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

Chris Christodoulou/BBC (Pickard)

Tonight *at the* Proms

Welcome to tonight's concert, in which the National Youth Orchestra makes its eagerly awaited annual appearance here in the Royal Albert Hall. At its helm is Carlos Miguel Prieto, who is making his Proms debut with three works from the 1940s. They may share a decade but they couldn't be more different in tone, starting with Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*, an unabashedly exuberant tribute from one German master to another.

The quietly valedictory mood of Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* is hardly surprising, given that they come from the end of the composer's long career and celebrate his love for the soprano voice. Tonight they're sung by Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha, who made a striking debut in Verdi's *Requiem* at last year's First Night of the Proms. We end with Copland's Third Symphony, a work by turns striving and lyrical but ultimately unashamedly optimistic.

ON AIR

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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 28

SATURDAY 5 AUGUST • 7.30pm–*c*9.45pm

Paul Hindemith Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber *21'*

Richard Strauss Four Last Songs *22'*

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

Aaron Copland Symphony No. 3 *43'*

Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha *soprano*

The National Youth Orchestra Isabell Karlsson *leader*
Carlos Miguel Prieto *conductor*

RADIO 3 FOUR SOUNDS iPLAYER

This concert is broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 (repeated on Tuesday 15 August at 2.00pm) and filmed for future broadcast on BBC Four. You can listen on BBC Sounds, and watch on BBC iPlayer for 12 months.

PAUL HINDEMITH (1895–1963)

Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber (1943)

1 **Allegro**
2 **Turandot Scherzo: Moderato**
3 **Andantino**
4 **Marsch** [March]

Hindemith is rarely given credit for the humour in his music. His works of the 1920s breathed irreverence but, as he grew older, his serious side held sway. Not in the *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*, however, music as jovial and full of ebullience as its title (intended, perhaps, to misdirect expectations) is ponderous and awkward. The work, which originated in an abortive ballet project in 1940, is not really symphonic in the conventional sense and, if 'metamorphosis' suggests variations, the four movements are variations not so much of themes contained in the Weber source-works as of those pieces as a whole.

The opening Allegro, based on the piano duet *Alla zingara* (Op. 60 No. 4), sweeps aside Weber's genteel politeness with an infectious swagger. The main melody passes from the strings to the brass before the textures thin out in the central section, the oboe dominating with a cheeky tune that maintains the atmosphere of good-humoured bluster. When the main theme returns, the scoring is entirely different, overlaid lines in the winds creating a texture not unlike the mixture stop of an organ which is eventually topped off by chiming percussion. The effect is wholly unlike Weber: a metamorphosis indeed.

Tanaquil Le Clercq and Todd Bolender in *Metamorphoses*, the 1952 ballet created by George Balanchine for New York City Ballet using Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis*

George Platt Lynes/Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund/Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington

The Allegro concludes with a brief orchestral guffaw, rather better-natured than the raucous laughter in the fourth movement of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* of the same year. (Hindemith invented the genre of concerto for orchestra in 1925, the *Philharmonic Concerto* following in

1932. In many respects, *Symphonic Metamorphosis* is his third.) The humour is a well-timed gesture, setting up the scintillating 'Turandot Scherzo'. This takes as its starting point the *Chinese Overture* (1805) – built on an anonymous, Eastern-sounding tune that Weber found in a collection and re-used in his incidental music to Schiller's version of Gozzi's play *Turandot* (the source for Puccini's opera). Hindemith modified the main tune, accentuating its exotic character, amplifying Weber's orchestration, especially in the brilliant use of percussion. The initial statement is beautifully reworked, the main phrases of the tune played by flutes and clarinets punctuated by four soft bell strokes on the notes F–D–C–A. The theme is then repeated eight times largely unchanged but moving systematically through all the instrumental sections (not unlike Ravel's *Boléro*), culminating in another orchestral belly laugh. After a linking passage for the first violins, the trombones start a fugue on a jazzed-up variation of the Chinese tune; its powerful climax for brass and timpani is followed by a calmer passage for chattering winds.

