

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

François-Xavier Roth's award-winning and boundary-breaking orchestra Les Siècles celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, and visits the Proms tonight with a programme pairing two true originals separated by 200 years. Mozart and Ligeti might at first seem an unlikely pairing but both developed along their own individual paths and were at the forefront of revolutions in the musical language of their respective ages.

Ligeti is represented by an early and a late work. His vibrant *Concert Românesc* is a light-footed celebration of the Romanian folk music – both real and invented – that surrounded him as a young composer, while the Violin Concerto is a tour de force of instrumental virtuosity and sonic imagination.

Mozart transformed the instrumental music of 1780s Vienna with an injection of true operatic drama and the influence of the 'ancient' music of Bach and Handel, resulting in a string of concertos and symphonies at the forefront of technique and expression.

Tonight's soloists, Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov, are the ideal exponents of this irresistible music.



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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 47

SUNDAY 20 AUGUST • 7.30pm–c10.00pm



György Ligeti

Concert Românesc *first performance at the Proms* 12'

Violin Concerto 28'

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major 25'

Symphony No. 41 in C major, 'Jupiter' 31'

Isabelle Faust *violin*

Alexander Melnikov *piano*

Les Siècles François-Marie Drieux (first half), Amaryllis Billet (second half) *leaders*

François-Xavier Roth *conductor*

The first half (Ligeti) will be played on 20th-century instruments tuned to A=442Hz; the second half (Mozart) will be played on Classical-period instruments tuned to A=430Hz. The instrumentation and pitches have been chosen to reflect those at the time of the works' composition.

RADIO 3 SOUNDS

This concert is broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 (repeated on Tuesday 5 September at 2.00pm) and available on BBC Sounds.

GYÖRGY LIGETI (1923–2006)

Concert Românesc (1951)

first performance at the Proms

- 1 **Andantino**
- 2 **Allegro vivace**
- 3 **Adagio ma non troppo**
- 4 **Molto vivace**

In the early 1950s in many countries of the Eastern bloc, the arts were under the close scrutiny of the state. In Hungary this took the form of ‘listening meetings’ held by the Composers’ Union. Ostensibly a forum for discussing new works, they were in practice also a means of censorship. In fact they often had little bearing on a work’s success, and seem to have been put on as much for show as anything else.



Romanian farm workers at harvest time: Ligeti grew up in a region of Transylvania whose culture was part Romanian, part Hungarian – a duality that manifests itself in much of his earlier music

Ligeti's *Concert Românesc* is a case in point. It was rejected, the composer claimed, because its imitations of Transylvanian folk music were deemed too dissonant, even though the sound was relatively authentic. (In the fourth movement, for example, the melody and accompaniment are played in two different keys.) However, the piece – written for the Hungarian Soldiers' Orchestra – was performed on several occasions before Ligeti escaped to the West in 1956.

“Ligeti's inspiration here was the bucium, a Romanian alphorn almost two metres in length that serves a range of purposes, from funeral ceremonies to the curdling of milk into cheese.”

The *Concert Românesc* ('Romanian Concerto') is a peculiar work, certainly. The first two movements – a slow, string-led introduction and a wild, Bartókian folk dance (compare with the last movement of *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*) – sound as though they come from another piece entirely. Which they do: they were arranged from the *Baladă și joc* ('Ballad and Dance', 1950) for two violins. As the *Concert Românesc* continues, it becomes increasingly strange. The third movement introduces two horns, trading call-and-reponse gestures. Ligeti's inspiration here was the bucium, a Romanian alphorn almost two metres in length that serves a range of purposes, from funeral ceremonies to the curdling of milk into cheese. The natural tuning of this folk instrument is imitated by the horns.

By the time we reach the final movement, the music – increasingly infused with the eerie, airy sound of the

horns – has left its folksiness far behind, so the sudden explosion of a peasant fiddle melody now sounds more ironic than naive. When the orchestral backing abruptly drops away, Ligeti leaves us with one of the most memorable moments in all his work. The violin, now completely isolated, holds a startled pose high in the stratosphere as the two horns make a brief return, calling across what is now an empty, blasted space.

Programme note © Tim Rutherford-Johnson

Tim Rutherford-Johnson is author of *Music After the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture since 1989* (Univ. of California Press, 2017) and *The Music of Liza Lim* (Wildbird, 2022), and co-author of *Twentieth-Century Music in the West* (CUP, 2022).

