



Welcome to the 2022 BBC Proms



Welcome to the BBC Proms 2022. I am delighted that, in this centenary year of the BBC, we can return to the first full eight-week season since 2019, and to the scale and ambition for which the Proms is famous. We see the return of big orchestral and choral repertoire,

visits from some of the world's finest symphony orchestras, family concerts with big screens, and Relaxed Proms in a more informal environment. This is the Proms as we know and love them, and we hope you will find much to enjoy.

When in 1927 the BBC, just five years into its existence, took over the running of the Proms, the introduction of broadcasts – first on radio and then also on TV – enabled our founder-conductor, Henry Wood, to reach the widest audiences that were so central to his vision. In 2022 that partnership is stronger than ever. The BBC's own orchestras and choirs play a central role in our programme, and other BBC collaborations include the return of our hugely popular CBeebies Proms and a celebration of the remarkable work of the Natural History Unit. We also have a special new commission from the band Public Service Broadcasting that draws together material from the BBC archive to create a new work reflecting the origins of the organisation.

Mixing the familiar with the lesser-known is one of the cornerstones of the Proms. There will always be a place for the central pillars of the repertoire, but I hope you will also want to know more about Ethel Smyth, George Walker and Doreen Carwithen – composers less frequently heard on the concert platform. They sit alongside a huge range of contemporary work that embraces Oscar-winning composer Hildur Guðnadóttir, composer-performer Jennifer Walshe and Minimalist icon Philip Glass. This summer also features our first ever Gaming Prom, as well as celebrations of the legendary Aretha Franklin, singer and actress Cynthia Erivo and distinguished sarod player Amjad Ali Khan.

This year our concerts venture into all corners of the UK, as well as to other London venues. But our home remains here at the Royal Albert Hall, where so many extraordinary Proms events have taken place. Here's to a memorable summer of shared musical exploration!

David Pickard
Director, BBC Proms



BBC Proms

THE BBC PRESENTS THE 128TH SEASON OF HENRY WOOD PROMENADE CONCERTS

Tonight at the Proms

Tonight the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra makes its Proms debut under its Chief Conductor, Marin Alsop, in a programme with a decidedly Central European accent.

The first half offers two 20th-century classics that both demand huge reserves of stamina from their players. Bartók's ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* is a masterpiece of grotesque eroticism in which lust and murder are translated into music of fearsome rhythmic energy, while Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto – written by the Russian in France – was conceived to showcase the composer's own phenomenal pianistic agility. Proms favourite and former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist Benjamin Grosvenor is the intrepid soloist.

After the interval the orchestra gives the UK premiere of a new work by the young Austrian composer Hannah Eisendle: *Heliosis*, a sonic depiction of a dry desert landscape under the baking sun. And, to close, Dvořák's Seventh Symphony, in which the influences of 19th-century giants Brahms and Wagner are heard alongside the melodies and rhythms of the composer's Bohemian homeland.



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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. There is no requirement to wear a face covering, but please feel free to wear one for your protection and the safety of others.



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





For an online exhibition
relating to the 2022
BBC Proms season, scan here



PROM 36 • SATURDAY 13 AUGUST 7.30pm–c9.50pm

Béla Bartók The Miraculous Mandarin – suite 19'

Sergey Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major 27'

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

Hannah Eisendle Heliosis *UK premiere* 7'

Antonín Dvořák Symphony No. 7 in D minor 38'

Benjamin Grosvenor *piano*

Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra Maighréad McCrann *concertmaster*

Marin Alsop *conductor*



RADIO **3** FOUR SOUNDS iPLAYER

This concert is broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 (repeated on Monday 29 August at 2.00pm) and shown on BBC Four on Sunday 21 August at 8.00pm. You can listen on BBC Sounds and watch on BBC iPlayer until Monday 10 October.





BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)

The Miraculous Mandarin – suite (1918–24, rev. 1926–31)

Bartók's score for *The Miraculous Mandarin* is a masterpiece of eroticism. It is true that, on first reading Menyhért Lengyel's scenario in the Hungarian literary periodical *Nyugat* in 1917, the composer must have been fascinated at least as much by the exotic figure of the Mandarin as by the sex and violence. But in applying himself to Lengyel's 'grotesque pantomime' – which brings an inextinguishably priapic force of nature into conflict with the evils of the modern city – he had no choice but to give musical expression to the seductions, the lust, the raging frustration and the murderous cruelty that are essential to it. Bartók's score is as successful in this respect as any, from *Don Giovanni* to *Salome*.

Given the uninhibited rhythmic energy and uncompromising harmonies of his idiom at the time, he was uniquely equipped for the task. It was the ideal subject for Bartók on a deeper, more philosophical level too. His very identity as a composer, his alliance of what is 'clean, fresh and healthy' in the peasant music of Eastern Europe with the extremes of modernism, found a clear reflection in a scenario that thrusts a robust representative of an ancient civilisation into the urban decadence of the day. Even so, it took him almost seven years to write what amounts to no more than 30 minutes of music. Sensing, no doubt, that his ballet (or 'pantomime', as he preferred to call it) would meet with censorious opposition, he was in no hurry to complete it. In fact, its first production, in



A costume for the title-character in Bartók's 'pantomime' *The Miraculous Mandarin*, sketched by the Italian Futurist artist Enrico Prampolini (1894–1956)

Cologne in 1926, was taken off after one performance. The suite, which consists of the first 20 minutes with two short cuts and a newly written ending, was virtually the only way the *Miraculous Mandarin* music could be heard during the composer's lifetime.

