

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

A warm welcome to tonight's Prom, in which Kirill Karabits and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra present a programme that begins with music by the conductor's father, Ivan Karabits. He played a major role in the musical life of Ukraine and his first *Concerto for Orchestra* – which is receiving its UK premiere – is a celebration of the city of Kyiv, written to mark the 1,500th anniversary of its founding.

The orchestra is joined by its Artist-in-Residence and Proms debutant Felix Klieser for Mozart's sunny Fourth Horn Concerto. And to close, the Second Symphony of Rachmaninov, whose 150th anniversary we're marking this year. This is a piece that finds him at the peak of his powers, its darkly brooding energy leavened by some of his most sublime melodies.



Because every Prom is broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 ... Please silence your mobile phones, watch alarms and other electronic devices.

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 24

WEDNESDAY 2 AUGUST • 7.30pm–c9.45pm



Ivan Karabits Concerto for Orchestra No. 1, 'A Musical Gift to Kyiv' *UK premiere* 13'

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Horn Concerto No. 4 in E flat major 16'

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

Sergey Rachmaninov Symphony No. 2 in E minor 60'

Felix Klieser *horn*

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra *Aryn Merchant leader*

Kirill Karabits *conductor*

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

This concert is broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 (repeated next Thursday at 2.00pm) and shown on BBC Four on Sunday 13 August at 8.00pm. You can listen on BBC Sounds, and watch on BBC iPlayer for 12 months.

IVAN KARABITS (1945–2002)

Concerto for Orchestra No. 1, 'A Musical Gift to Kyiv' (1980–81)

UK premiere

Maestoso – Presto

Kirill Karabits considers that his father's concertos for orchestra 'deserve a special place in his legacy, since he was profoundly attached to the idea that a symphony orchestra consists of different sections of instruments, and that a concerto for orchestra gives a wonderful platform to celebrate them. In that sense he considered himself a follower of Bartók, Lutosławski and Shchedrin. 'All three concertos,' Kirill adds, 'are profoundly rooted in Ukrainian culture.'

The *Concerto for Orchestra* No. 1 was composed in 1980–81 to mark the 1,500th anniversary of the foundation of Kyiv. Its title, 'Muzychny Darunok Kyevu', is difficult to translate into English: in essence it means a 'a musical gift to Kyiv', from the composer to his fellow citizens on this special occasion. Kirill describes it as 'a symphonic portrait of the city, celebrating its history and beauty'. The first performance was given in 1981 by the National Orchestra of Ukraine, conducted by Fedor Glushchenko.

Given the background to this *Concerto for Orchestra*, Kirill explains that his father had several places in Kyiv in mind when composing the work: the Dnieper River and the St Volodymyr monument that overlooks it; the ruins

of the medieval Golden Gate into the city (the same 'Great Gate of Kiev' that inspired Viktor Hartmann's architectural drawing for its reconstruction, which in turn appears as the final movement in Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*); St Sophia's Cathedral and Monastery; the Kyiv-Pechersk Monastery and caves; and the city's heartbeat, Khreshchatyk Street.

Following Shchedrin's example, each of Karabits's orchestral concertos is conceived in a single span, within which distinct sections are evident. In this one there are two; the first, Maestoso, presenting the thematic ideas from which the work is forged. Opening in celebratory mood with brass fanfares and tolling bells, the music softens with woodwind arabesques, and the front desks of the violins and harp evoke the *gusli*, the ancient multi-string plucked folk instrument of Slavic countries. A sonorous climax heralds a chorale-like melody on flutes and trumpets, leading to an explosion of energy that initiates the Presto second part.

Here Karabits creates a veritable kaleidoscope of orchestral colour by abandoning strict tempo, instead dividing the bars into periods of time, to which layers are added at the conductor's discretion, with solo instruments and orchestral sections fading in and out in an almost cinematic manner. The chorale returns as the music drives from climax to climax, at one point suggesting church bells pealing across the city. A barnstorming quick march erupts, until the return of the concerto's opening. Despite this, the work ends softly, an image, perhaps, of Kyiv's longevity and resilience over the centuries.

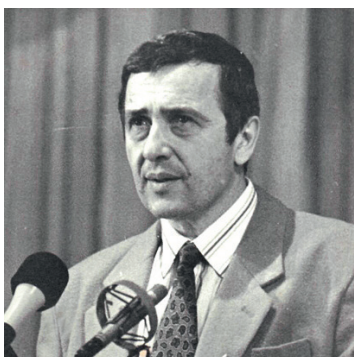
Programme note © Andrew Burn

Andrew Burn was a senior manager of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra for over 20 years and retains his association with the orchestra as presenter of its online pre-concert talks and editorial consultant of its printed programmes.