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

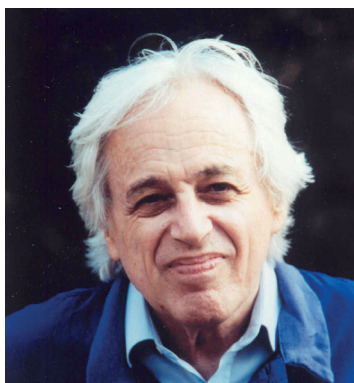
Ligeti hit the Proms in 1971, when Pierre Boulez directed *Aventures* and *Nouvelles aventures* during a groundbreaking new music event at the Roundhouse in Chalk Farm. While a handful of Ligeti scores have since featured regularly (*Lontano* received its fifth performance on Tuesday), his Violin Concerto has been heard only once, in 2003. It was framed by Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* – Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic were famously assailed by a mobile phone in the opening bars of the Stravinsky. Tasmin Little was the soloist in the Ligeti, her stunning performance assisted by then novel technology allowing her to scroll through the music electronically. Part of the *Concert Românesc*, ostensibly new to these concerts, has in fact arrived by the back door, its finale pressed into service as an encore. Twice chosen by Jonathan Nott to demonstrate the prowess of visiting orchestras, the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra in 2006 and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande in 2018, it also popped up unexpectedly in 2013 courtesy of Mariss Jansons's Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra – the first of their two Proms that season, pairing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 (soloist Mitsuko Uchida) with Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*.

© 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*.

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GYÖRGY LIGETI



György Ligeti was one of those great pioneering spirits of the post-war era who created whole new ways of devising and perceiving music. Yet, unlike Stockhausen, Boulez and Nono, he had no taste for strident manifestos, disliked ideologies of any kind and preferred to remain

unattached to schools or movements. That quality of being an outsider was instilled very young. Ligeti was born in 1923 into a small Jewish community in a part of Transylvania whose culture was partly Hungarian and partly Romanian. Isolated by anti-Semitism, he took refuge in a rich inner world. He enrolled at the conservatory at Cluj-Napoca, where he discovered Bartók's quartets, which influenced him profoundly.

During the war Ligeti was put into a Jewish forced-labour unit, which narrowly avoided being liquidated; his father and brother both perished in concentration camps. After the war he enrolled at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, and later taught there. Ligeti responded to the repressive nature of the Communist regime by going into 'internal exile'. For public consumption he composed in the official populist style; privately he was groping his way towards a new musical language. When the Soviets invaded in 1956, Ligeti fled to Austria. From there he went to Cologne, spent six weeks with Stockhausen, and soon established a reputation as a brilliant theorist of new music and the composer of a handful of witty pieces in a medium not noted for its wit: electronics.

What really put him on the map were the orchestral pieces *Apparitions* (1958–9) and *Atmosphères* (1961), which first revealed that beguiling Ligeti world of murmuring textures and sudden, sinister-comic shocks. He produced a whole series of works with a Dadaist flavour, including *Aventures* (1962, rev. 1963) and *Nouvelles aventures* (1962–5). During the 1960s and 1970s he elaborated his idea of 'micropolyphony' in works of ever-increasing aural refinement and emotional amplitude, including the Cello Concerto (1966), the Chamber Concerto (1969–70) and *San Francisco Polyphony* (1973–4). His opera *Le Grand Macabre* (1974–7, rev. 1996) transformed and satirised numerous other musics, from Monteverdi to Wagner.

After a creative hiatus, the Horn Trio (1982) announced a new direction, with complex polyrhythms, experiments in non-tempered tuning and a new, overt expressivity. The key works of this period are the Piano Concerto and Violin Concerto (1985–8 and 1989–93), the *Hamburg Concerto* (1998–2002) and the dazzling series of 18 piano *Études*. The charming yet profound set of Hungarian songs *Síppal, dobbal, nádihegedűvel* ('With Pipes, Drums, Fiddles') – written in 2000 – was the last work Ligeti composed before illness silenced him.

Profile by Ivan Hewett © BBC

Ivan Hewett is a critic and broadcaster who for nine years presented BBC Radio 3's *Music Matters*. He writes for *The Daily Telegraph* and teaches at the Royal College of Music.