The suite begins (like the ballet) with the dissonant music of the city – 'an awful clamour, chatter, stampeding and blowing of horns', as the composer described it. As the clangour subsides, the curtain rises on a shabby room overlooking the street. Urgent phrases on the violas and



then on violins, still in the jangling 6/8 rhythms of the city, accompany the desperate but vain efforts of the first two of three Thugs to find money. The third Thug, with an imperious gesture of rising fourths on trombones, orders the Girl to stand by the window to lure men in off the street. A seductive clarinet cadenza attracts the attention of an old roué who is not only penniless but also, a solo trombone suggests, drunk and, to judge by the seedily amorous interventions of cor anglais and cellos, embarrassingly pressing in his attentions. With a resumption of the 6/8 rhythms on trumpets the Thugs emerge from hiding and throw him out.

A second, longer and more explicitly sexy clarinet cadenza invites the entry of a shy young man. He is rather more to the Girl's taste and she engages him in a sinuously supple dance in quintuple time with a tender melody on bassoon accompanied by harp and a passionate variant on violins. But he has no money either and is also thrown out.

The third and most animated clarinet cadenza attracts a victim who alarms the Girl as soon as she sees him in the street, his exotic provenance identified by a pentatonic melody in dissonant parallel harmonies on muted trombones and tuba.

The actual entry of the Mandarin, signalled by cymbal clashes and glissando minor thirds on trombones and tuba again, provokes a terrifying orchestral climax. But the Girl has to dance for him and does so in a waltz, which is at first hesitant but becomes increasingly demonstrative. As she finally falls onto his hitherto impassive lap, he seems to be electrified in an extraordinarily vivid passage of string tremolos and excited shrieks and bellows on woodwind and brass. Even more terrified, she runs away from him, provoking much the most dynamic episode in the suite as he chases

after her in a poundingly relentless fugue, catches up with her, struggles with her ...

At which point the suite ends. In the ballet the Mandarin is attacked by the Thugs and killed three times over – by suffocation, stabbing and hanging – but, miraculously, refuses to die until the Girl embraces him.

Programme note © Estate of Gerald Larner

Gerald Larner (1936–2018) was for many years a music critic on *The Guardian* and later *The Times*. While specialising in French music, he wrote extensively on most other areas of the repertoire. He was appointed Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

Proms founder-conductor Henry Wood, a staunch supporter of contemporary music of all kinds, gave the first British performances of four scores by Bartók as well as accompanying the composer-pianist in his First and Second Piano Concertos. *The Miraculous Mandarin* was not among the works locally premiered by Wood but he did programme the concert suite during the 1933 Proms season. Its strange bedfellows were Beethoven's *King Stephen* overture, an aria from Verdi's *Don Carlos*, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, Schubert's 'Great' C major Symphony, a ballad by George Henschel and Rimsky-Korsakov's overture to the opera *The Maid of Pskov*. Bartók's stage work (fuller since the restoration in 2000 of 30 bars cut by the composer to comply with the demands of the censor) is particularly associated with Pierre Boulez here – he directed it four times – but its most recent advocates were Esa-Pekka Salonen's Philharmonia and Philharmonia Voices in 2015. The suite was last heard in 2011, a provocative Last Night inclusion from Edward Gardner and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

© 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 *The Stage*.

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



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BÉLA BARTÓK

Béla Bartók was born on 25 March 1881 in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary, now known as Sânnicolau Mare, Romania, near the border between the two countries (the name of the town translates as 'Great Saint Nicholas'). Having lost their father at an early age, the young Bartók and his younger sister lived with their mother, a schoolteacher, in a succession of provincial towns before settling in the city of Pozsony (now Bratislava, Slovakia). At the age of 18, Bartók moved to Budapest to attend the Conservatory as a composer and pianist.

Like any young musician growing up under the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Bartók was steeped in the music of Beethoven and Brahms. He first discovered the ancient layers of Hungarian folk music through a chance encounter and then through his friendship and collaboration with Zoltán Kodály. Folk music made it possible for Bartók to create an original musical idiom that was authentically Hungarian and, at the same time, at the forefront of international modernism.

The young composer began his ethnomusicological fieldwork in 1906 and eventually became one of the leading exponents of the budding discipline of folk music research. He authored numerous books and articles on Hungarian, Romanian and Slovak folk music, occasionally venturing even further afield, with research trips to Biskra, Algeria (1913) and Turkey (1936). His work in folk music had an immediate and fundamental effect on his musical style; turning away from the Romantic nationalism of such early works as *Kossuth* (1903) or the Suite No. 1 (1905, later revised), he achieved an artistic breakthrough with his *14 Bagatelles* for piano (1908), his String Quartet No. 1 (1908–9) and the opera *Duke*





Bluebeard's Castle (1911, later revised), all of which, in different ways, reflect the new discoveries and synthesise them with Western influences, especially that of Claude Debussy. Two more stage works followed: the ballet *The Wooden Prince* (completed 1917) and the pantomime *The Miraculous Mandarin* (completed 1924, later revised), the latter being Bartók's most modernistic score.

Bartók largely stopped collecting folk music after the First World War. The 1920s and early 1930s were a time of extensive analytical work on the previously gathered material. A major stylistic renewal resulted in such masterworks as the Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2, the String Quartets Nos. 3 and 4 and the deeply moving *Cantata profana*. Later in the 1930s, Bartók composed *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, the Violin Concerto No. 2 and the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion, widely regarded as the summits of his output. Through all these years, Bartók also maintained a busy schedule as a concert pianist and a professor of piano at the Budapest Academy of Music.

Although he was not personally threatened by Nazism, he found he could not live under its shadow and, in 1940, he emigrated to the USA with his former pupil and second wife, Ditta Pásztory. During the American years, he composed what became one of his most popular works, the *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943, rev. 1945), as well as the Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin and the Piano Concerto No. 3. He died of leukaemia in New York City on 26 September 1945.

Profile © Peter Laki

Programme annotator of the Cleveland Orchestra from 1990 to 2007, Peter Laki has written numerous articles and is editor of *Bartók and His World*. He is Visiting Associate Professor of Music History at Bard College, New York State.