A stamp issued in 1982 in celebration of the 1,500th anniversary of the founding of Kyiv. This anniversary also inspired Ivan Karabits to compose his first *Concerto for Orchestra*

IVAN KARABITS



Multi-talented as composer, conductor, teacher, curator and artistic administrator, Ivan Fedorovych Karabits was the leading musical dynamo of his generation in Ukraine, a role that gained further profile after the country won independence in 1991

following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the words of his son, the conductor Kirill Karabits, his ambition was ‘to promote Ukrainian culture and create bridges between Ukraine and the rest of the world’.

Of Ukrainian/Greek heritage, Ivan Karabits was born in the Greek settlement of Yalta in Ukraine’s Donetsk region on 17 January 1945; he died in Kyiv on 20 January 2002. Initially studying at the music college in Bakhmut, which would later be named after him, he then entered the Kyiv Conservatory, where he was a composition pupil of Borys Lyatoshynsky, and later of Myroslav Skoryk. In 1990 he founded Ukraine’s major contemporary music festival, the Kyiv Music Fest, and was its artistic director until his death; it remains today a major annual event in Ukrainian musical life. Even before then, he was programming and conducting works by significant composers from the countries of the former Soviet Union, including Avet Terterian (from Armenia), Chary Nurymov (Turkmenistan) and Rodion Shchedrin (Russia), all of whom Kirill Karabits met in his formative years and has championed with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

As professor of composition at the Kyiv Tchaikovsky Music Academy, Ivan Karabits inspired a new generation of Ukrainian composers that includes Victoria Poleva and Artem Roshchenko. In 1995 he founded an international competition for young pianists in memory of Vladimir Horowitz, leading it artistically as jury chair. From 1994 he was artistic director of the Kyiv Kamerata Soloists Ensemble. In 1991 the award of People’s Artist of the Ukraine was a fitting accolade, reflecting his outstanding achievements.

Karabits commented that his music was ‘characterised by a desire to synthesise different musical sources’, citing Mahler, Lyatoshynsky, Shostakovich and Stravinsky as influences. In addition, the folk-music tradition of Ukraine was a lifelong inspiration. Apart from three concertos for orchestra, his legacy includes three symphonies and three piano concertos. Among his choral works is the opera-oratorio *Kiev Frescoes* (1983), and he left a substantial body of chamber and instrumental pieces. He was also influenced by jazz and composed many film scores, as well as music for cartoons. He himself singled out his First Symphony, *Five Songs for Ukraine* (1974), the concerto for choir, soloists and orchestra *Garden of Divine Songs* (1971) and the Third *Concerto for Orchestra*, ‘Lamentations’ (1989) as works of which he was particularly proud.

Profile © Andrew Burn

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS
MOZART** (1756–91)

Horn Concerto No. 4 in E flat major, K495 (1786)

- 1 **Allegro moderato**
- 2 **Romanza: Andante cantabile**
- 3 **Rondo: Allegro vivace**

Felix Klieser *horn*

Mozart's years in Vienna were not just the happiest of his life, they were also some of the most creative. This was the time in which he composed his operas *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* and *The Magic Flute*, his later symphonies (Nos. 35–41) and the vast majority of his 27 piano concertos. Vienna was, as he wrote to his father, 'the land of the piano', and as Mozart quickly established himself as the city's preferred concert soloist, so he composed as many as three or four new piano concertos every year to showcase his talents.

But as war, inflation and depression began to quash Vienna's formerly



A stylised hunt painted on Sèvres porcelain c1780; Mozart conjures a similar scene in the bucolic finale of his Fourth Horn Concerto

flourishing court life, the aristocracy soon began to abandon their musical patronage, leaving Mozart to find his own way. Over the course of the decade, he transformed himself into a businessman and his music into a saleable commodity – while at the same time making the most of his new-found artistic freedom, composing what he liked when he liked, without being tied to the whims of his patrons.

So it was that, alongside the abundance of piano concertos composed during these fertile years, Mozart also wrote four horn concertos for his friend Joseph Leutgeb, one of the most outstanding horn players of the Classical era. The two enjoyed a close friendship, as many of the mischievous annotations in Mozart's scores make clear. The Horn Concerto No. 2, for example, bears the dedication: 'Wolfgang Amadé Mozart takes pity on Leutgeb, ass, ox, and simpleton, at Vienna, March 27, 1783.' Elsewhere, his scribblings include: 'Careful!', 'Special for you, Monsieur Donkey!' and 'Thank God this is the end!'

The Concerto No. 4, K495, also has its fair share of curious markings, written as it is in red, green, blue and black ink. It is still not clear whether this multicoloured manuscript was intended as a joke for Leutgeb or as a kind of colour code to convey specific details about the music. Mozart described the work in his catalogue as 'Ein Waldhorn Konzert für den Leutgeb' ('A hunting-horn concerto for Leutgeb'), and its galloping Rondo finale – surely one of the best-known of all Mozart's melodies – captures that character in abundance. The first movement, meanwhile, is a virtuosic challenge for what would then have been a valveless instrument, with hand-stopping, rapid articulation and difficult lip trills designed to showcase (and no doubt also to test) Leutgeb's prowess. Mozart parks his gentle sparring for the beautiful Romanza at the work's centre, however,

where the horn's long, languorous lines transfigure the gentle call of the hunt at dawn into an exquisite centrepiece.

