

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

One of the UK's leading counter-tenors, Iestyn Davies mesmerised Proms audiences last summer with his roles in Handel's *Solomon* and Bach's Mass in B minor. Tonight he returns for an atmospheric Late Night Prom focusing on J. S. Bach, with The English Concert – celebrating its 50th anniversary this year – under its Principal Guest Director, harpsichordist Kristian Bezuidenhout.

As director of music at Leipzig's main churches from 1723, Bach embarked on a cherished project to compose five annual cycles of cantatas. During 1726 one of his musicians was an alto who must have displayed remarkable talent, to which Bach responded by composing a group of solo cantatas that have become cornerstones of the counter-tenor repertoire.

Tonight we hear two of them: the heaven-gazing *Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust*, and *Geist und Seele wird verwirret*, which marvels at miracles of creation and God's goodness. In between the two cantatas comes Bach's bustling Third Brandenburg Concerto.



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 53

FRIDAY 25 AUGUST • 10.15pm–c11.30pm



Johann Sebastian Bach

Cantata No. 170, 'Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust' 24'

Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major 10'

Cantata No. 35, 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret' 26'

first performance at the Proms

Iestyn Davies *counter-tenor*

Tom Foster *organ*

The English Concert *Nadja Zwiener leader*

Kristian Bezuidenhout *harpsichord/director*

There will be no interval

RADIO 3 SOUNDS

This concert is broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 (repeated on Wednesday 6 September at 2.00pm) and available on BBC Sounds.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

Cantata No. 170, 'Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust' (1726)

- 1 **Aria:** 'Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust'
- 2 **Recitative:** 'Die Welt, das Sündenhaus'
- 3 **Aria:** 'Wie jammern mich doch die verkehrten Herzen'
- 4 **Recitative:** 'Wer sollte sich demnach'
- 5 **Aria:** 'Mir ekelt mehr zu leben'

Iestyn Davies *counter-tenor*
Tom Foster *organ*

For text, see page 7

When, in 1723, Bach took up the position of Kantor of the St Thomas School in Leipzig, he was stepping into one of the leading church music posts in Protestant Germany, and one of the busiest. His duties included organising music for Sunday and special services at the city's four main churches, at the two biggest of which – St Thomas's and St Nicholas's – the focal point was to be a cantata for voices and instruments. His immediate predecessor, Johann Kuhnau, had largely been content to mix his own cantatas with those by others, but Bach wanted to perform only his own music, having since his early twenties harboured the wish to compose what he called a 'well-regulated church music', a carefully planned cycle of cantatas that would provide for the entire church calendar of Sundays and important feast days. Now that he had the chance to do so, he plunged in with a will, composing between 1723 and 1728 five annual cycles of cantatas at the astounding rate of about 60 a year.



The Sermon on the Mount, the Gospel for the day *Vergnügte Ruh* was performed: an 1877 oil on copper by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834–90)

Not surprisingly, practical considerations are always near the surface in Bach's cantatas. They were, after all, written for almost immediate performance, and thus bound to be influenced by the relative strengths and weaknesses of the performers available at any particular moment. The cantatas of the third annual cycle (or *Jahrgang*) emerged at a slightly slower rate than the first two, covering a period (summer 1725 to Easter 1727) during which Bach is known to have performed at least 18 cantatas by his older cousin Johann Ludwig. Perhaps he wanted to create the time and space to work on the massive *St Matthew Passion*

(premiered on Good Friday 1727), a theory strengthened by the fact that the cantatas of the third cycle show a clear tendency towards writing for solo singers rather than choruses, which would presumably have saved Bach time in both composition and rehearsal.

On the other hand, it may simply indicate the presence of an especially good singer. *Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust* is the first of three cantatas composed in 1726 for solo alto, perhaps all intended for some talented senior boy at the school. The work also shares with a number of other cantatas from that year the inclusion of a part for solo organ; Bach may well have played this himself, but it is also conceivable that it was performed by one of his sons, such as the 16-year-old Wilhelm Friedemann, or by one of his other accomplished pupils.

