburn

Tanya Cutts  
Natalie Dalcher  
Rebecca Daltry  
Josceline Dunne  
Rebecca Eckley  
Lizzie Fletcher  
Stella Guardi  
Jane Heath  
Bev Howard  
Lizzie Howard  
Karan Humphries  
Jacqueline Hunt  
Valerie Isitt  
Emily Jacks  
Helen Jeffries  
Helen Jorgensen  
Mackenzie Kavanagh  
Rei Kozaki  
Ramani Langley  
Christine Leslie  
Sue Lowe  
Arielle Loewinger  
Katie Masters  
Bridget McNulty  
Olivia Middleton  
Ellie Parker  
Kaja Pecnik

Rebecca Rimmington  
Nicola Robinson  
Cosima Rodriguez-Broadbent  
Hannah Savignon-Smythe  
Madelon Shaw  
Maxine Shearer  
Nathalie Slim  
Elizabeth Ullstein  
Sheila Wood

**Altos**  
Stella Baylis  
Kirsty Carpenter  
Catherine Chapman  
Rachael Curtis  
Joanna Dacombe  
Danniella Downs  
Susannah Edwards  
Alison Grant  
Elizabeth Hampshire

Kate Hampshire  
Mary Hardy  
Rosie Hopkins  
Teresa Howard  
Ruth James  
Tina James  
Laura Jolly  
Carolyn Nicholls  
Cecily Nicholls  
Anja Rekeszus  
Elisabeth Storey  
Jayne Swindin  
Helen Tierney  
Deborah Tiffany  
Anna Williams  
Yajie Ye

**Tenors**  
Justin Althaus  
Xander Bird  
Phiroz Dalal  
Jamie Foye  
David Halstead  
Stephen Horsman  
Simon Lowe  
James Murphy  
Simon Naylor  
Jim Nelhams  
Panos Ntourntoufis

Ernie Piper  
Philip Rayner  
Bill Richards  
Fionn Robertson  
Richard Salmon  
Greg Satchell  
Jon Williams  
Jonathan Williams

**Basses**  
Mike Abrams  
Malcolm Aldridge  
Alan Barker  
Dominic Beazer  
Tim Bird  
Alex Britton  
Clive Buckingham  
Vicente Chavarria  
Tony de Rivaz  
David England  
Quentin Evans  
Jonathan Forrest  
Tom Fullwood  
Mark Graver  
Alan Hardwick  
Alex Hardy  
William Hare  
Alan Jones

Peter Kellett  
Andrew Lay  
Michael Martin  
John McLeod  
Tim Miles  
Nigel Montagu  
Amos Paran  
Mark Parrett  
Andrew Parkin  
Simon Potter  
John Russell  
Joshua Taylor  
Robin Wicks

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

**Vocal Coach**  
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*Pianos supplied and maintained for the BBC by Steinway & Sons*

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**Season Identity** BBC Creative/BBC

**Advertising** Cabbells (020 3603 7930); cabbells.co.uk

**Printed by APS Group. APS Group is ISO 14001 certified by BSI under certificate number EMS 500624, FSC® certified (FSC® C003270) and offers PEFC-certified products.**

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*In line with the BBC's sustainability strategy, the BBC Proms is actively working with partners and suppliers towards being a more sustainable festival*





## BBC Singers

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The BBC Singers has held a unique place at the heart of the UK's choral scene for almost 100 years and has collaborated with many of the world's leading composers, conductors and soloists.

The choir is based at the BBC's Maida Vale Studios, where it rehearses and records for Radio 3. It also presents an annual series of concerts at Milton Court Concert Hall, performs free concerts in London and appears at major festivals.

It promotes a 50:50 gender policy for composers whose music it performs, and champions composers from all backgrounds. Recent concerts and recordings include music by Soumik Datta, Joanna Marsh, Cecilia McDowall, Sun Keting and Roderick Williams, and recent collaborations have featured Laura Mvula, Clare Teal, South Asian dance company Akademi and world music fusion band Kabantu.

The BBC Singers appears annually at the BBC Proms. The 2023 season sees the group perform at the First and Last Nights, as well as concerts with Sir Simon Rattle, an evening with Jon Hopkins and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and a concert with Chief Conductor Sofi Jeannin, performing two BBC commissions.

The BBC Singers also offer a wide programme of innovative learning activities working with schools, colleges/universities and community groups.

**Chief Conductor**  
Sofi Jeannin

**Principal Guest Conductors**  
Bob Chilcott  
Owain Park

**Artists in Association**  
Anna Lapwood  
Abel Selaocoe

**Composer in Association**  
Roderick Williams

**Associate Conductor, Learning**  
Nicholas Chalmers

**Sopranos**  
Rebecca Lea  
Emma Tring  
Olivia Robinson  
Helen Neeves  
Clare Lloyd-Griffiths

**Altos**  
Nancy Cole  
Jessica Gillingwater  
Eleanor Minney  
Katherine Nicholson

**Tenors**  
Peter Davoren  
Benjamin Durrant  
Stephen Jeffes  
Tom Raskin

**Basses**  
James Birchall  
Jamie W Hall  
Edward Price  
Andrew Rupp  
Philip Tebb

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

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Rob Johnston

**Producer and Co-Director**  
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Alexander Turner

**Assistant Producer**  
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