GYÖRGY LIGETI

Violin Concerto (1989–93)

- 1 Praeludium: *Vivacissimo luminoso* –
- 2 Aria, Hoquetus, Choral: *Andante con moto* –
- 3 Intermezzo: *Presto fluido*
- 4 Passacaglia: *Lento intenso*
- 5 Appassionato: *Agitato molto*

Isabelle Faust *violin*

In his Piano Concerto (1985–8), Ligeti ventured to extremes of polymetrical complexity. In the Violin Concerto that followed it his attention switched to tuning, which he wished to make as strange and deliciously novel and ‘extra-territorial’ as his rhythms had been in the previous work. ‘When I look back,’ he said, ‘I realise that I have always been, consciously or unconsciously, looking for an alternative to the 12-note temperament,’ and his way of escape here would be the ‘mistuned’ overtones that can be produced on many instruments, above all strings and horns.



A sing-sing welcome dance performed by men in traditional attire in the village of Kopar in the Sepik River area of Papua New Guinea: folk music from the area was among the influences that fed into Ligeti's Violin Concerto

Systematisation was not his way – he didn't want a single novel way of tuning but a labyrinth in which some paths were familiar, some weirdly unfamiliar, and one could never guess when the music might flip from one to another.

Like the Piano Concerto, this piece had a hugely long gestation during which Ligeti absorbed all manner of influences drawn from his nightly habit of listening to music: the Iatmul people in Papua New Guinea with their six-foot-long flutes, ceremonial music of Laos and Cambodia, jazz by Thelonious Monk and Stanley Clarke, microtonal music by Harry Partch and – most unlikely of all in this company – Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony. None of these is quoted or even glancingly referred to. They are all magically transmuted and absorbed in the extraordinary, never-to-be-repeated sound-world of the Violin Concerto.

Part of this extraordinary sound-world is due to the presence of exotic instruments in the surprisingly small orchestra, especially three ocarinas and two swanee whistles. Their naive, strange, 'out-of-tune' piping is echoed by the horns, often called upon to play natural harmonics, and also by a solo violin and solo viola tuned to two high 'out-of-tune' harmonics on the double bass. The remaining instruments – nine strings, trumpet, trombone and six winds – are instructed to play in such strange ways that the normality of their tuning may well pass us by. In Ligeti's world, nothing stays familiar.

Yet there are moments in the work that seem blissfully natural, as if Ligeti had tapped into some primal root of music: above all, the murmuring opening, which emerges from the simple sound of the soloist's open strings, soon multiplied across the strings of the mistuned violin and viola before turning into a giddy, folkish dance. Then, in the second movement, comes what at first seems to

be an age-old folk melody, sounding as if it could have been culled from a notebook of Bartók, that composer who is never far from Ligeti's late music. Round and round it comes, each time in a new colour (including, at one astonishing moment, those ocarinas), draped in uncanny parallel harmonies, as if it were moving through a hall of mirrors. Then comes a tremulously delicate Intermezzo, the violin's high, wavering melody pinioned over blizzards of descending scales.

After that – at the farthest remove of glacial slowness – comes a Passacaglia that moves from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*.

The final movement begins with the murmuring open strings of the beginning but soon becomes a game of hectic rhythms in opposing layers, leading to a cadenza which Ligeti (though he devised one for the definitive score's 1993 premiere) preferred each soloist to supply for themselves, and then to a typically sinister-comic conclusion.

Programme note © Ivan Hewett

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

Now playing on BBC Radio 3 ...

Lecturer and critic Flora Willson joins Radio 3's Andrew McGregor for a look ahead to Proms highlights in the coming week.

Available on BBC Sounds



PROMS Q&A

Isabelle Faust violin

What's been your relationship with Ligeti's Violin Concerto?

It's surely one of the few violin concertos from the late 20th century that will be regularly played for many years. It's already considered a classic. I learnt it many years ago and was extremely lucky to be surrounded by experts in Ligeti's music – the London Sinfonietta and conductor George Benjamin – when I first performed it. I played it a few times then, but for many years I didn't get the chance to perform it again. I've been really happy to dig into this extraordinary piece again this summer, and to rediscover it from a new perspective. Playing it in such a huge space as the Royal Albert Hall is very unusual, and the venue is something you need to get used to. But the audience will no doubt help enormously with their very attentive attitude!