PROMS Q&A

Marin Alsop conductor

You've been Chief Conductor of the Vienna RSO since 2019. How would you describe the orchestra's personality?

I love working with the musicians of the Vienna RSO. They're fast, flexible, good-natured, hard-working and brilliant – especially with contemporary repertoire.

It's a very wide-ranging programme you're performing tonight. How would you say the pieces work together?

All four works show off different aspects of the RSO. The Bartók is virtuosic and exotic; the Dvořák is sophisticated and Slavic; the Prokofiev is a wonderful showcase for our soloist Benjamin Grosvenor, and also for the orchestra; and the new piece by Hannah Eisendle represents an exciting young voice from Austria.

It was the Vienna RSO that commissioned Hannah Eisendle's *Heliosis*. How would you describe her music?

Hannah has a unique voice, and *Heliosis*, which is about extremes of heat, is powerful and effective. When we premiered the piece in Vienna earlier this year and then toured with it in Spain, audiences were wonderfully enthusiastic. It's difficult to judge her music from just one work but I appreciate her skill in composing for orchestra: she has an excellent grasp of colour and instrumentation.

Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin* and Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto are both energetic, powerful pieces. How does it feel conducting them together in the same concert?

I love conducting both of these pieces, especially the Bartók. I first conducted it at Tanglewood as a student, and it never loses its intrigue and magnetism. Back then, I had just four days to learn it, so I was absolutely terrified. But it was one of the early highlights of my career. It was new to all of us, and an incredible adventure. Every



piece demands its own type of stamina. But both the Bartók and the Prokofiev are very visceral and demand complete engagement.

You're finishing tonight's concert with Dvořák's Seventh Symphony. Vienna isn't very far at all from the Czech Republic: do you think there's a particularly Viennese way of playing Dvořák?

It's true that the orchestra has a wonderful affinity for Dvořák – perhaps it's because of that proximity! But the RSO has great rhythmic integrity and drive, which both suit the Slavic aspects of Dvořák's music beautifully. It also understands the rhythmic flexibility of rubato which, for me, is a hallmark of Dvořák's music.

You made history as the first woman to conduct the Last Night of the Proms. What does the festival mean to you?

Performing at the Proms is always special. Bringing the RSO for its debut here is truly exciting, though. I can't wait to see their faces as they walk out onto the Royal Albert Hall stage for the first time!

Interview by David Kettle

Nancy Horowitz



SERGEY PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26 (1917–21)

- 1 Andante – Allegro
- 2 Tema con variazioni
- 3 Allegro ma non troppo

Benjamin Grosvenor *piano*

Prokofiev's five piano concertos, of which the Third is by far the most often heard, were all composed with his own phenomenal but idiosyncratic pianistic agility – plus his psychological need to startle and delight – in mind. The First provided him with both success and notoriety, winning him the Anton Rubinstein Prize at the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1914 against the wishes of Alexander Glazunov, who had to announce the result through clenched teeth. And the gargantuan Second seemed determined to trump that kind of impact, at the same time as outbidding Rachmaninov's apparently unsurpassably colossal Third.

Like those works, Prokofiev's Third Concerto was designed partly as a calling card for his burgeoning career as a pianist. Not untypically, its thematic ideas accumulated over a number of years, rather than emerging as part of an organic process of inter-relationship, derivation and synthesis. The main tune for the second movement, for example, was jotted down in 1913, while two of its variations and the opening of the first movement date from 1916–17; and two of the

finale's principal ideas come from a 'white-key' string quartet that was sketched in 1918 but never completed.

Only three years after leaving Russia in early 1918, shortly after the Bolshevik Revolution, did Prokofiev sit down to complete the work; this he did on holiday at Saint-Brevin-les-Pins in Brittany, just after the successful premieres of his Diaghilev ballet *Chout* ('The Buffoon') and his farcical fairy-tale opera *The Love for Three Oranges*. Prokofiev himself gave the premiere of the concerto on 16 December that year, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Frederick Stock. The music immediately found favour and he performed the piece on numerous occasions thereafter, including on his first return visit to Russia, with the famous conductorless orchestra 'Persimfans' on 24 January 1927, and in his only concerto recording, made with the London Symphony Orchestra in 1933.

...

After its dreamy opening gambit, the first movement has an extrovert, stagy quality, suggestive of the deliberately artificial, circus-like theatre productions of Vsevolod Meyerhold (Russia's modernist equivalent of Bertolt Brecht, who had been instrumental in the concept of *The Love for Three Oranges*), as opposed to the psychological realism of his rival Konstantin Stanislavsky (equally important historically, but as the prophet of Method acting). In this movement, four apparently unrelated ideas are juxtaposed, maximalised, then artfully knitted together: these being the deliciously stretching initial clarinet theme, the immediately following aerobic exercises for strings and piano, a fantastical gavotte and an aggressive tarantella.

Although beginning in a gracious and languid gavotte style, the second movement soon unfolds as a devilishly challenging set of variations, in which the pianist



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The composer at the piano: a portrait of Prokofiev (oil on cardboard) by Lia Alexandrovna Ostrova (1914–2009)

masquerades in turn as lover, acrobat, athlete, nocturnal poet and gymnast. Each variation poses its own severe pianistic problems, but the most important challenge of all is to give the impression that no such problems exist.

In the finale the soloist enters in yet another guise: as charlatan-magician, as though in a puff of smoke and with tricks galore up his sleeve. A slower central section, at first romantic in tone, then more questioning in its

tick-tock oscillations, helps to give balance to the overall tempo scheme of the concerto's manifold contrasts, and the last pages make for a dazzlingly acrobatic and ultimately clangorous race to the finishing line.

Programme note © David Fanning

David Fanning is a Professor of Music at the University of Manchester, the author of books on Nielsen, Shostakovich and Weinberg and a critic for *Gramophone* and *The Daily Telegraph*.



PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

Like Beethoven, Prokofiev completed five concertos for his own instrument, losing interest once he was no longer playing much in public. Then again, not all his piano concertos have entered the standard orchestral repertoire, the Fourth and Fifth having been heard here for the first time as recently as 2015, when Valery Gergiev conducted all five works in a three-hour-plus Prokofiev marathon. In 1923 *The Musical Times* wrote off the existing works in no uncertain terms: 'None but the composer has yet been known to play one. In a way it is infantile. You think of a singularly ugly baby solemnly shaking a rattle. But no; it is not so human as that ...' The composer himself performed his Third Piano Concerto more than once in the old Queen's Hall, home of these concerts until the building's destruction in 1941, but never at an actual Prom. Eileen Joyce was at the keyboard for the work's Proms debut under the stalwart Henry Wood in 1930. Thereafter, despite being rested between 1966 and 1984 and again from 2003 until 2013, it has remained the most ubiquitous of the cycle. In modern times, two names stand out: the late Alexander Toradze, who gave the First (2010), Second (1995, 2007) and Third (2002) here, and Martha Argerich, single-minded advocate of the Third in 1966, 1992 and 2001. Its most recent champion in 2018 was Yuja Wang, appearing with the Berlin Philharmonic under its Chief Conductor Designate, Kirill Petrenko. Benjamin Grosvenor previously worked with tonight's conductor during the Last Night of the 2015 season; the orchestra was the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the music Shostakovich's Second Piano Concerto.

© David Gutman

SERGEY PROKOFIEV

Prokofiev spent his youth in Imperial Russia as a student at the St Petersburg Conservatory, but following the October Revolution he relocated to the West, travelling through the USA, France and Germany. He carved out a space for himself as a modernist rabble-rouser, resisting the conservative dictates of his teachers (Glazunov, Rimsky-Korsakov and Tcherepnin) and competing with Stravinsky for critical attention as well as commissions. Prokofiev himself recognised that he was composing as a riposte, proving his command of traditional idioms while also blazing a path forwards to the new. His popular 'Classical' Symphony (No. 1, 1916–17) thus stands in marked contrast to his early songs and the raw primitivism of his cantata *Seven, They Are Seven* (1917–18, rev. 1933).

He built up an international career. For the Chicago Opera Association he composed *The Love for Three Oranges* (1919), a work indebted to the Italian *commedia dell'arte* tradition that gained a toehold in the repertoire despite baffling the critics. Between 1915 and 1929 he wrote three ballets for the Paris-based Ballets Russes: the neo-primitivist *Chout* ('The Buffoon'), the constructivist *Le pas d'acier* ('The Steel Step') and the neo-Classical *Le fils prodigue* ('The Prodigal Son'). Yet he grew tired of peripatetic concert life and, in 1936, after years on the road and several frustrated efforts to organise a production of his supernatural opera *The Fiery Angel* (1919–23, rev. 1926–7) in the West, he resettled in Russia.

The brutality of the Stalin regime ruined the lives of Prokofiev's first wife Lina and their two sons and compromised the composer's own health. There were creative successes – the pedagogical children's parable *Peter and the Wolf* (1936), the scores to the films *Lieutenant Kijé* (1933), *Alexander Nevsky* (1938) and *Ivan the Terrible*



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(1942–5), and the Soviet court ballet *Cinderella* (1940–44) – but Prokofiev’s music was routinely censored and at times its performance prohibited. The cool formalism of his Third Piano Concerto (1917–21) was deemed part of the past, along with the sarcastic elements of his early style and anything evidencing his spiritual outlook as a Christian Scientist. The original ‘happy ending’ of his balletic masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet* (1935–6) was rejected by Soviet defenders of the classics; his *Cantata for the 20th Anniversary of the October Revolution* (1936–7) – a massive score that undercut (in the opinion of the censors) Communist ideals as articulated by Marx, Lenin and Stalin – was not performed during his lifetime; and his monumental opera *War and Peace* suffered through four revisions between 1942 and 1952.

Prokofiev’s musical language simplified over time and he produced agitprop on command. But he also, during the worst of times, produced beguiling scores of ruminative introspection. His Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Piano Sonatas (1939–44) are cases in point: the music has no specific meaning but, as such, means different things – referring, perhaps, to the tragedy of the Second World War as well as the turmoil of Prokofiev’s life. Stress and disappointments took their toll. Prokofiev died on 5 March 1953 – the same day, as fate would have it, as Stalin.

Profile © Simon Morrison

Simon Morrison is a professor at Princeton University and specialises in 20th-century music, especially Russian, Soviet and French repertoire. His books include *Russian Opera and the Symbolist Movement* (2002), *Prokofiev and His World* (2008) and *The Love and Wars of Lina Prokofiev* (2013).

MORE PROKOFIEV AT THE PROMS

TOMORROW, 7.30pm • PROM 38
Romeo and Juliet – excerpts

TUESDAY 16 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 40
Symphony No. 5 in B flat major

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HANNAH EISENDLE (born 1993)

Heliosis (2021)

UK premiere

This is a summer piece, but not the kind with a clear landscape under blue sky and sunshine. ‘Heliosis’ is the medical term for sunstroke and, as such, the music depicts a dirty, sultry, sticky-soot kind of summer – functioning as a metaphor for emotional and physical states. The sun burns over sandy dunes and jagged cairns, where heat robs the breath, numbs and dazes. Underneath lies the never-ending struggle between maintaining and losing control over our consciousness.

The opening hurls us suddenly into the midst of a dynamic climax: rhythmic material explodes, conveying inflamed senses and the wavering between clear wakefulness and exhausted surrender. We hear a glint of dust in the fiery wind – a billow of heat over asphalt runways. The rhythmic structure pushes relentlessly forwards like a mechanical *perpetuum mobile*, driven by the glow of the sun. Then, suddenly, the climax gives way to a sense of space and astonishment. The machine continues to churn but now sits underneath the main texture, occasionally bursting through.