“The cantatas were written for almost immediate performance, and thus bound to be influenced by the relative strengths and weaknesses of the performers available at any particular moment.”

The cantata was first heard on 28 July 1726, that year's sixth Sunday after Trinity. The text comes from a collection published in 1711 by the Darmstadt court poet Georg Christian Lehms, who described it as being appropriate to Communion, and it seems that Bach may have performed it at this point in the service, having presented a cantata by Johann Ludwig in an earlier slot just after the Gospel. Its subject is the favourite Lutheran one of longing for virtuous death as a release from the world's swarming violence and hatred, relating it both to the day's Epistle (a passage from Romans concerning

Christ's triumph over sin and death) and to the Gospel reading (from Matthew, a section of the Sermon on the Mount dealing with brotherly love).

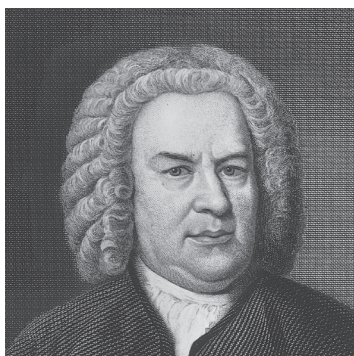
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The opening aria describes the pleasures of heavenly accord in a peaceful slumber-song, lovingly warmed by the sound of oboe d'amore and gently lapping string lines. A recitative follows, introducing a contrasting image of worldly strife, which is then developed in the second aria. Here, with the music having shifted to a remote key, the voice and solo organ drift and spin to the groping accompaniment of upper strings in a bleak depiction of wayward mankind. Another expressive recitative, proposing that love should be extended even to one's enemies, leads to the final aria and a joyful return to the cantata's initial subject, the contented afterlife that awaits the believer.

Programme note © Lindsay Kemp

Lindsay Kemp was for 30 years a producer for BBC Radio 3. He is Artistic Director of Baroque at the Edge and a regular contributor to *Gramophone*.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH



When, in 1977, NASA made Bach the most prominent composer on the 'Sounds of Earth' record placed in the departing *Voyager* spacecraft, it seemed to symbolise not only the composer's acknowledged place among the highest of human achievers but

also the fundamental quality many listeners find in his music, as if it were some divine frame that has existed since time began.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in 1685 in Eisenach into a sprawling family in which many of his male relatives were musicians working in the Lutheran churches, courts and municipalities of central Germany. After singing at school and studying with an older brother, he got his first paid post as a violinist in Weimar in 1702. Within months he had obtained an organist's position in Arnstadt and it was there and subsequently at Mühlhausen that he acquired a reputation as a virtuoso keyboard performer. Six years later he returned to Weimar as organist to the ducal court, where the composing of church cantatas and instrumental music was added to his duties. In 1717 he moved to assume the post of Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold at Cöthen, and it was there, where there was a good orchestra, that he wrote much of his orchestral, chamber and solo harpsichord music.

His final move came in 1723, when he took up the job of Kantor at St Thomas's in Leipzig, which among other things required him to provide music for services at

the city's main churches. It was a prestigious post that offered important opportunities – in his first five years there Bach carried out a cherished project to write 300 cantatas for the liturgy and also composed his two great Passion settings – but there were professional frustrations too, and he often clashed with his employers. In the 1730s he found comfort in the publication of keyboard works (including the monumental 'Goldberg' Variations) and began to gain some recognition further afield. His last decade saw him increasingly concerned with organising and revising his earlier music into sets or larger works – the most substantial example being the Mass in B minor – and working on semi-didactic collections such as the masterly contrapuntal compendia the *Musical Offering* and *The Art of Fugue*.

In historical terms, Bach's music, along with that of Handel and Telemann, represents the pinnacle of the High Baroque, assimilating the formerly competing French and Italian styles into a new and distinct 'German' manner. Yet, like all the greatest artistic legacies, it lives free of its time – intellectually gripping, spiritually profound, intelligible and satisfying to all.