It's quite an unconventional piece in many ways – what are the particular challenges for the soloist?

Ligeti uses very colourful and unusual instruments, starting with ocarinas, swanee whistles and recorders, as well as unusually tuned strings and lots of percussion, to create an alternative to the tempered tuning system we usually hear. He also makes references to all kinds of different musics, using Javanese harmonies, Baroque elements and Hungarian folk aspects. It all produces a kaleidoscope-like picture, but at times he just lets the solo violin intone a chorale all on its own. The violin part is certainly very virtuosic, but then so too are some of the orchestral parts. The five-movement form gives you the feeling of being part of one long story in five chapters, all of them strongly connected, and to be performed in a single big breath.

There's often humour in Ligeti's music. Do you think he intended any of the concerto to be particularly comic?

Of course, even just using the exotic ocarinas, which are slightly out of tune, already shows a lot about Ligeti's capacity for humour.



As soon as those instruments appear, they provoke a big smile on everyone's faces, including the musicians! But there's also Ligeti's way of using accents across the bar, making sure they're always in the 'wrong' places, which is full of irony and humour – he surely wanted to challenge and tickle both the musicians and the audience.

You've worked before with Les Siècles and François-Xavier Roth. How would you describe your musical relationship with them?

I deeply admire them. We've worked together several times on different repertoire, and the feeling of rediscovering well-known pieces has always been very strong for me. Whatever composer we might be working on, I'm always intrigued to dig deeper and dare more. And the fact that we work together over a longer period means we can make new discoveries and build a closer dialogue between the soloist and the orchestral musicians.

Interview by David Kettle

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–91)

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major, K488 (1786)

- 1 **Allegro** (*cadenza: Mozart*)
- 2 **Adagio**
- 3 **Allegro assai**

Alexander Melnikov *piano*

Given Mozart's enduring popularity and mass appeal today, it is hard to credit that audiences of his own time didn't always share our enthusiasm for his compositions, finding them dissonant, complicated and difficult to digest. This is especially true of the larger instrumental forms of piano concerto and symphony, through which Mozart worked out his most ambitious musical ideas, boldly experimenting with unusual instrumental combinations, pushing the envelope with his daring piano writing, calling out staid formal conventions and revolutionising the concert experience in the process.

Completed in 1786, when the former child prodigy was eking out a living as a freelance musician in Vienna, Mozart's Piano Concerto in A major, K488, is an example of the composer's maturing creativity and his visionary late style. Unfazed by fickle audiences and the lack of secure job prospects, the 30-year-old composer seems determined to elevate the piano concerto genre to the lofty heights of the symphony, using his gifts as a virtuoso pianist to set a precedent for future pianist-composers. Granted, this concerto is much lighter in feel compared with the two concertos that followed, K491 in C minor and K503 in C major. But it is here that



The Mozarthaus in Vienna: Mozart's residence from 1784 to 1787 in the imperial city's Domgasse, where he composed many of his greatest works

Mozart lays the groundwork for his most monumental musical aspirations.

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The opening Allegro, in A major (a key generally associated with songfulness, innocence and romantic love in 18th- and early 19th-century musical aesthetics), pulsates with the energy and optimism we generally associate with Mozart's signature style. Underpinning this elegant movement is a haunting, persistent phrase in F sharp minor – a touch of melancholy that ultimately manifests as the slow movement (Adagio), which is now cast in this key (a first for Mozart).

The Adagio unfolds as a siciliano – a slow dance in lilting 6/8 time – made especially poignant by subtle and sophisticated woodwinds, in keeping with late 18th-century ideas of sensibility or *Empfindsamkeit*. It is a blueprint for the slow movements of later works such as the Clarinet Quintet in A major (K581, 1789) and the Clarinet Concerto in the same key (K622, which Mozart completed shortly before his death in 1791).

Rounding off the concerto is a fast-paced finale (Allegro assai), which counters the Adagio's sombre atmosphere with an injection of Mozartian cheer. With a piano part designed to make the soloist sweat and the sighing motifs from the Adagio now turned into jumps and leaps, this vertiginous movement is a testament to Mozart's own mercurial musical mind, and to that spirit of devilment lurking beneath his most solemn themes.