Hindemith wrote the work with the sound of American orchestras in mind: might he here have imagined the muscular polyphony of Roy Harris? After a quieter passage led by percussion, and that bell motif, F–D–C–A, the orchestra rouses itself for a final *tutti* statement of the Chinese theme before matters wind back down to a quiet closing woodwind chord rooted on F: politeness is restored.

In the Andantino (from the second of Weber's Six Pieces, Op. 10a, for piano duet), perhaps the most straightforward of Hindemith's 'metamorphoses', he conjures a tranquil, sunlit mood for the wistful main melody, played first by solo clarinet, then solo bassoon, repeated in full. Strings lead off the central section, before a brief, gentle climax. The flute countermelody that appears when the main theme returns is wholly of Hindemith's own invention.

The rollicking final March possesses a verve and virtuosity quite foreign to Weber's source duet (the seventh of his Eight Pieces, Op. 60). After the opening flourish for the brass (which returns at times to punctuate the music's flow), the swagger of the first movement returns in the strings and woodwinds, gaining in bravado with every step. The horn quartet provide contrast, the woodwinds chattering excitedly around them, and the music then passes from section to section before the principal theme returns. A striking statement for the trombones ushers in the coda, with the horn calls recapitulated as the work closes in the brightest good humour imaginable.

Programme note © Guy Rickards

Guy Rickards writes extensively on Nordic music, is the author of books on Jean Sibelius and on Hindemith, Hartmann and Henze, and contributed three of the eight chapters to a life-and-works study of John McCabe.

PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

This work received its UK premiere during the 1946 season. The BBC Symphony Orchestra was employed throughout what would now be considered a somewhat ramshackle evening Prom. The first half, conducted by Adrian Boult, consisted of either Bach or Handel – an overture, a cantata and three concertos. After the interval Constant Lambert was responsible for the Hindemith and an original Weber overture. There were three more performances in the 1950s but a fall from grace thereafter. Only four conductors have since taken up the *Symphonic Metamorphosis*: Christopher Seaman in 1976, Norman Del Mar in 1983, James Levine in 2002 and Domingo Hindoyan as recently as 2021, perhaps hinting at a modest change of fortune.

© 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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PAUL HINDEMITH

Hindemith's creativity – by turns (and sometimes simultaneously iconoclastic, exploratory and traditionalist – knew few constraints. A string player of international standing, he was an orchestral leader at 19, pioneering violist (premiering Walton's concerto), founder-member of the Amar String Quartet and a wide-ranging instrumentalist who knew how to play every standard instrument and expected the same of his students. He revived and taught himself to play the viola d'amore, precursor to the viola, in a few months in 1922 and then composed a sonata and concerto for himself to perform; he also took a lively interest in early electronic music, as the works for trautonium (an electronic instrument invented in 1929) reveal. He was a fine conductor, too, one of the most illustrious teachers of his time – at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik (1927–37) and Yale from the 1940s – and a trenchant author: the renaissance man of 20th-century German music.

His music embraced a vast range of styles, from late Romanticism in his youth (as in the First Quartet) and neo-Classicism in the 1920s (heard in the seven *Kammermusik* chamber concertos, 1921–7) to a robust postmodernism (decades before it became fashionable) via brief flirtations with ragtime (in the short 1921 eponymous orchestral miniature) and Expressionism in his early one-act operas *Murder, Hope of Women* (1919) and *Sancta Susanna* (1921), the latter set in a convent and still banned in many Catholic countries. He composed in every major genre except the piano trio, from songs and choral music to operas – including *Cardillac* (1925–6), *Mathis der Maler* (1933–5) and *Die Harmonie der Welt* (1956–7, based on the life of the astronomer Kepler) – and ballets, notably *Nobilissima visione* (1938), inspired by St Francis of Assisi. At the heart of his orchestral output are six symphonies, two based on music from *Mathis der Maler* and *Die Harmonie der Welt*, plus four *Konzertmusik* and the *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber* (1943), as well as a sizeable number of concertos. His chamber music includes seven string quartets, around 40 sonatas (with at least one for every standard orchestral instrument), trios and quintets.