Profile © Lindsay Kemp

MORE J. S. BACH AT THE PROMS

TOMORROW, 2.00pm • PROM 54
Cantata No. 146, 'Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal' – Sinfonia
(transcr. Dupré)

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

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Cantata No. 170, 'Vergnügte Ruh', beliebte Seelenlust'

1 **Aria**

Vergnügte Ruh', beliebte Seelenlust,
 Dich kann man nicht bei Höllensünden,
 Wohl aber Himmelseintracht finden;
 Du stärkst allein die schwache Brust.
 Drum sollen lauter Tugendgaben
 In meinem Herzen Wohnung haben.

Contented rest, beloved inner joy,
 you cannot be found amid hell's sins,
 but rather in the harmony of heaven;
 you alone strengthen the weak breast.
 Thus shall naught but virtue's gifts
 dwell in my heart.

2 **Recitative**

Die Welt, das Sündenhaus,
 Bricht nur in Höllenlieder aus
 Und sucht durch Hass und Neid
 Des Satans Bild an sich zu tragen.
 Ihr Mund ist voller Ottergift,
 Der oft die Unschuld tödlich trifft,
 Und will allein von 'Racha' sagen.
 Gerechter Gott, wie weit
 Ist doch der Mensch von dir entfernet;
 Du liebst, jedoch sein Mund
 Macht Fluch und Feindschaft kund
 Und will den Nächsten nur mit Füßen treten.
 Ach! diese Schuld ist schwerlich zu verbeten.

The world, that house of sin,
 breaks only into songs of hell
 and seeks through hate and envy
 to impress Satan's image on itself.
 Its mouth is filled with viper's venom,
 which often murders innocence,
 and speaks of naught but Raca [Hebrew for 'fool!'].
 O righteous God, how far,
 in truth, is man from thee divided;
 thou dost love, and yet his lips
 utter curses and hostility,
 and he would merely trample his neighbour.
 Ah! such sin can scarce be banished through prayer.

3 **Aria**

Wie jammern mich doch die verkehrten Herzen,
 Die dir, mein Gott, so sehr zuwider sein;
 Ich zittre recht und fühle tausend Schmerzen,
 Wenn sie sich nur an Rach und Hass erfreun.
 Gerechter Gott, was magst du doch gedenken,
 Wenn sie allein mit rechten Satansränken
 Dein scharfes Strafgebot so frech verlacht.
 Ach! ohne Zweifel hast du so gedacht:
 Wie jammern mich doch die verkehrten Herzen!

How those perverted hearts grieve me,
 who have, my God, so offended thee;
 I tremble, in truth, and feel a thousand torments,
 when they merely rejoice in revenge and hate.
 O righteous God, what might thy thoughts be,
 when they so boldly flout thy stern punishment
 with veritable Satanic scheming.
 Ah! these were doubtless your thoughts:
 how those perverted hearts grieve me!

4 Recitative

Wer sollte sich demnach
 Wohl hier zu leben wünschen,
 Wenn man nur Hass und Ungemach
 Vor seine Liebe sieht?
 Doch, weil ich auch den Feind
 Wie meinen besten Freund
 Nach Gottes Vorschrift lieben soll,
 So flieht
 Mein Herze Zorn und Groll
 Und wünscht allein bei Gott zu leben,
 Der selbst die Liebe heisst.
 Ach, eintrachtvoller Geist,
 Wenn wird er dir doch nur sein Himmelszion geben?

5 Aria

Mir ekelt mehr zu leben,
 Drum nimm mich, Jesu, hin!
 Mir graut vor allen Sünden,
 Lass mich dies Wohnhaus finden,
 Woselbst ich ruhig bin.

Text by Georg Christian Lehms (1684–1717)

Who would, therefore,
 ever wish to live here,
 when love is countered
 with naught but hate and hardship?
 Yet since I am to love my foe
 as well as my closest friend,
 according to God's commandment,
 so my heart
 shuns wrath and rancour
 and seeks to dwell with God alone,
 who is himself called love.
 Ah! peace-loving spirit,
 when will he bring you his heavenly Zion?