Programme note © Karishmeh Felfeli-Crawford

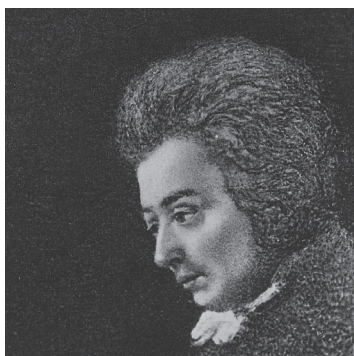
Dr Karishmeh Felfeli-Crawford is a researcher, pianist and author of articles on Mozart, Brahms, Erasure and Indian Ocean. Born and educated in Pune, India, she has also presented radio programmes for BBC Radio 3, RTÉ Radio 1, CBC Radio 2 and Dublin City FM. She holds a PhD from University College Cork.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

It was not until the 1960s that some of Mozart's now ubiquitous concertos were played for the first time here but K488 has a much longer history, stretching right back to 1904, when Proms founder-conductor Henry Wood and his Queen's Hall Orchestra were joined by the Russian-born pianist Mania Séguel. The most faithful exponent of a work often allocated to female pianists in the early days was Myra Hess, who gave eight performances between 1917 and 1955. More recently it was perhaps most closely identified with Clifford Curzon, who played it at the Proms in 1947 and 1978. Following a hiatus in the 1990s, it has been championed in the present century by Stephen Hough (2002 – his second account), Paul Lewis (2004), Richard Goode (2006), Ingrid Fliter (2014), Maria João Pires (2015), Eric Lu (2019) and, in a change from the advertised programme, Radio 3 New Generation Artist Elisabeth Brauss (2021).

© David Gutman

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*. Mozart's 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. He is the author or editor of 10 books on Mozart, including *Mozart in Vienna: The Final Decade* and *Mozart's Requiem: Reception, Work, Completion* (both CUP).

MORE MOZART AT THE PROMS

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER, 7.00pm • PROM 69
Requiem (compl. Süßmayr); 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.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Symphony No. 41
in C major, K551
'Jupiter' (1788)

- 1 Allegro vivace
- 2 Andante cantabile
- 3 Menuetto and Trio: Allegretto
- 4 Molto allegro

I never lie down at night without thinking that perhaps, as young as I am, I will not live to see another day – and yet no-one who knows me can say I am morose or dejected in company – and for this blessing I thank my Creator every day and sincerely wish the same blessing for all my fellow human beings.

Mozart in a letter to his father Leopold, 4 April 1787

A spirit of devilment also animates Mozart's symphonies. But it is the *carpe diem* philosophy quoted above (from Mozart's last letter to his father) that transfers over to his final symphony, written in 1788, a year after Leopold's death. Struggling financially, grieving the death of his infant daughter, stressed by his wife's health problems and medical bills (as his desperate begging letters to his Freemason friend Michael Puchberg reveal), Mozart, overworked and under-employed, had no intention of giving up, as confirmed by his Symphony No. 41, completed during these hard times.

Leaving behind the gritty realism of his previous symphony, No. 40 in G minor, with its instantly recognisable, mournful opening, Mozart casts

No. 41 in the joyous, accessible key of C major. Christened 'Jupiter' (not by Mozart but most probably by the German impresario Johann Peter Salomon, who moved in the same circles as Mozart and Haydn), this landmark work is the pinnacle of the 18th-century symphonic tradition, and a totally new example for 19th-century composers to follow. Unlike earlier symphonies, where the opening movement carried the most weight, the 'Jupiter' gets bigger and more bombastic as it progresses from first movement to last – an important precedent for the goal-directed symphonies of Beethoven (notably his Ninth, with its epic choral finale). Acknowledging the intimidating influence of the Baroque greats Bach and Handel, Mozart reaches back to Gregorian chant and church modes for musical inspiration, using his symphonic canvas to contemplate what Harold Bloom termed 'the anxiety of influence' – the artistic pressure one feels when following in the footsteps of the old masters. But that's not all. In the 'Jupiter', Mozart confronts not just the legacy of his forefathers Bach and Handel but also the heavy burden of his own prolific output.