Programme note © Jo Kirkbride

Jo Kirkbride is the outgoing Chief Executive at the Dunedin Consort and a freelance writer on classical music. In September she becomes CEO of IMPACT Scotland, overseeing the building and running of the Dunard Centre, Edinburgh's first new concert hall in more than a century.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

This concerto was last heard complete here as long ago as 1989, when it was played by Jonathan Williams with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe under Nikolaus Harnoncourt. Its famous finale popped up again during daytime concerts associated with the BBC's Ten Pieces education project in 2015. The soloist then was Tim Thorpe, principal horn of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the conductor Thomas Søndergård. On its initial appearance, in 1927, the work formed part of a prolonged Henry Wood-directed mix of the kind more hospitable to a short concerto. Orchestral and operatic Mozart predominated and there was also room for pieces by Haydn, Tchaikovsky and Grieg, plus piano-accompanied songs by Schubert, Beethoven and Massenet. Aubrey Brain was the soloist in the Mozart, as he was in 1929 and 1931, his son Dennis continuing the tradition post-war. Two performances apiece were clocked up by Barry Tuckwell (1962, 1964) and Alan Civil (1971, 1974).

© 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.

PROMS Q&A

Felix Klieser

horn

You have a long history with Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 4. Can you tell us about it?

I first started to learn the French horn at the music school in my home town of Göttingen, and at that time I'd never played with an orchestra. I was about 8 when my teacher gave me a CD recording of the four Mozart horn concertos, and it was the very first time I'd heard that it was even possible to play with an orchestra. From that day on, it became my biggest dream to play these concertos with an orchestra. Now it's my job! It's a privilege to be able to do what I love.

Has your approach to the concerto has changed since you first encountered it?

It's been a really fluid process. There are periods when I've played one of the Mozart horn concertos almost every week with a different orchestra and a different conductor, and of course that brings lots of contrasting views on the music – even if they are very small, like a slight tempo change. But during periods when I haven't played the concertos as much, if I come back and practise them again, I always see something new. In any case, a performance is always a mixture of my own ideas about the piece, and the ideas of the orchestra and conductor, because every ensemble is unique.

You have a close relationship with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra as Artist-in-Residence across two seasons. What has that involved?

Usually when you're a visiting soloist with an orchestra, you travel to the concert, do one rehearsal, perform in the concert and then leave again. But being Artist-in-Residence has meant I've had much more time to work with the orchestra, so that the relationship changes completely. An orchestra is a huge group of individual musicians, of course, and I've been able to work closely with many of them in



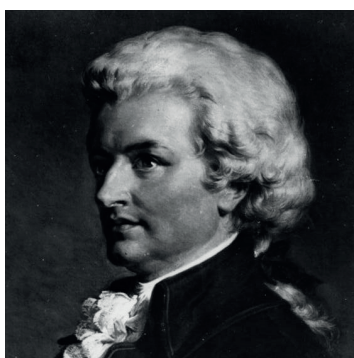
various pieces and situations. You quickly get to recognise their musical personalities – just as you would if someone you know phones you, and you recognise their voice. That makes it so much easier and more fulfilling to perform with them.

You're quite active on social media (as is your horn, with its own accounts), and often give advice on overcoming obstacles and challenges – how important is that to you?

It's becoming more and more important. When I was younger, I devoted all my energy to becoming a good horn player and establishing my solo career. But more recently I've been thinking about how that's been possible. When you're a horn player who has no arms, there's a danger that nobody will believe in you. But I have a specific mindset: if you have a problem, it doesn't matter how big it is, you can solve it. It's crucial that you believe in yourself. I want to use these experiences from my own life to give other people motivation: they can maybe do much more than they think they can, if they believe in themselves.

Interview by David Kettle

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART



Born in Salzburg on 27 January 1756, Mozart displayed prodigious musical talents that were quickly nurtured by his father Leopold, a distinguished court musician, composer and writer. The family made a grand tour of northern and central Europe from

1763 to 1766 (including a 15-month stay in London), during which Mozart and his gifted elder sister Nannerl played to great acclaim for royalty, nobility and the musical public. Having already written three operas in the late 1760s, Mozart composed three more – *Mitridate*, *Ascanio in Alba* and *Lucio Silla* – for the Teatro Regio in Milan in connection with visits to Italy with his father in 1769–73.

Mozart's enthusiasm for life as Konzertmeister at the Salzburg court began to wane from the mid-1770s onwards. He travelled to Munich, Mannheim and Paris in 1777–9 in an ultimately unsuccessful pursuit of a permanent position abroad; the trip was overshadowed in any case by the death in 1778 of his mother Maria Anna, who had accompanied him.