It sickens me to live longer,
 therefore, take me, Jesus, hence!
 I have a horror of all sinning,
 let me find that dwelling,
 wherein I may have rest.

English translation © Richard Stokes; reprinted with kind permission

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048 (c1720)

- 1 [Allegro]
- 2 Allegro

Bach's works have long presented fertile ground for scholars interested in musical symbolism, particularly concerning numbers. Even a cursory glance at the way the composer organised his instrumental works into groups – in the Brandenburgs, but also in the two books of 24 Preludes and Fugues in all the keys (*The Well-Tempered Clavier*) or in the keyboard and cello suites – shows that, at the very least, Bach liked to approach the task with a concern for mathematical and formal neatness. It seems unlikely, therefore, that he would have acted haphazardly when, sometime around 1720, he gathered together the six brilliant works now known as Brandenburg Concertos.



Apollo and the Muses, oil on wood by the Flemish artist Maarten de Vos (1532–1603): one theory posits that the nine solo strings in the Third Brandenburg Concerto represent the nine Muses and the harmony of the spheres

One somewhat extreme theory, proposed by the conductor Philip Pickett, holds that the whole set was an ambitious sequence of allegorical tableaux depicting subjects from classical mythology, history and the cosmos, and that within it Concerto No. 3 represents the nine Muses and the harmony of the spheres. And indeed the number 3 is a hard presence to ignore in the work, with its nine solo instruments arranged into three groups – three violins, three violas and three cellos, supported by double bass and keyboard continuo – and further internal references to the number which have prompted descriptions of the work as ‘a fanatical obsession’ and ‘a meditation on the Trinity’.

To what degree such things impinge on the listener is debatable but what the work does offer within its essentially single-colour scoring for strings is a fascinating kaleidoscope of subtly shifting textures and tonal aspects. To hear in the first movement the nine soloists now passing melodic material between them and now coming together in various different and ingenious permutations is an absorbing exercise.

Unusually, Bach wrote no slow movement for this concerto, and in the score just two chords (perhaps intended to be adorned by the players) serve to introduce the final movement, a fast-running Allegro with something of the character of a gigue.

Programme note © Lindsay Kemp

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

Composer-led nights have a long history at the Proms, stretching back to the days when audiences could expect minimally rehearsed entertainments of extraordinary length and unpredictable content. In 1928 a ‘Bach night’ with soloists Myra Hess and Charles Woodhouse

raised £328. 18s. 11d. in single-ticket sales, the season’s highest takings. Not that this would have been Bach as we know it: the custom then was to extract highlights and reinvent the music in accordance with the tastes of the day. Henry Wood sometimes made his orchestra stand to play the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major but he had a deep aversion to the harpsichord: ‘... how horrible this is today, in a large concert hall – and for that matter, horrible under any conditions.’ William Glock, a controversial BBC Controller of Music and Proms planner of the 1960s, not only introduced Bach’s bigger pieces uncut but sought through innovative scheduling to recontextualise familiar favourites such as the Brandenburg Concertos. One 1970 concert consisted of Bach’s Fourth Orchestral Suite, vocal and instrumental music from medieval Florence, the Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major, Elliott Carter’s Double Concerto and Bach’s Third Orchestral Suite. That particular Brandenburg is unique in boasting a Proms performance history stretching back to the 19th century. In 1898 *The Musical Times* was full of praise for music ‘which probably was new to the very large majority of those present, for it is doubtful if it had been played before in the metropolis’. The Third Brandenburg debuted in 1904. Different modes of programme-building and performance practice applied when all six Brandenburg Concertos were performed over two concerts in one day by Sir John Eliot Gardiner’s English Baroque Soloists in 2010 and Thomas Dausgaard’s Swedish Chamber Orchestra in 2018. In the first instance chamber music playing predominated, one to a part, mostly without conductor. In the second, Bach’s cycle was interspersed with six newly commissioned companion works. Of tonight’s cantatas, *Geist und Seele wird verwirret* would seem to be new to the Proms but *Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust* has been given twice. On both occasions the soloist was a mezzo-soprano: Anne Sofie von Otter joined Marc Minkowski and his period-instrument ensemble, Les Musiciens du Louvre, in 2003; Nancy Evans was accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic in 1955. The conductor then was the sadly short-lived John Hollingsworth, whose name lives on thanks to a clutch of recordings and a parallel career in Gothic horror as resident musical supervisor for Hammer Film Productions Ltd.