Hindemith was born in Hanau near Frankfurt-am-Main in November 1895. He studied at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt under Adolf Rebner, Arnold Mendelssohn and Bernhard Sekles. The provocative nature of his works of the 1920s caused his music to be declared *entartete* ('degenerate') and banned by the Nazi regime in the 1930s, eventually forcing him to emigrate first to Switzerland in 1938 and then to the USA in 1940. Although he became a naturalised US citizen, he returned to Europe in 1953, settling in Blonay, Switzerland, and died in Frankfurt of pancreatitis in December 1963.

Profile © Guy Rickards

> "People who make music together cannot be enemies, at least while the music lasts."
>
> **Paul Hindemith**

BBC

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

Four Last Songs (1948)

1 **Frühling** [Spring]
2 **September**
3 **Beim Schlafengehen** [Going to Sleep]
4 **Im Abendrot** [At Sunset]

Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha
soprano

For text, see page 11

For some listeners it comes as quite a surprise to discover when the *Four Last Songs* were written. Musically they sound like the kind of thing Strauss might have composed after the success of his luxuriously beautiful, profoundly worldly-wise opera *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1911. Instead they date from the very end of his life, from the year 1948, when Strauss's Germany was still reeling from crushing defeat and from the realisation of the immensity of the crimes committed under the Third Reich. When Strauss composed these exquisite, at times almost painfully tender songs, many Central European composers were, understandably, struggling to forget the past and everything associated with it. For them, the antidote to

Granger/Bridgeman Images

The legendary Norwegian soprano Kirsten Flagstad, who gave the world premiere of Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* here at the Royal Albert Hall in 1950, mere months after the composer's death

such traumatic (and in some cases guilty) memories was to be found in Schoenbergian serialism – an intellectually rigorous means of organising music without tonality, and perhaps even (as the young Pierre Boulez put it) of 'annihilating the will of the composer' altogether. To their ears, Strauss's ripe, very late Romanticism was the sound of the old world, and thus symptomatic of the very culture that had made Hitler's rise to power possible.

And yet the *Four Last Songs* survive, triumphantly, while the work of most of Strauss's modernist detractors is long forgotten. The explanation lies partly in the soaring melodic lines, gorgeous harmony and orchestration, and, particularly, Strauss's superb writing for the soprano voice – the distillation of a lifetime's experience in the opera house. But, above all that, it is the humanity of the music's message that makes people turn and return to this music. In the *Four Last Songs* there is a sharply focused sense of joy in life and shared love, intensified by awareness of the closeness of death. Strauss offers no religious consolation but he shows that it is still possible – in the words of Mary Renault's novel *The Persian Boy* – to 'make peace with your mortality'. How he was able to do this so persuasively with Germany in ruins and news of the human cost of Nazism growing more terrible by the day is hard to say, but the fact remains that he did; and this finds expression in what for many is simply his greatest creation.

It is not clear in what order Strauss intended these songs to be performed, or even if he intended the four to be heard together. At their posthumous premiere in 1950, given in the Royal Albert Hall by Kirsten Flagstad and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Wilhelm Furtwängler, 'Beim Schlafengehen' was sung first, with 'Frühling' third. But soon afterwards Strauss's publisher decided on the current sequence, and it has stuck. It is easy to see why: the chosen order makes compelling emotional and musical sense. We begin – naturally enough – with 'Frühling' (Spring), nature's renewal, but as observed by an older man, keenly aware of his own imminent end. 'September' develops this theme, bringing images of autumnal decay after summer's ripeness, and ends with a touching solo farewell for the horn – the instrument of which Strauss's father was a master. In 'Beim Schlafengehen' (Going to Sleep), the image of the soul floating free in the 'magic sphere of night' is captured in a rapturous duet for soprano and solo violin, the latter perhaps standing for the newly liberated soul's wordless voice – though Strauss may also be recalling his use of solo violin to depict his wife, Pauline, in his autobiographical tone-poem *Ein Heldenleben* ('A Hero's Life').