Working conditions under the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Hieronymus Colloredo, had become intolerable for Mozart by the end of the decade. Following a summons to Vienna from Colloredo in spring 1781, when Mozart was in Munich for the premiere of his opera *Idomeneo*, the composer opted to remain in the Habsburg capital as an independent musician. After testy exchanges with

Colloredo, his resignation from court service was accepted.

Mozart wrote his greatest works in Vienna in the final decade of his life (1781–91). An operatic hit with *The Abduction from the Seraglio* shortly before he married Constanze Weber in summer 1782 was followed by a four-year period as the darling of the Viennese musical establishment; the 15 newly written piano concertos that appeared during this period became the primary vehicles for him to promote his talents as a performer-composer. His reputation was further enhanced by *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte* for the National Court Theatre in Vienna – *Don Giovanni* having met with great approbation at its premiere in Prague – and numerous chamber works for publication.

After enduring financial difficulties in the late 1780s, Mozart saw his problems begin to ease during the highly productive year of 1791, which included the premieres of *The Magic Flute* at a popular Viennese theatre and *La clemenza di Tito* in Prague, as well as the composition of the unfinished *Requiem*. His stock rose dramatically after his death on 5 December 1791; by the mid-1790s he had secured a position alongside Joseph Haydn as one of the greatest musicians of all time. He has remained a totemic musical figure, and cultural icon, ever since.

Profile © Simon P. Keefe

Simon P. Keefe is James Rossiter Hoyle Chair of Music at the University of Sheffield and President-Elect of the Royal Musical Association. He is the author or editor of 10 books on Mozart, including *Mozart's Requiem: Reception, Work, Completion* (2012, CUP) and *Mozart in Vienna: The Final Decade* (2017, also CUP). He was elected to life membership of the Academy for Mozart Research at the International Mozart Foundation in Salzburg in 2005.

MORE MOZART AT THE PROMS

TOMORROW, 11.30am • PROM 25
Horn Concerto No. 4 in E flat major

SUNDAY, 11.00am • PROM 29
Mass in C minor, K427 (compl. C. Kemme)

SUNDAY 20 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 47
Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major; Symphony No. 41 in C major, 'Jupiter'

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER, 7.00pm • PROM 69
Requiem in D minor (compl. Süßmayr); Ach, zu kurz ist unsers Lebenslauf; Masonic Funeral Music; Kyrie in D minor, K90; Thamos, King of Egypt – 'Ne pulvis et cinis'; Five Solfeggios – No. 2; Quis te comprehendat; Two Church Songs – No. 2: 'O Gottes Lamm'

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

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

Now playing on BBC Radio 3 ...

Russian music expert Marina Frolova-Walker joins Martin Handley to discuss the 150th-anniversary focus on Rachmaninov at this year's Proms.