© 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.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Cantata No. 35 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret' (1726)

first performance at the Proms

Part 1

- 1 Concerto
- 2 Aria: 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret'
- 3 Recitative: 'Ich wundre mich'
- 4 Aria: 'Gott hat alles wohlgemacht'

Part 2

- 5 Sinfonia
- 6 Recitative: 'Ach, starker Gott, lass mich'
- 7 Aria: 'Ich wünsche nur bei Gott zu leben'

Iestyn Davies *counter-tenor*Tom Foster *organ*

For text, see page 13

Six weeks after *Vergnügte Ruh* was performed, Bach presented on 8 September (the 12th Sunday after Trinity) his second cantata for solo alto, *Geist und Seele wird verwirret*. Presumably the talented soloist was still around, and Bach's third cantata for him (No. 169) was to follow six weeks later. Like its predecessor, the new cantata included a part for solo organ, although this time its role was significantly expanded from the cameo appearances of No. 170 to include two concerto-style movements for organ and orchestra. Bach reused existing concerto movements in a number of his cantatas around this time, some of which are familiar today in their original versions (for instance, the first movement of the Third Brandenburg Concerto, repurposed with enlarged scoring in Cantata No. 174), so the likelihood that the two instrumental

movements in *Geist und Seele* were recycled from a now lost concerto is very high. Indeed, they have served as the basis of a number of modern reconstructions of concertos for purported 'original' soloists, most commonly oboe.

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Bach sometimes wrote cantatas in two parts, the first to be performed in the usual position after the Gospel reading and the second during Communion. The Gospel for the day this time was St Mark's account of Jesus curing a man of deafness and a speech impediment, and the cantata text (again by Lehms) links this to the sensation of the believer struck temporarily deaf and mute by the sight of God's wonders. After the breezy opening Concerto movement, the first aria's halting, meandering quality suggests the resulting inner confusion of spirit and soul, and perhaps something of its claustrophobia, escaped momentarily in the central section by a little fanfare on the word 'jauchzet' (rejoice). A recitative then marvels at Jesus's miraculous healing powers, before Part 1 closes with an aria that basks joyfully in God's goodness, to the sound of a gently running organ part.

Part 2 opens with a Sinfonia that was presumably the concerto's finale, leading to a recitative that submits to God's watchful care, in the process referencing almost directly the Gospel's words: 'and he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and spit, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto to him, Ephphatha, that is Be opened'. The final aria looks forward with calm pleasure and certainty to an afterlife spent with God and the angels, the organ encouraging the singer to join in dancing triplets over the steady minuet-like tread of the orchestra.

Programme note © Lindsay Kemp

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JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Cantata No. 35, 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret'

PART 1

1 Concerto

2 Aria

Geist und Seele wird verwirret,
 Wenn sie dich, mein Gott, betracht'.
 Denn die Wunder, so sie kennet
 Und das Volk mit Jauchzen nennet,
 Hat sie taub und stumm gemacht.

Spirit and soul become confused,
 when they gaze on thee, my God.
 For the miracles they know,
 and which the people tell with joy,
 have made them deaf and dumb.