The ending of a long shared life is then evoked in 'Im Abendrot' (At Sunset). Strauss's marriage to the formidable Pauline had not been stress-free but his comment to his friend Gustav Mahler that 'she's what I need' was evidently sincere. As the soprano finally asks 'is this perhaps death?', horn and cor anglais recall the transfiguration theme from Strauss's much earlier tone-poem *Tod und Verklärung* ('Death and Transfiguration') – slightly wistfully, it must be said. But then comes the warm, serene close, with two piccolos recalling the poet's image of a pair of trilling larks. Distilling the music's message in words is hard but British listeners might be reminded of the last lines of Philip Larkin's poem *An Arundel Tomb*: 'What will survive of us is love.'

Programme note © Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson is the author of books on Bruckner, Wagner, Mahler and Shostakovich, 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

Having been posthumously premiered in this very building, Strauss's *Four Last Songs* reached the Proms in 1954: Sena Jurinac was the soloist with the London Symphony Orchestra under Basil Cameron. By the time Jurinac returned to them in 1961 the Canadian soprano Lois Marshall had given two performances (1957, 1958). Their tally, subsequently matched by Christine Brewer (1996, 2008) and Soile Isokowski (1999, 2006), has been trumped only by Dame Felicity Lott (1984, 1989 and 1990). In total there have been 24 renditions but curiously none between 1961 and 1981, when Heather Harper revived the songs in the company of Norman Del Mar and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Their most recent advocates? Inger Dam-Jensen with Vasily Petrenko's Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (2014), Malin Byström with Thomas Dausgaard's BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (2018) and Louise Alder with Daniele Rustioni's Ulster Orchestra (2022). Tonight's soloist made her Proms debut in last year's First Night performance of Verdi's *Requiem*.

© David Gutman

> "It is difficult composing endings. Beethoven and Wagner could do it. Only great composers can do it. I can do it too."

Strauss to soprano Elisabeth Schumann as recorded in her travel diary *In America with Richard Strauss*

RICHARD STRAUSS

Richard Strauss was born on 11 June 1864 into the heart of the German operatic world: his father, Franz Joseph Strauss, was principal horn at the Munich Court Opera. He began to compose aged only 6 and his talent developed prodigiously. Exploring Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* aged 17 proved a special epiphany. By his early thirties, he had composed some of his most celebrated tone-poems, with *Don Juan* (1888–9) serving as breakthrough work, rapidly followed by *Tod und Verklärung* ('Death and Transfiguration', also 1888–9), *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* ('Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks', 1894–5) and *Also sprach Zarathustra* ('Thus Spake Zarathustra', 1896), among others

Aged 21, Strauss was helped by the conductor Hans von Bülow to secure his first conducting post in Meiningen. Later he held posts at opera houses in Munich, Weimar and Berlin, before serving as principal conductor of the Vienna Court Opera from 1919 to 1924 and co-founding the Salzburg Festival in 1920.

In a rehearsal for Strauss's first opera, *Guntram*, the soprano Pauline de Ahna threw a piano score at the composer; he later married her. At Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the Bavarian Alps, they built a substantial villa with proceeds from the opera *Salome* (1903–5). The pair's volatile relationship left its mark on Strauss's *Symphonia domestica* (1902–3), the tone-poem *Ein Heldenleben* ('A Hero's Life', 1897–8) – in which Pauline is personified by a solo violin – and the semi-autobiographical opera *Intermezzo* (1918–23). Above all, however, her presence is felt in the power and sensuality with which Strauss wrote for the female voice.