Available on BBC Sounds



SERGEY RACHMANINOV

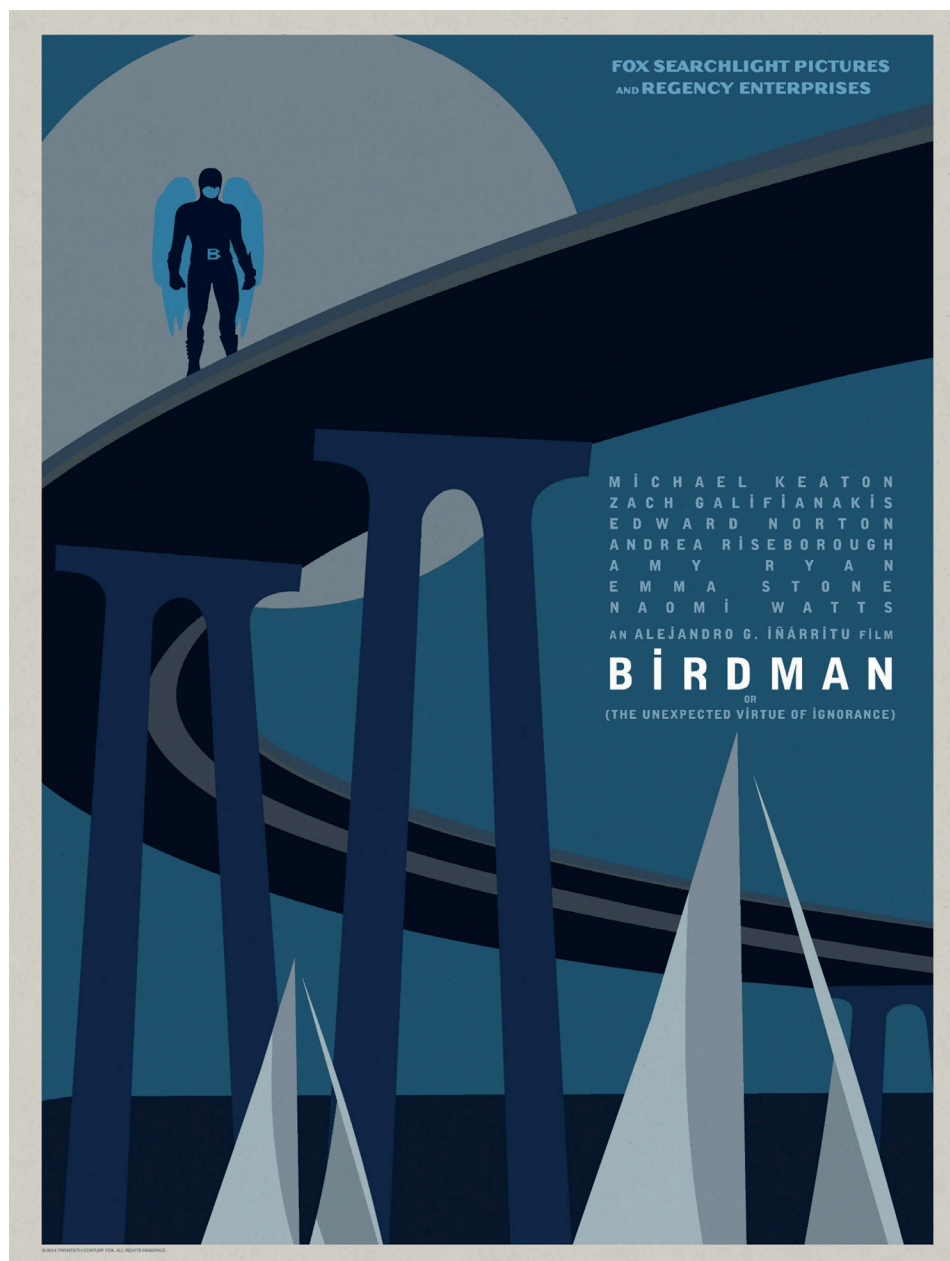
(1873–1943)

Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27 (1906–8)

- 1 Largo – Allegro moderato
- 2 Allegro molto
- 3 Adagio
- 4 Allegro vivace

In the summer of 1906, wearied by his workload and by the political and social unrest that had swept Russia after the 1905 uprising, Rachmaninov decided to take his family abroad for a while. They chose Dresden. Here, in quiet seclusion and undisturbed, he turned his thoughts first to opera.

At the start of 1906 he had successfully conducted the premieres of his *Francesca da Rimini* and *The Miserly Knight* in a double bill at the Bolshoi Theatre and he was clearly bitten by the theatrical bug. He particularly wanted to write an opera based on Maurice Maeterlinck's 1902 drama *Monna Vanna* and by the middle of April 1907 he had completed the first



Rachmaninov's Second Symphony has crept into various soundtracks over the years, not least that of Antonio Sánchez in the 2014 black comedy *Birdman*, a film about a faded superhero, directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu

act in piano score. His librettist was his old friend from his student days, Mikhail Slonov. Unbeknown to Slonov, however, Rachmaninov was working on something else at the same time. In general, it was characteristic of him not to divulge all that much about his progress on compositions, and it was only when Slonov spotted something in a Russian newspaper that Rachmaninov wrote back to him from Dresden on 11 February: 'I have composed a symphony. It's true! It's only ready in rough. I finished it a month ago, and immediately put it aside. I am heartily sick of it and I am not going to think about it any more.' And that is all we know about the Second Symphony's gestation.

Fortunately, Rachmaninov did think more about it. During the summer, at his Russian estate at Ivanovka, and then early in 1908 back in Dresden, he completed the orchestration in time for the first performances, which he himself conducted, in St Petersburg on 8 February 1908 and in Moscow a week later. Work on *Monna Vanna* was put on hold, and in fact, when Rachmaninov started sketching the second act during the summer of 1908, he encountered an insuperable problem: Maeterlinck had already assigned the operatic rights to the French composer Henri Février. Legal niceties aside, two *Monna Vanna* operas appearing in quick succession might not have been particularly desirable (Février's was performed in Paris in 1909), so Rachmaninov abandoned the project altogether.

A few years ago, the manuscript of the Second Symphony came to light, having remained untraced since more or less the time of the first performances. This was the *Stichvorlage*, the manuscript that Rachmaninov himself presented to the printer. It is a fascinating document, for it contains a multitude of changes, crossings-out and adjustments, particularly in matters of orchestration, which one can only assume Rachmaninov made after

conducting the symphony himself in St Petersburg and Moscow. All these changes – including a subtle reshaping of the sprightly theme of the second-movement scherzo – are reflected in the published score as we know it today, and there is one especially useful fact: there is no indication whatsoever in the manuscript that Rachmaninov ever intended the symphony to be performed with cuts. As with the Third Piano Concerto, it was common practice in the past to omit certain sections, but nowadays it is happily appreciated that the broad scheme of the music requires all its component parts and that cuts are cruelly disfiguring.