In *Heliosis* the strings represent the sonic topography of the desert landscape. They often play on and behind the bridge – the rasping sound representing the intensity of the sun. In between are whispered soliloquies – high shimmering, deep wafting and strong contrasts between rhythmic stability and oblique interjections. We hear extreme highs over deep glissandos, swells and compact chords.



Warning: extreme heat. That experienced in California’s Death Valley is a metaphor for the kind of torpor and exhaustion explored in *Heliosis*

As our consciousness splits when we overheat, at a certain point in *Heliosis* the orchestra splits. Tempos slide apart and we hear a unison line with some instruments remaining stable, others ‘taking off’. Then, *Più mosso* – incessant to the end.

Programme note © Hannah Eisendle



HANNAH EISENDLE

Though still in her twenties, Hannah Eisendle has a catalogue of compositions going back more than a decade, to when she was starting out as a student at the University of Music and Performing Arts in her native Vienna. Among her first pieces, *Porto mosso* (2013) is a trio for clarinets in which the three players take roles in an imaginary story set at a 'turbulent port' (to translate the title). One is a rebellious dockworker; another conveys the sounds of small boats; and the third portrays a big steamer. The following year she was chosen to create works for a concert at Carnegie Hall in New York, her contribution being *tough tRuth* for piano and strings.

During these early student years she also began writing music for short films and for one of the leading jazz clubs in Vienna, *Porgy & Bess* (*dry indeed* for big band, 2013). She found these experiences of collaboration and of working in alternative environments congenial, and they had the effect of broadening her reputation within Vienna. In 2018 she composed a piece for the city's foremost festival of contemporary music, *Wien Modern* (*come apart* for piano, bass flute and double bass). This was followed in 2019 by a solo piano piece, *pur.troppo*, for a concert marking the 200th birthday of Clara Schumann.

Since graduating from the university with a master's degree just two years ago, she has been working as a conductor and musical assistant with the Theater an der Wien, Oper rund um (a company taking opera to non-standard venues) and Neue Oper Wien. At the same time her career as a composer has continued to develop. She conducted the Tonkünstler Orchestra in the premiere of her first orchestral composition, *crushed ice II*, at the Grafenegg Festival in October 2020. Her second, *Heliosis*,



followed in March this year, performed by the same forces as tonight at the Konzerthaus in Vienna.

Profile © Paul Griffiths

A critic for over 30 years, Paul Griffiths is an authority on 20th- and 21st-century music. Among his books are studies of Boulez, Cage and Stravinsky, as well as *Modern Music and After* and *A Concise History of Western Music*. His most recent novels are *Mr Beethoven* (2020) and *The Tomb Guardians* (2021).



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 70 (1884–5)

- 1 **Allegro maestoso**
- 2 **Poco adagio**
- 3 **Scherzo: Vivace – Poco meno mosso – Vivace**
- 4 **Finale: Allegro**

Early in 1884 Dvořák heard a performance of the new Third Symphony by his friend and champion Johannes Brahms. Not only was he deeply impressed, he was soon thinking of writing another symphony of his own. Then, in June that year, the London Philharmonic Society elected Dvořák an honorary member, in the process inviting him to compose a new symphony for them. Excited as he was, Dvořák wisely hesitated before starting work on the music. This made good artistic sense. His previous symphony, No. 6, had also been partly inspired by the experience of hearing a Brahms symphony – in this case the Second. While Dvořák's Sixth is a confident, colourful and entirely characteristic work, its indebtedness to Brahms's Second is clear, especially in the finale. When it came to its successor, Dvořák was anxious to avoid writing in Brahms's shadow – something that Brahms actively encouraged. 'My idea of your new symphony is quite different to this,' Brahms told him, gesturing to the manuscript of the Sixth.

Not only was Dvořák determined to break new ground, at the same time he wanted to curb his natural tendency to expansiveness (and, at times, diffuseness) by concentrating his ideas into a taut symphonic argument.

By general consent, he succeeded. None of Dvořák's previous symphonic orchestral or chamber works is as compellingly purposeful as the Seventh Symphony. All his natural lyricism is here – the symphony abounds in good tunes – but there is nothing superfluous: everything makes sense as part of the grand design. Even Dvořák's passionately held nationalist spirit finds a place in the symphonic scheme: the Scherzo third movement is based on the rhythm of a Czech country dance called the 'furiant'; at the same time it is one of the most gripping and original symphonic scherzos since Beethoven. Having completed the work on 17 March 1885, Dvořák himself conducted its first performance at St James's Hall, London, on 22 April.

...

The first movement begins with a hushed drum roll, supported by basses and low horns, above which violas and cellos deliver a tersely eloquent theme in a rocking 6/8 time. Immediately it is clear that this idea has plenty of potential energy – great things could grow from this seed. New motifs are heard and passed around the orchestra but all are derived in some way from the melodic contour or the rhythm of the opening theme. Tension builds to a massive restatement of the 'seed' theme on full orchestra but this swings in a new direction, leading to a gentler, lilting melody on flute and clarinets. From the opposition of these two leading ideas Dvořák builds a magnificent, increasingly tragic argument. The ending is hushed, like the opening, with only fragments of the main ideas left as the movement's powerful dark momentum finally ebbs away.

The slow movement begins with a touching suggestion of a folk hymn on woodwind and pizzicato strings, a more sensuous, Brahmsian rising motif on full orchestra, followed by a beguiling long melody on flutes and oboes.