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Beginning with a bold, three-chord gesture designed to quieten noisy audience members, the symphony's opening movement captures the dichotomy between heroic (extrovert, public, epic) and poetic (introvert, private, lyrical) forms of musical expression. In Mozart's hands, the call-and-response heard at the start (between powerful orchestral *tutti* and hushed, obedient strings) evolves into an action-packed drama complete with Romantic melodies, jump scares and military fanfares – the very ingredients found in the comic operas of the time but which we'd seldom expect in this lofty abstract genre.

Confident that he's done enough to hook his audience, Mozart looks inwards once again. The second movement (Andante cantabile) is tastefully orchestrated, with

a reserve and restraint highly prized in late 18th-century musical aesthetics. In this poignant movement, Mozart judiciously uses his gifts as a supreme melodist, moving between halting, quiet sobs and soaring, impassioned declamations to create a musical portrait of intense longing. In the *Andante cantabile* he achieves these effects via dotted figures, scalic passages and a persistent pulsating rhythmic idea, all of which are a throwback also to the slow movement of the G minor symphony.

In the next movement (*Menuetto*) Mozart seems to snap out of his contemplative mood, inviting us to dance to the music of his own *galant* time. Uncomplicated themes, light textures and memorable tunes flourish in this third movement, which displays not only Mozart's intuitive grasp of musical form but also his innate sense of fun.

Ultimately, though, the 'Jupiter' Symphony is Mozart's dialogue with, and tribute to, the musical past. The finale opens with four whole notes (C–D–F–E) – a famous motif popularised by the *stile antico* (antique style) of the influential Renaissance composer Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, codified as a *cantus firmus* (fixed melody) by the Austrian theorist Johann



Jupiter, king of the gods and the god of sky and thunder in Roman myth: a depiction from the 15th-century manuscript *De Sphaera* by Cristoforo de Predis (1440–86)

Joseph Fux and deployed in liturgical music by Bach, Handel, Joseph Haydn and his younger brother Michael. In Mozart's own music too, the C–D–F–E cantus idea occurs in many earlier compositions: for example, around the two-minute mark in the opening movement of his Symphony No. 33 in B flat major, K319 (1779). Aware of its illustrious lineage and expressive power, he reaches for it again, using it strategically in the 'Jupiter' finale, to give the out-of-fashion fugue form a new lease of life. In Mozart's hands, the long pauses demanded by the whole-note C–D–F–E motif create a sense of suspense and excitement at every formal junction in this movement. Moments from the end, as the symphony crawls to a temporary halt, Mozart restates the C–D–F–E cantus a few more times, teasing out different versions of the same tune before settling on a chromatic fugue subject. Then, channelling the principles of expansiveness, personal growth, good fortune and prosperity that bring to mind the Roman god Jupiter, Mozart stitches together five independent themes (all familiar to us by now), unleashing the full force of his brilliance in a thunder-and-lightning coda.

Programme note © Karishmeh Felfeli-Crawford

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

The first Mozart symphony to reach the Proms was No. 40, the 'Great G minor' arriving halfway through the fourth season of 1898. The 'Jupiter' had three weeks longer to wait for its own Proms unveiling, kicking off an evening that also included the Proms debut of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, additional Beethoven oddments and music by Verdi, Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, Mascagni, Sullivan, Handel and, finally, Saint-Saëns's *Marche héroïque*, Op. 34. Much of the material would have been presented in arrangements by other hands. There were also lighter popular ballads for the guest soloists including a vocal waltz, 'Love Me' by one J. M. [James Munro] Coward, heard 21 times in 1898 and then consigned to oblivion. Not so the Mozart. Its six 21st-century renderings have included a performance

by Paul Daniel and the City of London Sinfonia in Mozart's 250th-anniversary year (2006). A decade later the work was played from memory by Nicholas Collon's Aurora Orchestra with all but the cellists, bassists and timpanist standing. The truncated season of 2020 included a fine account from the Philharmonia Orchestra, albeit shorn of its designated conductor – Esa-Pekka Salonen thwarted by Finnish Covid quarantine rules – and the finale's second-half repeat; Paavo Järvi stepped in to direct without changing the programme. Its most recent airing came in 2021, when the Scottish Chamber Orchestra gave the last three Mozart symphonies under a ceaselessly energetic Maxim Emelyanychev. The closing measures of the finale also served as an encore.