...

As in Rachmaninov's other two symphonies, the seeds of the Second are planted in the very opening bars. The crepuscular, stepwise shapes heard at first on cellos and double basses germinate and offer hints of their potential during the slow introduction; they burgeon in the moderately quick music of the first movement and then, by a natural process of synthesis and propagation, blossom into the three other contrasting movements that complete the symphony. Interestingly, the small but crucial change that Rachmaninov made to the theme of the scherzo in the definitive manuscript that he gave to the printer actually strengthens its link with the semitonal colouring of the symphony's opening phrase.

At the start of the third movement the violas' sinuous thread through the centre of the texture (later taken up by the second violins) again alludes back to the symphony's opening motif, a motif that is metamorphosed once more and revitalised to fuel the vivacious finale. Melody, always at the heart of Rachmaninov's music, is no less prominent in the Second Symphony, notably in the sublime vocalise for the clarinet in the Adagio. But the crucial fact is that all these melodies, whether in the first, second, third or fourth

movements, belong together; there is an ineluctable feeling that they have all grown organically from the same roots. This structural control in the Second Symphony is coupled with a creative energy and an emotional power that, as in the symphonic poem *The Isle of the Dead*, the Third Piano Concerto and the First Piano Sonata, represent Rachmaninov at a peak of his inspired maturity.

Programme note © Geoffrey Norris

Geoffrey Norris's study of Rachmaninov is published by OUP. He is on the editorial board of the new Rachmaninov Collected Edition, for which he is currently compiling an anthology of the press interviews that the composer gave. Until February 2022 he lectured at the Gnessin Academy in Moscow.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

Henry Wood directed the Second Symphony only once at the Proms, introducing the work in 1924. *The Musical Times* critic, W. R. Anderson, was unimpressed: 'One would very much like to know why certain works are brought out at all. What possible interest could anyone be expected to take in the rambling Third Symphony of Saint-Saëns, for instance; or what nourishment is to be found in the Second Symphony of Rachmaninov, that, though it contains dozens of skilful openings, does so little with any of them ... and generally spends its substance to surprisingly little profit? These works are distinctly poor.' The Rachmaninov was revived in 1957 by Basil Cameron and the London Symphony Orchestra and again in 1976 by Alexander Gibson's then Scottish National Orchestra. By this time critical hostility and public indifference had started to wane and, in a remarkable turnaround, the piece has since received an additional 19 performances, most if not all of them uncut. Novel, too, is the raft of distinguished foreign names invited to conduct the score. Between 1908 and 1963 the rostrum was, after all, a British, Empire and Commonwealth preserve! The symphony was last given in 2022 by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and its then soon-to-be Chief Conductor Kazuki Yamada.

© David Gutman

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 *oeuvre* 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

MORE RACHMANINOV AT THE PROMS

TOMORROW, 11.30am • PROM 25
Symphony No. 2 in E minor – Allegro vivace (4th mvmt)

FRIDAY, 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.*

“Music ... should be the expression of a composer's complex personality. A composer's music should express the country of his birth, his love affairs, his religion, the books that have influenced him, the pictures he loves. It should be the sum total of his experiences.”

Sergey Rachmaninov



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 3 Concertos: All for One and One for All?

It's not called the 'Bull Run' for nothing: that short curving corridor that connects backstage at the Royal Albert Hall with the auditorium. It's not only an architectural reference – although the Hall's rotunda shape really is part bull-fighting arena, part gladiatorial colosseum – it also gives a clue to what it feels like to be back there before a concert.

If you're a concerto soloist at this year's Proms waiting at the backstage end of the Bull Run, you're a potentially sacrificial musical victim about to go through a fight for your life on one of the biggest stages in the world. You know you're about to do battle against a myriad of forces: against your own instrumental perfectionism, against the audience's expectations of you, as well as trying to live up to the demands of the concerto you're playing. All that, and you've the combined masses of the orchestra and the conductor to deal with, acoustically and expressively. Any concerto performance is literally about you, the soloist, versus everyone else in the hall. Good luck!

Whatever else is true across the fantastic diversity of the concertos you'll hear this week and this Proms season, they're all a version of a staged relationship that pits one – the soloist – against the many in the orchestra. One versus a hundred or so: who wins? We the Proms-goers, collective musical Caesars, decide: giving the approval of our applause as enthusiastically as we choose; inviting the soloist to give us even more after they've played their concerto, if they're

lucky, and we're lucky enough to get an encore; proof of their popularity, proof of their successfully running the gauntlet and beating the Bull Run of the Royal Albert Hall.