3 Recitative

Ich wundre mich;
 Denn alles, was man sieht,
 Muss uns Verwund'ung geben.
 Betracht ich dich,
 Du teurer Gottessohn,
 So fliehet
 Vernunft und auch Verstand davon.
 Du machst es eben,
 Dass sonst ein Wunderwerk vor dir was Schlechtes ist.
 Du bist
 Dem Namen, Tun und Amte nach erst wunderreich,
 Dir ist kein Wunderding auf dieser Erde gleich.
 Den Tauben gibst du das Gehör,
 Den Stummen ihre Sprache wieder,
 Ja, was noch mehr,

I marvel;
 for everything that one sees
 must fill us with amazement.
 If I look on thee,
 thou precious Son of God,
 both
 reason and sense take flight.
 For thou art the cause
 that even a miracle seems wretched next to thee.
 Thou art
 in name, deed and office wonderful;
 no wonder on earth resembles thee.
 To the deaf thou givest hearing,
 to the dumb the gift of speech again,
 yea, more than this,

*Christ Healing a Deaf Man (1579) by Léonard Gaultier (1561–1641),
 a theme explored in Bach's cantata Geist und Seele*

Du öffnest auf ein Wort die blinden Augenlider.
 Dies, dies sind Wunderwerke,
 Und ihre Stärke
 Ist auch der Engel Chor nicht mächtig, auszusprechen.

4 **Aria**

Gott hat alles wohlgemacht.
 Seine Liebe, seine Treu
 Wird uns alle Tage neu.
 Wenn uns Angst und Kummer drücket,
 Hat er reichen Trost geschicket,
 Weil er täglich für uns wacht.
 Gott hat alles wohlgemacht.

thou dost open, at a word, the eyelids of the blind.
 These, these are works of wonder,
 and their power
 cannot be expressed even by the choir of angels.

God has done all things well.
 His love, his faith
 are new every morning.
 When fear and sorrow oppress us,
 he hath always sent us ample comfort,
 for he watches over us each day.
 God has done all things well.

PART 2

5 **Sinfonia**

6 **Recitative**

Ach, starker Gott, lass mich
 Doch dieses stets bedenken,
 So kann ich dich
 Vergnügt in meine Seele senken.
 Lass mir dein süßes 'Hephata'
 Das ganz verstockte Herz erweichen;
 Ach! lege nur den Gnadenfinger in die Ohren,
 Sonst bin ich gleich verloren.
 Rühr auch das Zungenband
 Mit deiner starken Hand,
 Damit ich diese Wunderzeichen
 In heil'ger Andacht preise
 Und mich als Kind und Erb erweise.

Ah, mighty God, let me
 always remember this,
 and then I can
 happily immerse thee in my soul.
 Let thy sweet 'Ephphatha'
 soften my so stubborn heart;
 ah, lay but thy gracious finger in my ear,
 or else I shall quickly perish.
 Touch too my tongue
 with thy mighty hand,
 that I may praise these signs of wonder
 in sacred worship
 and show myself to be thy child and heir.

7 **Aria**

Ich wünsche nur bei Gott zu leben,
Ach! wäre doch die Zeit schon da,
Ein fröhliches Halleluja
Mit allen Engeln anzuheben.
Mein liebster Jesu, löse doch
Das jammerreiche Schmerzensjoch
Und lass mich bald in deinen Händen
Mein martervolles Leben enden.

Text by Georg Christian Lehms

I only wish to live with God,
ah! would the time were already there
to raise a happy hallelujah
with all the angels.
My dearest Jesus, free me
from this sorrow-laden yoke of pain
and let me soon in thine arms
end my life so full of torment.

English translation © Richard Stokes; reprinted with kind permission



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 6 All the King's Men (Masters of the King's Music)

Judith Weir renews her place in our musical lives with her BBC commission this week, *Begin Afresh*. It's music inspired by the endlessly refreshing cycles of time in nature – 'musical reflections,' she says, 'about the trees and plants I observed, in a very urban setting, over the period of a year'; and it's based on Philip Larkin's poem *The Trees*: 'Last year is dead, they seem to say, / Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.' That sylvan subject matter is sure to appeal to one person for whom Weir's music is especially resonant this year: King Charles III. Judith Weir consecrated her title as Charles's first Master of the King's Music with the joyous, crystalline music of her commission for his coronation, *Brighter Visions Shine Afar*.

Yet the music that Weir has written is addressed not to solitary monarchs, but to all of us, her audiences. She knows that the music she composes for funerals, weddings and coronations makes its impact on millions of us listening and watching, and that her royal appointment is a chance to stand up for the musical community as a whole, for every root and branch and leaf of the musical ecology.