Strauss's other muse was the writer Hugo von Hofmannsthal, librettist of his operas *Elektra* (1906–8), *Der Rosenkavalier* (1909–10), *Ariadne auf Naxos*, (1911–12), *Die Frau ohne Schatten* ('The Woman Without a Shadow', 1914–17), *Die ägyptische Helena* (1923–7, later revised) and *Arabella* (1929–32). After Hofmannsthal's death, Strauss worked with writers including Joseph Gregor and Stefan Zweig, among others, but no team proved quite as satisfying again.

In 1933, aged nearly 70, Strauss was appointed head of the Nazi administration's Reichsmusikkammer, whose aim was to promote 'good German music' by 'Aryans'. He was forced to resign in 1935 when the Gestapo intercepted a letter he had written to his Jewish librettist Zweig that disparaged the regime.

At the end of the Second World War, American troops arrived at Strauss's Garmisch house, where one soldier, an oboist, encouraged the composer to write an oboe concerto. The resulting work, along with *Metamorphosen* for string orchestra, was part of his Indian summer of late masterpieces. Three years later he wrote his *Four Last Songs*, his final and perhaps most perfect offering to the soprano voice. He died aged 85 on 8 September 1949.

Profile © Jessica Duchen

Jessica Duchen's music journalism appears in *The Independent*, *The Guardian* and *BBC Music Magazine*. She is the author of seven novels, two plays, biographies of Fauré and Korngold and the librettos for Roxanna Panufnik's operas *Silver Birch* and *Dalia*, commissioned by Garsington Opera.

BBC

MORE STRAUSS AT THE PROMS

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Also sprach Zarathustra

WEDNESDAY 16 AUGUST, 7.30pm • PROM 42
Aus Italien

FRIDAY 25 AUGUST, 6.30pm • PROM 52
Death and Transfiguration

SATURDAY 9 SEPTEMBER, 7.00pm • PROM 71
Don Juan

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RICHARD STRAUSS

Four Last Songs

1 **FRÜHLING**

In dämmrigen Grüften
Träumte ich lang
Von deinen Bäumen and blauen Lüften,
Von deinem Duft und Vogelsang.

Nun liegst du erschlossen
In Gleiss und Zier,
Von Licht übergossen,
Wie ein Wunder vor mir.

Du kennst mich wieder,
Du lockst mich zart;
Es zittert durch all meine Glieder
Deine selige Gegenwart.

SPRING

In sombre shadows
I dreamt long
of your trees, your blue skies,
of your fragrance, and the song of birds.

Now you lie revealed,
glistening, adorned,
bathed in light
like a miracle before me.

You recognise me,
you beckon gently;
my limbs tremble
with your blessed presence.

2 SEPTEMBER

Der Garten trauert,
Kühl sinkt in die Blumen der Regen.
Der Sommer schauert
Still seinem Ende entgegen.

Golden tropft Blatt um Blatt
Nieder vom hohen Akazienbaum.
Sommer lächelt erstaunt und matt
In den sterbenden Gartentraum.

Lange noch bei den Rosen
Bleibt er stehn, sehnt sich nach Ruh.
Langsam tut er die
Müdgewordnen Augen zu.

3 BEIM SCHLAFENGEHEN

Nun der Tag mich müd' gemacht,
Soll mein sehnliches Verlangen
Freundlich die gestirnte Nacht
Wie ein müdes Kind empfangen.

Hände, lasst von allem Tun,
Stirn, vergiss du alles Denken;
Alle meine Sinne nun
Wollen sich in Schlummer senken.

Und die Seele, unbewacht,
Will in freien Flügen schweben,
Um im Zauberkreis der Nacht
Tief und tausendfach zu leben.