Will Seong-Jin Cho do justice to Chopin's supremely lyrical Piano Concerto No. 1? Can Christian Tetzlaff bring off Elgar's big-boned Violin Concerto? Will Annalien Van Wauwe wow us in Copland's Clarinet Concerto? And how will Yuja Wang deal with the virtuosity, romanticism and jazz inflections of Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*?

Spoiler alert: they're going to do just fine. Probably. But what counts is that everything's at stake for every one of them. None of us can play the piano as well as Seong-Jin Cho or Yuja Wang, but the illusion during their performances is that we identify with them as individuals. As opposed to what can feel like the corporate behemoth of the orchestra, soloists allow us to empathise with them, one human being to another, in their dialogues and laments, their ecstasies and virtuosities with and against the orchestra. The magic, for as long as the concerto lasts, is that their super-musicality becomes ours too. Thanks to all of our soloists' bravery and brilliance at this year's Proms, they allow us to feel like musical superheroes, just for one night.

Six concertos – by Korngold, Copland, Prokofiev, Mozart, Walton and Rachmaninov – feature this week at the Proms, performed respectively by Vadim Gluzman, Annalien Van Wauwe, Felix Klieser, Isata Kanneh-Mason, Yuja Wang and James Ehnes.

→ Next week: **Transcendence**

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).



Kirill Karabits *conductor*

Kirill Karabits has been Chief Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra for 15 years. Together they have made numerous recordings, most notably championing the music of his native Ukraine, performed regularly at the BBC Proms

and appeared at the Barbican as part of its Beethoven celebrations during the 2019–20 season.

He has worked with many of the leading ensembles of Europe, Asia and North America. Recent highlights include debuts with the Baltimore, Dallas and Pittsburgh Symphony orchestras and the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra. Engagements this season included *Die tote Stadt* for English National Opera, *La bohème* at the Zurich Opera House and *Così fan tutte* at the Grange Festival, concerts with the Opéra National de Bordeaux, Montpellier National Orchestra and Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra and a tour of South Korea last November with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

His work with the next generation of musicians includes his post as Artistic Director of Poland's I, CULTURE Orchestra, which he conducted on a European tour with violinist Lisa Batiashvili in 2015 and on a summer festivals tour in 2018. In 2012 and 2014 he conducted the televised finals of the BBC Young Musician competition, working with the Royal Northern Sinfonia and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and in 2019 he made his debut with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain on its UK tour.

Kirill Karabits was named Conductor of the Year at the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards in 2013.



Felix Klieser *horn*

PROMS DEBUT ARTIST

German horn player Felix Klieser took his first horn lessons at the age of 5 and studied at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hanover. He was named Young Artist of the Year at the Echo Klassik Awards and won the Music Award of the

Association of German Concert Directors in 2014. In 2016 he received the Leonard Bernstein Award of the Schleswig-Holstein Festival.

This season sees the continuation of his position as Artist-in-Residence with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Last year he gave the world premiere of *Soundscape*, a concerto composed for him by Rolf Martinsson, and he gave further performances of the work this season in Milan and Umeå (Sweden). Other highlights of the current season include his debut at the Vienna Musikverein and collaborations with Festival Strings Lucerne and the Prague Symphony Orchestra. He also performs with a variety of chamber music partners and appears in panel discussions on subjects such as diversity, motivation and inclusion.

Felix Klieser is a member of Alondra de la Parra's online Impossible Orchestra, created during the pandemic to support Mexican women and children affected by Covid, and took part in its first live performances in Mexico following its digital success. His recordings include *Reveries*, works for horn and piano, which won an Echo Klassik Award, horn trios by Brahms and others with violinist Andrej Bielow and pianist Herbert Schuch, the horn concertos of Mozart with Camerata Salzburg and music by Haydn and Mozart with the Zemlinsky Quartet.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is a professional ensemble known for championing the role of culture in people's lives. Based at Lighthouse, Poole, it has residencies in Bournemouth, Bristol, Exeter, Portsmouth, Southampton and Yeovil – and is the largest cultural provider in the South West, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

The orchestra, under Chief Conductor Kirill Karabits, is known for pushing artistic boundaries, and its series of music from former Soviet states, 'Voices from the East', continues to gain praise. It boasts an enviable roster of past principal conductors, including Marin Alsop, the first female principal conductor of a major UK orchestra, and has given memorable performances worldwide.

The orchestra's live-streamed broadcasts have cemented its reputation for presenting live music of the highest quality, and next season guest artists include Artist-in-Residence Alexander Malofeev, Alina Ibragimova and Awadagin Pratt. It also reunites with Seeta Patel Dance in a Bharatanatyam interpretation of *The Rite of Spring*, as well as giving world premieres of works by Jonathan Dove and Mark-Anthony Turnage when it returns to its residency at Bristol Beacon.

The BSO leads hundreds of community-based events each year, from award-winning work in health settings to partnerships with education providers; next season it welcomes its second cohort of BSO Young Associate music leaders. Following international attention for igniting change, BSO Resound – the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble at the core of a major orchestra, and winner of the 2019 Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award – continues to challenge perceptions.