Weir is the first woman to hold the post of the Master of the monarch's music (since Nicholas Lanier, the first incumbent in Charles I's reign in 1626, the roll call of Masters has had no gender equality at all, despite the many queens as well as kings they have served) and she's also made the role her own through proselytising and advocacy.

That had also been the case for her predecessor, Peter Maxwell Davies, and for Malcolm Williamson, Arthur Bliss and Arnold Bax, all previous holders of the post in the 20th century, along with Elgar, who was appointed in 1924 and whose previous music had already given royalty so many of its indelible soundtracks, from 'Land of Hope and Glory' to *The Crown of India*.

But the historical record of ambition and achievement of the Masters from the 17th century ranges from flashes of brilliance in the music of John Eccles (the longest-serving Master, from 1700 to 1735) and William Boyce (1755–79), to litanies of laziness and mediocrity by composers you've never heard of and whose music is virtually impossible to hear. Yes, I'm thinking of you, Franz Cramer, who couldn't even be bothered to write anything for Queen Victoria's Coronation in 1838, and your equally lackadaisical successor, George Frederick Anderson, whose Handelian first names couldn't save him from obscurity.

By radiant contemporary contrast, Judith Weir's renewal of the purpose of the Master's role is a gift to whoever comes after her when her 10-year term ends next year, allowing royal-sponsored musical culture once again to 'Begin Afresh'.

'Begin Afresh', a BBC commission by Master of the King's Music, Judith Weir, and the Violin Concerto by Edward Elgar (who held the title from 1924 to 1934) feature this week on Thursday 24 August.

→ Next week: **Playing at Sight and from Memory**

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).



Kristian Bezuidenhout

harpsichord/director

Born in South Africa in 1979, Kristian Bezuidenhout began his studies in Australia, completed them at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and now lives in London. Equally at home on the fortepiano,

harpsichord and modern piano, he is an Artistic Director of the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and Principal Guest Director with The English Concert. He has performed with artists including Giovanni Antonini, Frans Brüggen, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Philippe Herreweghe, Trevor Pinnock, Alina Ibragimova, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Carolyn Sampson and Matthias Goerne.

Engagements this season include performances with the Auckland Philharmonic and Cologne Gürzenich orchestras, and projects playing with and directing the Basel and Irish Chamber orchestras, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Philharmonia Baroque and Concerto Copenhagen. He gave recitals with tenor Mark Padmore and cellist Sol Gabetta in Europe and undertook an American tour with mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter. During next season he appears with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, play-directs Camerata Salzburg, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, and gives solo and chamber recitals throughout Europe and Japan.

Kristian Bezuidenhout's award-winning discography includes the complete solo keyboard music of Mozart. Recent releases include Schubert's *Winterreise* with Mark Padmore, Bach sonatas for violin and harpsichord with Isabelle Faust, Haydn piano sonatas, and the complete Beethoven piano concertos with the FBO.



Iestyn Davies

counter-tenor

After graduating from St John's College, Cambridge, British counter-tenor Iestyn Davies studied at the Royal College of Music.

He has appeared in opera with companies including the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English

National Opera, Glyndebourne, the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Chicago Lyric Opera and the Teatro Real in Madrid, at the Salzburg Festival and in Munich, Vienna and Zurich. Recent highlights include *Arsace (Partenope)* in Madrid, *Ottone (Agrippina)* for the Hamburg and Bavarian State operas and *Bertarido (Rodelinda)* for the Metropolitan Opera.

Highlights of the current season include a world-premiere production of music by Dowland at the Barbican with lutenist Thomas Dunford, featuring visuals by Netia Jones; concerts at Carnegie Hall, New York, and the Berlin Philharmonie; and *Ottone (The Coronation of Poppaea)* in Versailles. He has also undertaken a French tour of Handel duets with Ensemble Jupiter and sung in Bach's Mass in B minor and Handel's *Radamisto* with Philharmonia Baroque.