PROGRAMME NOTES



St James's Hall, London, where Dvořák's Seventh Symphony received its first performance (image from the *Illustrated London News*, 1858)

Then comes a gravely eloquent idea (violins and cellos) punctuated by solemn wind chords. On paper this looks very like a theme from the slow movement of Brahms's Third Symphony but it sounds very different – Wagnerian listeners may hear echoes of *Tristan and Isolde* (in his youth Dvořák had caught the Wagner bug). Warmly

lyrical though this movement is, it is as strongly engineered in formal terms as the first movement. The climax, topped with trumpet and horn fanfares, has a stirring inevitability, and the return of the opening 'folk hymn' idea on oboe above tremolando strings is also beautifully judged.



The Scherzo's furiant-inspired rhythmic games begin right at the start. Cellos, double basses, bassoons and horns outline a quick waltz-like theme: one-two-three, one-two-three; but the upper strings present a slower-sounding one-two two-two three-two, which tugs against the waltz beat. Throughout the Scherzo section, the tension between these two patterns is exploited in ever-new ways, bringing the kind of exhilarating dance vitality for which Brahms often strove but rarely matched. On the surface the slightly slower central trio section seems to offer relaxed lyrical contrast but ominous pulsating figures on low strings continue to disturb the peace and it is no surprise when tension mounts again and the Scherzo sweeps back in.

Many fine 19th-century symphonies flounder when it comes to the finale, but Dvořák's Seventh is a splendid exception. It begins with a highly charged theme on cellos, followed by a sombre chorale that recalls – but in the process completely transforms – a similar idea from the finale of Brahms's Third Symphony. From this grows an urgent, exciting Allegro that picks up on and intensifies the first movement's tragic drama. The dark minor mode seems set to hold the stage until the very end. But then, at the last minute, comes a thrilling *coup de théâtre* as high woodwind, horns and violins twist the cello's opening theme into a defiant D major – victory snatched from the jaws of defeat – and with four emphatic major chords the symphony ends.

Programme note © Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson is the author of books on Bruckner, Mahler, Shostakovich and Wagner, and a regular contributor to *BBC Music Magazine*. For 14 years he was a presenter of BBC Radio 3's *Discovering Music*. He now works both as a freelance writer and as a composer.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

In Henry Wood's day this work would still have been known as Dvořák's Second thanks to the problematic publishing history of the symphonies. The conductor had planned to direct its oddly belated Proms premiere in 1939 but the concert was among those cancelled following Hitler's invasion of Poland when the BBC withdrew its orchestra from London. In the event it was the self-effacing Basil Cameron who introduced the score at the Royal Albert Hall in 1943, guiding a London Philharmonic that had lost its instruments in the incendiary bombing of the old Queen's Hall. He returned to the piece in 1945, 1948 and 1951 but his performance tally was rapidly surpassed by that of Malcolm Sargent with nine renditions between 1947 and 1966. More recently the Seventh has been presented by a number of distinguished visiting orchestras, not invariably Czech, although the Czech Philharmonic did play it with Vladimir Ashkenazy in 2001. Other guest ensembles have included the Dresden Staatskapelle, under Colin Davis (1991) and Bernard Haitink (2004), and, in 2009, Iván Fischer's Budapest Festival Orchestra. Its most recent performance was given by Thomas Søndergård and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in 2016, part of another programme that opened with Bartók, his *Dance Suite* preceding the world premiere of Malcolm Hayes's Violin Concerto (with Tai Murray).

© David Gutman



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Antonín Dvořák was born on 8 September 1841 to a lower-middle-class family in the small Bohemian village of Nelahozeves. He showed musical talent from an early age and his family did everything they could to nurture his gifts. Despite their modest means, at the age of 16 Dvořák was able to attend the Prague Organ School. He graduated in 1859 and soon took the position of principal violist in the orchestra of the Provisional Theatre.

At the Provisional Theatre, Dvořák was exposed to the current trends in French, Italian and German opera – including the works of Wagner, which had a profound effect on him – as well as the compositions of Smetana, who conducted the orchestra. During this time, Dvořák wrote a number of works in which he tackled progressively larger forms, such as the song-cycle *Cypresses* and his first two symphonies (all 1865). While at the Provisional Theatre he also met his first love, the actress Josefina Čermáková. His affection, however, was not reciprocated and he later married her younger sister, Anna.

It was not until Dvořák was 36 that he began to receive international recognition. In 1877 he submitted his *Moravian Duets* for a state prize. Johannes Brahms, a member of the jury, thought enough of the works to send them to his own publisher and developed a close friendship with Dvořák. This led to a surge of performances across Europe and Dvořák's rise to international acclaim. He garnered a reputation as a conservative composer of nationally inflected 'absolute', or purely instrumental music, through works such as the two books of *Slavonic Dances* (1878 and 1886) and the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth symphonies (1880, 1885 and 1889).



BBC



In 1891 Dvořák was approached by the wealthy arts patron Jeannette Thurber, who offered him a position as director of the National Conservatory in New York. Dvořák initially rejected her proposition but after further consideration (probably influenced by the princely sum offered) he accepted. Dvořák's time in America was the apex of his international fame and, while there, he wrote his two most-performed works: the Symphony No. 9 ('From the New World', 1893) and the Cello Concerto (1894–5).

Dvořák returned to Europe in 1895 and in 1901 accepted the job as director of the Prague Conservatory, a position he held for the remainder of his life. His return was marked by a complete break from symphonic composition. He wrote four tone-poems based on the fairy tales of Karel Erben (*The Water Goblin*, *The Noon Witch*, *The Golden Spinning Wheel* and *The Wild Dove*, all 1896) and his two most successful operas, *The Devil and Kate* (1898–9) and *Rusalka* (1900). In these works Dvořák combined Wagnerian influences with a careful attention to Czech speech patterns that presages Leoš Janáček's development of 'speech-melody'. Not only did Dvořák work in almost every conceivable genre but he had an astonishingly wide stylistic palette and was able to fuse the musical languages of his time with subtle formal schemes to create compositions of enormous power.

Profile © David Catchpole

David Catchpole is a PhD student in Musicology at New York University, working on 19th- and early 20th-century Czech-American musical exchange. He serves on the board of the Dvořák American Heritage Association.