Chief Conductor

Kirill Karabits

Principal Guest Conductor

Mark Wigglesworth

Associate Guest Conductor

David Hill MBE

Conductor Laureate

Andrew Litton

Conductor Emeritus

Marin Alsop

Assistant Conductor

Tom Fetherstonhaugh

First Violins

Amy Merchant
leader

Mark Derudder
Edward Brenton
Kate Turnbull *
Karen Leach *
Magdalena

Gruca-Broadbent
Jennifer Curiel *

Tim Fisher *
Kate Hawes *

Joan Martinez
Stuart McDonald
Bella Fleming
Sarah Baldwin
Katherine

Watmough
Catriona Hepburn
Gaia Ramsdell

Second Violins

Carol Paige
Dmitry

Khakhamov
Jake Phillips
Ricky Gore
Boglarka Gyorgy
Vicky Berry *
Lara Carter *
Rebecca Burns
Edward McCullagh
Aysen Ulucan
Sophie Phillips
Janice Thorgilsson
Hanna Tracz
Tom Bott

Violas

Tom Beer
Miguel Rodriguez
Ana Teresa Alves

Ray Lester
Liam Buckley
Judith Preston *
Annie-May Page
Ben Norris
Joe Griffin
Nathalie Green-Buckley
Alison Kay
Diana Mathews

Cellos

Jesper Svedberg
Thomas Isaac
Auriol Evans
Hannah Arnold
Philip Collingham
Lydia Dobson
Yuuki Bouteray-Ishido
Judith Burgin
Kate Keats
Naomi Watts

Double Basses

David Daly *
Joe Cowie
Moray Jones
Jane Ferns *
Mark Thistlewood
Martin Henderson
Albert Dennis
Callum Duggan

Flutes

Anna Pyne
Jenny Farley

Piccolo

Owain Bailey

Oboes

Edward Kay *
Holly Randall
Rebecca Kozam

Cor Anglais

Holly Randall

Clarinets

Barry Deacon
Dov Goldberg
Meline Le Calvez

Bass Clarinet

Meline Le Calvez

Bassoons

Tammy Thorn
Emma Selby

Contrabassoon

Kim Murphy

Horns

Dan Curzon
Ruth Spicer *
Robert Harris *
Kevin Pritchard *
Edward
Lockwood *

Trumpets

Paul Bosworth
Peter Turnbull *
Tom Freeman-
Attwood
Kaitlin Wild

Trombones

Kevin Morgan *
Robb Tooley

Bass Trombone

Kevin Smith *

Tuba

Michael Levis

Timpani

James Bower

Percussion

Matt King *
Ben Lewis
Helen Edordu
Alastair
Marshallsay

Harps

Eluned Pierce *
Anwen Thomas

Celesta

Alistair Young

* Long Service
Award (20 years)

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

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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

Coming up at the Proms



Alan Ovaska

ANNA-LENA ELBERT



Camilla Greenwell

SANTTU-MATIAS ROUVALI

SUNDAY 13 AUGUST

PROM 39 LIGETI, BARTÓK & BEETHOVEN

7.30pm–c9.35pm • Royal Albert Hall
Iván Fischer, his Budapest Festival Orchestra and soprano Anna-Lena Elbert mark Ligeti's 100th anniversary with *Mysteries of the Macabre*. Sir Andrés Schiff is the soloist in Bartók's Third Piano Concerto before Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony concludes the evening.

WEDNESDAY 16 AUGUST

PROM 42 ELGAR, CHOPIN & STRAUSS 7.30pm–c10.05pm • Royal Albert Hall

International Chopin Piano Competition-winner Seong-Jin Cho performs Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Philharmonia Orchestra and its Principal Conductor Santtu-Matias Rouvali. Meanwhile Italy's summer sunshine suffuses both Elgar's bucolic *In the South* overture and Strauss's tone-poem *Aus Italien*.



Roy Cox

GEMMA NEW



Benjamin Ealovega

SAKARI ORAMO

FRIDAY 18 AUGUST

PROM 44 SAMY MOUSSA, SHOSTAKOVICH & STRAVINSKY

7.30pm–c9.40pm • Royal Albert Hall
Conductor Gemma New makes her Proms debut with the BBC Scottish SO. Together they give the European premiere of Samy Moussa's BBC commissioned Symphony No. 2, followed by Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 2 – featuring Pavel Kolesnikov as soloist – and Stravinsky's ballet *The Firebird*.

SATURDAY 19 AUGUST

PROM 45 MAHLER'S THIRD SYMPHONY 7.00pm–c8.45pm • Royal Albert Hall

Sakari Oramo conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Trinity Boys Choir and mezzo-soprano Jenny Carlstedt in a performance of Mahler's Third Symphony, one of the composer's most radiant and expansive works – a vision of man and nature, earth and heaven.