Iestyn Davies has won a Grammy Award and three *Gramophone* Awards for his recital recordings. He was nominated for an Olivier Award for singing the role of Farinelli in *Farinelli and the King* opposite Mark Rylance, a Globe Theatre production that had runs in the West End and on Broadway. In 2017 he was appointed MBE for services to music.

The English Concert

The English Concert was founded in 1972 by harpsichordist Trevor Pinnock, who remained its director for 30 years. Harry Bicket has been Artistic Director since 2007 and Kristian Bezuidenhout is Principal Guest Director. Artistic partners with whom the orchestra has collaborated include Joyce DiDonato, Dame Sarah Connolly, Iestyn Davies, Alison Balsom, Dominic Dromgoole and Tom Morris.

A cornerstone of the ensemble's annual cycle is its international Handel Opera tour. Growing out of a continuing relationship with Carnegie Hall, New York, the itinerary now regularly takes in the Theater an der Wien, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie and London's Barbican Hall.

The ensemble explores a broader range of repertoire in its regular London series and this summer launched the ambitious Handel for All project, which aims to film and make freely available online all of Handel's works.

The English Concert's recent discography includes recordings of Handel's *Rodelinda*, *La Resurrezione* and *Serse* under Harry Bicket.

Artistic Director
Harry Bicket

Principal Guest Director
Kristian Bezuidenhout

First Violins
Nadja Zwiener*
leader
Asuka Sumi
Abel Balazs
Thérèse Timoney
Rodrigo Checa
Lorite

Second Violins
Kinga Ujszászi*
Chloe Kim*
Sara Deborah Struntz
Cristina Prats Costa
Diana Lee

Violas
Alfonso Leal del Ojo
Kyle Miller
Charlotte Fairbairn

Cellos
Joseph Crouch
Alexander Rolton
Benjamin Michaels

Double Bass
Alexander Jones

**Oboe d'amore/
Oboe da caccia**
Clara Espinosa Encinas
Michael Roux
Bethan White

Bassoon
Katrin Lazar

Organ
Tom Foster

Harpsichord
Kristian Bezuidenhout

* *Violins in
Brandenburg
Concerto No. 3*

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

Chief Executive
Alfonso Leal del Ojo

Head of Artistic Planning
Sarah Fenn

Artistic Planning Manager
Lucy Roberts

Development Manager
Thomas Morgan

PR
Rebecca Driver
Grace Filmer



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SOUNDS

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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



Marco Borrelli

MICHAEL SPYRES



Umberto Nicoletti

SEMYON BYCHKOV

SATURDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

PROM 64 BERLIOZ'S THE TROJANS
4.00pm–c9.25pm • Royal Albert Hall
Sir John Eliot Gardiner and his Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique bring Berlioz's five-act grand opera *The Trojans* to life in this concert staging. Joining him onstage is an outstanding cast that includes British mezzo Alice Coote and American tenor Michael Spyres.

MONDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

PROM 65 BRUCKNER'S EIGHTH SYMPHONY
7.30pm–c9.05pm • Royal Albert Hall
Russian-born conductor Semyon Bychkov leads the BBC Symphony Orchestra in Bruckner's mighty Eighth Symphony, the last the composer would ever complete.



Monarca Studios

ERIN MORLEY



Mark Allan

BBC SINGERS

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

PROM 69 MOZART'S 'REQUIEM'
7.00pm–c8.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
Raphaël Pichon, his exciting ensemble Pygmalion and a solo line-up featuring American soprano Erin Morley present an alternative vision of Mozart's famously unfinished *Requiem*. Tonight's reimagining swells the popular completion by Mozart's pupil Süssmayr with additional pieces to create a compelling alternative sequence.

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

PROM 69A JOANNA MARSH, DANIEL-LESUR & SOUMIK DATTA
10.15pm–c11.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
The BBC Singers and Chief Conductor Sofi Jeannin present a late-night Prom of choral works. Two contemporary pieces – Joanna Marsh's *SEEN* and Soumik Datta's *Awaaz* – explore themes of identity, while Danel-Lesur's masterpiece *Cantique des cantiques* sets the biblical Song of Songs.