Hermann Hesse (1877–1962) © 1952 Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main

SEPTEMBER

The garden grieves,
the cool rain sinks into the flowers.
The summer shudders
and silently meets her end.

Leaf upon leaf drops golden
from the tall acacia tree.
Wondering, faintly, summer smiles
in the dying garden's dream.

Long by the roses
she lingers, yearning for peace.
Slowly she closes her
wearied eyes.

GOING TO SLEEP

Now made tired by the day,
so my ardent desire shall
warmly greet the starry night
like a tired child.

Hands, cease your doing,
brow, forget all thought;
all my senses now
would sink into slumber.

And my soul, unguarded,
would soar free in flight,
and in the magic sphere of night
live life deep a thousandfold.

4 **IM ABENDROT**

Wir sind durch Not und Freude
Gegangen Hand in Hand;
Vom Wandern ruhen wir
Nun überm stillen Land.

Rings sich die Täler neigen,
Es dunkelt schon die Luft;
Zwei Lerchen nur noch steigen
Nachträumend in den Duft.

Tritt her und lass sie schwirren;
Bald ist es Schlafenszeit;
Dass wir uns nicht verirren
In dieser Einsamkeit!

O weiter, stiller Friede!
So tief im Abendrot
Wie sind wir wandermüde –
Ist dies etwa der Tod?

Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857)

AT SUNSET

Through sorrow and joy
we have walked hand in hand;
now we are at rest from our journey
above the silent land.

The valleys descend all about us,
the sky grows dark;
only two larks yet soar
wistfully in the haze.

Come, leave them to fly;
soon it will be time to sleep;
let us not lose our way
in this solitude!

O boundless, silent peace!
So deep in the sunset
how weary we are of our journeying –
is this perhaps death?

Translations © Mari Pračkauskas

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

Now playing on BBC Radio 3 …

Backstage Pass Continuing her series, violinist Tasmin Little meets tonight's soloist, Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha.
Available on BBC Sounds

BBC RADIO 3

AARON COPLAND (1900–90)

Symphony No. 3 (1944–6)

1 **Molto moderato – with simple expression**
2 **Allegro molto**
3 **Andantino quasi allegretto –**
4 **Molto deliberato (Fanfare) – Allegro risoluto**

In 1944 Aaron Copland received a commission to write a symphony for the Russian-born conductor Serge Koussevitzky, Artistic Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It was an unusual opportunity and a particular kind of challenge. In the early 1940s the USA had produced only a fledgling symphonic repertoire. Copland and many of his contemporaries closed their ears to earlier contributions by late 19th-century Americans (George Chadwick, Amy Beach, Edward MacDowell); Ives's symphonies were still unknown.

American Vice-President Henry Wallace; his 1942 speech announcing 'The Century of the Common Man' gave rise to Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, a piece the composer referenced in the finale of his Third Symphony

Associated Press/Alamy

Yet enough new American symphonies were being heard to foster anticipation of a generation coming of age into a genre that marked cultural maturity. Koussevitzky himself had premiered Roy Harris's Third Symphony in 1939 and David Diamond's Second in 1944.

Copland knew Koussevitzky wanted a piece with a 'grand sound' and 'broad appeal'. So he provided it. Steeped in the venerable tradition of the symphony as a heroic manifesto, both composer and conductor were also musicians-in-arms on the Home Front of the Second World War.

It was 'a thrilling fact' that 'democracy has entered the realm of music', Copland wrote in 1939. In 1943 Koussevitzky said, 'As we know, this is a war of the people as much as of the armies, and of the artists as much as of the soldiers, every atom of artistic effort must be mobilised and thrown into action.' He held up the symphonies of Shostakovich and Prokofiev as paradigms, programming them frequently in the 1940s. Their music is part of the backdrop to Copland's Third Symphony.