MORE DVOŘÁK AT THE PROMS

SUNDAY 21 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 46
Violin Concerto in A minor

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



The Proms Listening Service

As Radio 3's *The Listening Service* revisits earlier episodes reflecting a range of this summer's Proms themes, presenter **Tom Service** takes a wide-angle view of each theme in this weekly column



Week 4 What is it about Mozart?

Mozart wasn't the composer he appears to us now in classical music culture. At this distance from his time and place, with the mountainous patina of the years between us and 18th-century Vienna, weighed down by all those who have claimed him as their own – performers, politicians, purveyors of chocolate balls – any attempt to find a different Mozart, the Wolfgang Amadé who lived and worked in the late 18th century rather than the monumentalised Amadeus into which posterity has turned him, is a melancholy endeavour.

And a pointless one. Spoiler alert: I haven't found the 'real' Mozart, and I can tell you as little about him as anyone else. My Mozart, whose virtuosity of empathy collapses the abyss between his time and ours, is yet another personally made Mozart to add to the infinite palimpsest of Mozarts that have been created in the hearts of everyone who loves his music.

One thing, however, I'm certain of. Which is that he wasn't a composer. Or rather, that his personality in the crucible of 1780s Vienna put his performances, his improvisation and his spontaneity centre stage, not his creation of fixed-for-all-time works written on manuscript paper.

His piano concertos are the best possible expression of Mozart the living musician. These concertos – his performances of them and his improvisations around them – were the centrepieces of the subscription concerts he sold as a freelance musician, someone who dared to make his living outside the church, without the support of the court.

As he left them to us, his concertos are radically incomplete. They were made for him alone to play in their first incarnations, vehicles to display his virtuosity of musical feeling and technical innovation. Which means that any soloist putting themselves in Mozart's position when they play these pieces, as Leif Ove Andsnes is doing in his two Proms this week with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, requires an essential hubris. Andsnes has to believe he has as much to offer as Mozart did, otherwise he, and everyone else who plays these pieces, shouldn't bother with them.

Any keyboard player tackling what Mozart did leave us has to improvise as freely as he did, to make every performance an urgent moment of creation instead of a routine rehearsal of the printed notes. That's a performance practice that Mozart would not have countenanced for these pieces. The concertos are a call for freedom both to the musicians – most obviously in their cadenzas, the solos that Mozart would always have improvised, and pianists today should too – and to us in the audience – the freedom to feel.

So there's another image of Mozart to add to the palimpsest of history: Mozart, harbinger of freedom. Better, at least, than a chocolate ball.

Mozart features this week at the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday 7 August at 3.00pm and 7.30pm, and at Battersea Arts Centre on Monday 8 August at 1.00pm.

→ Next week: **What's the point of the conductor?**

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 200-plus editions of the series on BBC Sounds. Tom's book based on the series is now available, published by Faber.



Marin Alsop *conductor*

A conductor of vision and distinction, Marin Alsop represents a powerful and inspiring voice. Convinced that music has the power to change lives, she is recognised for her innovative approach to programming and audience development, deep

commitment to education and advocacy for music's importance in the world.

This season marks her third as Chief Conductor of the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, which she leads at Vienna's Konzerthaus and Musikverein, and on recordings, broadcasts and tours. As Chief Conductor and Curator of Chicago's Ravinia Festival, she conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's summer residencies.

Last year she became Music Director Laureate and OrchKids Founder at the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, following a 14-year tenure as Music Director. In 2019, after seven years as Music Director, she became Conductor of Honour of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, with which she continues to lead major projects each season.

She has won multiple *Gramophone* Awards, is the first and only conductor to have received a MacArthur Fellowship, has been honoured with the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award and made history as the first female conductor of the BBC's Last Night of the Proms. To nurture the careers of her fellow female conductors, she founded the Taki Concordia Conducting Fellowship in 2002.

The film *The Conductor* maps her life and career through interviews, shared moments in her life and archival footage with her mentor Leonard Bernstein.



Benjamin Grosvenor *piano*

Benjamin Grosvenor studied at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating with The Queen's Commendation for Excellence in 2012 and becoming a Fellow in 2016. A BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist from 2010 to 2012, he made his BBC Proms debut at the First Night in 2011.

Recent and forthcoming concerto engagements include performances with the Chicago, Hamburg, City of Birmingham, Prague Radio and KBS Symphony orchestras, Orchestra of St Luke's at Carnegie Hall, New York, Lyon National, Philharmonia, Hallé and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic orchestras and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra at Festival Radio France. He also gives recitals in Barcelona, Berlin, London, Luxembourg, Mainz, Naples, Paris, Washington DC and at the 'Chopin and his Europe' Festival in Warsaw.

Benjamin Grosvenor collaborates with conductors such as Myung-Whun Chung, Sir Mark Elder, Paavo Järvi, Kent Nagano and François-Xavier Roth. Chamber partners include Hyeyoon Park, Timothy Ridout and Kian Soltani. Plans include a 2023 US tour with the Doric Quartet. Next season he is Artist in Focus at Sage Gateshead, having recently been artist-in-residence at Wigmore Hall and Radio France.

His discography includes solo piano works by Liszt and Chopin's piano concertos with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra under Elim Chan. He has been *Gramophone*'s Young Artist of the Year, the UK Critics' Circle Exceptional Young Talent and the inaugural recipient of the Ackman Piano Prize with the New York Philharmonic.



Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra

PROMS DEBUT ENSEMBLE

The ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra defines itself within the Viennese orchestral tradition and is noted for its bold programming. Marin Alsop became Chief Conductor in September 2019.