© David Gutman

“It is for the *Finale* that Mozart ... has reserved all the resources of his science, and all the power, which no-one seems to have possessed to the same degree with himself, of concealing that science, and making it the vehicle for music as pleasing as it is learned. Nowhere ... has he achieved more.”

George Grove in *The Musical Times*, 1906



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).



François-Xavier Roth *conductor*

François-Xavier Roth is General Music Director of the City of Cologne, founder and Artistic Director of the French period-instrument orchestra Les Siècles, Artistic Director of the Atelier Lyrique de Tourcoing and Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra.

With Les Siècles, which performs on modern and period instruments, he has toured China, Europe and Japan. Projects have included Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, in collaboration with the Pina Bausch and Dominique Brun dance companies, and a cycle (curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic) of Beethoven's symphonies at the Palais de Versailles and around France.

His programming frequently features new commissions alongside Baroque and Romantic music, leading to collaborations with composers including Pierre Boulez, Helmut Lachenmann, Philippe Manoury, Wolfgang Rihm and Jörg Widmann.

Engagement with new audiences plays a key role in his activity, whether speaking from the podium or working with young people and amateurs. He has founded youth or community orchestras in France and Germany, and his television series *Presto!* attracted weekly audiences of over three million in France.

Among this season's highlights are appearances with the Berlin Philharmonic and Bavarian Radio Symphony orchestras and productions of *The Flying Dutchman*, *Lohengrin*, *Les mamelles de Tirésias*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Salome* and *The Trojans*.



Isabelle Faust *violin*

German violinist Isabelle Faust's artistic curiosity encompasses many eras and forms of collaboration. She dives deep into each piece, considering its musical and historical context, historically appropriate instruments and the greatest possible authenticity.

After winning the Leopold Mozart and Paganini competitions at an early age, she began giving performances with major European orchestras. This led to close cooperation with conductors such as Giovanni Antonini, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Daniel Harding, Philippe Herreweghe, Klaus Mäkelä, Andris Nelsons, François-Xavier Roth, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Robin Ticciati.

Highlights this season include concerts with the Berlin, Helsinki and Oslo Philharmonic, Cologne WDR and Vienna Symphony and Freiburg Baroque orchestras, plus tours with Il Giardino Armonico, English Baroque Soloists, Berlin Academy of Ancient Music, Basel Chamber and Mahler Chamber orchestras and Orchestre des Champs-Élysées. Chamber engagements include collaborations with Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Sol Gabetta, Alexander Melnikov, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Antoine Tamestit and Jörg Widmann, along with solo concerts and a performance of György Kurtág's *Kafka Fragments* with Anna Prohaska at the Vienna Musikverein.

Isabelle Faust's recordings have won many awards and include, most recently, Schoenberg's Violin Concerto with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding and Beethoven's Triple Concerto with Melnikov, Queyras and the FBO under Pablo Heras-Casado.



Alexander Melnikov *piano*

Russian pianist Alexander Melnikov studied at the Moscow Conservatory under Lev Naumov. A formative musical moment was an early encounter with Sviatoslav Richter, who invited him to perform at festivals in Russia and France. He won major prizes at the 1989

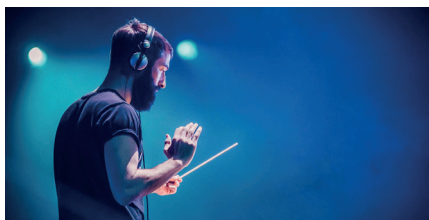
Robert Schumann Competition and the 1991 Queen Elisabeth Competition.

He has developed a career-long interest in historically informed performance practice, with major influences including Andreas Staier and Alexei Lubimov. He performs regularly with period-instrument ensembles including the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, MusicAeterna and the Berlin Academy of Ancient Music.

Highlights of the new season include a concert tour of Australia with the Melbourne and Sydney Symphony orchestras, a residency at the Cologne Philharmonie, performances with Les Siècles under François-Xavier Roth and collaborations with Anja Bihlmaier, Nicholas Collon, Maxim Emelyanychev, Vladimir Jurowski and Osmo Vänskä.

Alexander Melnikov has a long-standing association in concert and on disc with violinist Isabelle Faust. Their recording of Beethoven's violin sonatas won a *Gramophone* Award and was followed by recordings of music by Brahms and Mozart. He has recorded four-hand piano music by Schubert with Staier, concertos and trios by Schumann with Faust, Jean-Guihen Queyras, the FBO and Pablo Heras-Casado, and solo discs on historical instruments including *Four Pieces, Four Pianos* and *Fantasia: Seven Composers, Seven Keyboards*.

Coming up at the Proms



Anthony Mooney

JULES BUCKLEY



Victoria Cadisch

LUCY CROWE

MONDAY 21 AUGUST

PROM 48

STEVIE WONDER'S INNERVISIONS
8.00pm–c9.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
Following last year's Prom debut, the Jules Buckley Orchestra returns with its Grammy Award-winning conductor and internationally renowned artist, composer, producer, multi-instrumentalist and keyboard master Cory Henry to celebrate 50 years of Stevie Wonder's iconic 1973 solo release *Innervisions*.



Arielle Doneson

JOËLLE HARVEY

WEDNESDAY 23 AUGUST

PROM 50 HANDEL'S SAMSON

7.00pm–c10.00pm • Royal Albert Hall
The ongoing Proms cycle of Handel oratorios continues with *Samson*, featuring star British tenor Allan Clayton and American soprano Joëlle Harvey. One of today's leading Handeliens, Laurence Cummings, directs the Academy of Ancient Music from the harpsichord.

TUESDAY 22 AUGUST

PROM 49 SCHUMANN'S DAS PARADIES UND DIE PERI

7.30pm–c9.45pm • Royal Albert Hall
Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus present the first ever complete performance at the Proms of Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri*. Lucy Crowe leads an exciting international cast in this part oratorio, part opera.



Giorgia Bertazzi

CHRISTIAN TETZLAFF

THURSDAY 24 AUGUST

PROM 51 JUDITH WEIR, SCHUMANN & ELGAR

7.30pm–c9.50pm • Royal Albert Hall
German violinist Christian Tetzlaff is the soloist in Elgar's boldly virtuosic Violin Concerto. He joins Sakari Oramo and the BBC SO, who also perform Schumann's 'Spring' Symphony and a BBC commission from Master of the King's Music Judith Weir.

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Les Siècles

Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, Les Siècles is a pioneering Paris-based orchestra performing on instruments appropriate to the era of the works being performed. Its repertoire spans several centuries.

Les Siècles holds residencies at the Théâtre de Champs-Élysées in Paris and the Atelier Lyrique de Tourcoing, and presents series at venues throughout the Hauts-de-France region. It is the associate orchestra of the Berlioz Festival in La Côte Saint-André, the Théâtre de Nîmes and the Musicales de Normandie festival in France. The orchestra's innovative approach and imaginative programming have made it sought-after internationally, with UK appearances at London's Barbican and at the Aldeburgh and Edinburgh festivals and the BBC Proms.

The orchestra's wide-ranging discography has attracted the German Record Critics' and the Edison awards and its recording of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* won *Gramophone's* Orchestral Award in 2018. Current recording projects include orchestral music by Berlioz, Debussy and Ravel, as well as a new cycle dedicated to Mahler and the Second Viennese School.

The orchestra's musicians regularly lead educational activities in schools, hospitals and prisons. Les Siècles is a partner of the youth orchestra L'Aisne Symphonique, the Hector Berlioz Youth European Orchestra and the DEMOS project in Picardy and Île-de-France, aimed at children in socially and economically deprived regions. Les Siècles also created the 'Music at the Hospital' project in partnership with the paediatric haemato-oncology departments at the Trousseau and Beauvais hospitals.

Artistic Director

François-Xavier
Roth

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François-Marie
Drieux
leader (first half)
Amaryllis Billet
leader (second half)
Laetitia Ringeval
Jérôme Mathieu
Mathias Tranchant
Chloé Jullian
Angelina Zurzolo
Pierre-Yves Denis
Sandrine Naudy

Second Violins

Martial Gauthier*
Caroline
Florenville
Naomi Plays
Ingrid Schang
Mathieu Schmaltz
Charles Quentin
de Gromard
Emmanuel Ory

Violas

Hélène Desaint*
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Christian Laborie
Jérôme Schmitt

Bassoons

Michael Rolland
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Horns

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