The Vienna RSO regularly performs in two subscription series in Vienna, at the Musikverein and the Konzerthaus. It appears annually at major Austrian and international festivals, with tours within Europe and further afield an important component of its schedule. Since 2007 the Vienna RSO has collaborated with the Theater an der Wien, developing its reputation as an opera orchestra. It is also at home performing film music.

Most of the orchestra's performances are broadcast on radio, particularly on the Österreich 1 station but also internationally. It welcomes the foremost conductors and composers to direct concerts and performs regularly with the world's leading soloists. The broad scope of the orchestra's recording activities includes works in every genre, among them many first recordings that represent modern Austrian classics and contemporary Austrian composers. Four of the orchestra's recordings have received Opus Klassik awards.

The Vienna RSO has launched a broad-based educational programme. In addition, talented musicians have been admitted to the orchestra's own academy since 1997.

Chief Conductor

Marin Alsop

First Violins

Maighréad McCrann
concertmaster
Kristina Šuklar
second
concertmaster
Wei-Ping Lin *
Geert-Rudolf Langelaar
Tudor Florian Paduraru
Jue-Hyang Park
Anaïs Colette Patricia Tamisier
Monika Jadwiga Uhler
Peter Uhler
Bhoiravi Achenbach
Amora De Swardt
Ulrike Greuter
Zoran Nogic
Manon Stankovski-Hoursiangou

Second Violins

Ririko Sonnleitner *
Marianna Ewa Oczkowska †
Aileen Maria Dullaghan †
Eirina Belomazova
Daniele Brekyte
Barbara Chomča
Kanako Gergov
Boris Pavlovsky
Johannes Wolfgang Pfliegerl
Tongtong Sun
Sibylle Wurzinger-Gund
Iva Yablanska

Violas

Mario Michael Gheorghiu *
Andrea Marju Stadler †
Tomáš Bumbál †
Julia Puchegger †
Raphael Handschuh
Wilhelm Klebel
Martin Kraushofer
Samuel Mittag
Lara Sophie Schmitt
Eveline Meier.

Cellos

Julia Schreyvogel *
Raffael Dolezal †
Solveig Nordmeyer †
Marta Hanna Kordykiewicz
Johannes Kubitschek
János Ripka
Katharina Theres Steininger
Peter Wolf

Double Basses

Michael Blasius
Pistelok *
Bernhard Marinus Ziegler †
Pawel Lukasz Dudys
Yamato Moritake
Felipe Javier Medina
Camilla Pillinger

Flutes

Raimund Weichenberger *
Andreas Planyavsky †
Aleksandra Pleterski

Oboes

Thomas Höniger *
Richard Zottl †
Gernot Jöbstl
Felix Hagn



Clarinets

Pedro Afonso
Minhava Reis *
Johannes
Gleichweit †
Thomas
Obermüller

Bassoons

Marcelo M. Padilla *
Martin Machovits
Ana Francisca
Ferreira Bastos

Horns

Peter Keserű *
Péter Erdei †
Margreth Luise
Nussdorfer
Matthias Riess
Johann Widihofer

Trumpets

Johann Plank *
Franz Tösch †
Christian
Hollensteiner ‡

Trombones

Sascha Hois *
Christian Troyer †
Ulrich
Gruchmann-
Bernáu
Simon Wildauer

Tuba

Rainer Stephan
Huss

Timpani

Josef Gumpinger *
Wolfgang Nagl *

Percussion

Patrick Prammer *
Georg Hasibeder †
Jonathan
Geroldinger
Leonhard
Königseder

Harp

Margarethe Ulrike
Mattanovich

Piano

Christine David
Hettlinger

Celesta

Stephanie
Timoschek-
Gumpinger

Organ

Marco Primultini

* *Principal*

† *Second Principal*

‡ *Assistant Principal*

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

Orchestra Director

Christoph Becher

Tours Manager

Eveline Mum

Orchestra Administration and Finance

Veronika Hartl

Orchestra Personnel Manager and Planning

Fabio Kapeller

Marketing and Communication

Anna Jagenbrein

Orchestra Librarians

Florian Reithner
Natalija Striku

Stage Managers

Martin Lehr
Michael Ramsauer-
Müller

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Coming up at the Proms

Highlights of the next few days



Eric Richmond

NICHOLAS DANIEL



Jürgen Frank

JENNIFER KOH

SUNDAY 14 AUGUST

PROM 37 HAYDN, VAUGHAN WILLIAMS,
KAIIJA SAARIAHO & BEETHOVEN

11.00am–c12.40pm • Royal Albert Hall

A matinée concert from Dinis Sousa and the Royal Northern Sinfonia, featuring sunlit masterworks by Haydn, Kaija Saariaho and Beethoven. Nicholas Daniel is the soloist in Vaughan Williams's pastoral Oboe Concerto.

SUNDAY 14 AUGUST

PROM 38 TCHAIKOVSKY, MISSY
MAZZOLI & PROKOFIEV

7.30pm–c9.45pm • Royal Albert Hall

Music from two great ballets, Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* – plus a new violin concerto written for Jennifer Koh – played by the Philharmonia Orchestra under its new Music Director Santtu-Matias Rouvali.



Tobias Epp

CONSTANTIN HARTWIG



VASILY PETRENKO

MONDAY 15 AUGUST

PROM 39 MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE,
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS & ELGAR

7.30pm–c9.40pm • Royal Albert Hall

Elgar's First Symphony, Vaughan Williams's Tuba Concerto (with star soloist Constantin Hartwig) and a swinging new showpiece from Mark-Anthony Turnage: music that could have been made for the BBC Symphony Orchestra and its Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo.

TUESDAY 16 AUGUST

PROM 40 COPLAND, WALKER &
PROKOFIEV

7.30pm–c9.40pm • Royal Albert Hall

Forged in a time of war and tyranny, Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony embodied, he said, 'the greatness of the human spirit'. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Music Director Vasily Petrenko pairs it with Copland's *Appalachian Spring* suite and George Walker's Trombone Concerto.