This was just the time to unfurl the flag-waving power of classical music. Copland began his Third Symphony with sketches for the first movement in August 1944, two months after Allied forces were launched from Britain on D-Day. The second movement, a scherzo, was followed by the slow movement and finale in the second half of 1945, when first Germany, then Japan, surrendered. By the time the work was premiered on October 18, 1946, Roosevelt had died and Churchill had been turned out of office. Peace was a mere 14 months old.

Copland brought a fully developed arsenal of musical techniques to the challenge of composing this symphony. His thorny dissonant language, which he often used to express his sense of 'tragic reality' in modernist works from the 1920s, comes through the relentlessness of the second theme in the first movement, for example. Its shrill and demanding timbres and its sometimes plodding counterpoint recall Copland's *Symphonic Ode* from the 1920s. But overall, what this symphony projects is his later more accessible aesthetic shaped during the Great Depression and the War.

The years 1938–1944 had already yielded the brilliant ballets *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo* and *Appalachian Spring*. Copland resurrected sketches from these pieces while working on the symphony. At the same time he declared himself independent of a ballet story line or folk-song quotations, a point underscored in his own programme notes at the premiere of the work.

Instead Copland avowed his faith in the versatility of his new language and his 'personality' as a composer – to use one of his favourite critical terms. This musical personality is defined in part by a focus on intervals as much as chords (particularly folksy-sounding open fourths and fifths) and further by the careful manipulations of timbre and register to set off the pitches of common triads like gemstones. The personality of this symphony also comes from a consistent aesthetic. It doesn't really matter whether or not there is a direct quote from an outlaw ballad or a cowboy tune or a revival hymn among Copland's many themes in this work: Anglo-American hymnody reduced to its elements gives the Third Symphony its special flavour. Copland had a special 'Gift to be Simple' in a modern way. Many passages in the piece, sounding deceptively minimal, evoke a spiritual resilience that bridges the gulf between solitude and community.

Such disparate stylistic elements unite in the last movement, especially because a borrowed tune used in it has become a signature of the work as a whole. Early on

in the genesis of the Third Symphony, Copland decided to rework his then obscure and now iconic piece – *Fanfare for the Common Man*. Written in 1942, the *Fanfare* took its title from a controversial speech by Vice-President Henry Wallace – 'The Century of the Common Man' – from the same year. ('The people's revolution is on the march,' Wallace said.) Originally scored for brass and percussion, the *Fanfare* proves surprisingly flexible in the finale. Hushed dynamics on winds and strings soften the potentially militaristic drums and brass. Soon enough the trumpets sound and the percussion thunders. The *Fanfare* is sufficiently varied in tone and timbre to make its final 'apotheosis' (Copland's term) a rousing affirmation of hope and courage.

Programme note © Judith Tick

A professor emerita of Northeastern University (Boston, USA), Judith Tick is the author of *Music in the USA: A Documentary Companion.*

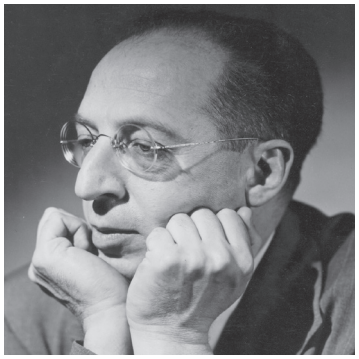
PREVIOUSLY AT THE PROMS

An earlier incarnation of the National Youth Orchestra was responsible for this work's fifth and most recent Proms rendition, in 2008, when the conductor was Sir Antonio Pappano. The first took place in 1956, when Basil Cameron and the London Symphony Orchestra were entrusted with the first concert performance in England. It is only within the last 30 years that further advocacy has come, from American guests leading British bands: Michael Tilson Thomas with the LSO (1994), Leonard Slatkin with the Philharmonia (2000) and Marin Alsop with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (2007). The *Fanfare for the Common Man*, which Copland later drew upon for the finale of his symphony, actually featured four times that year. It served as the opening item of *Blue Peter* Proms on consecutive mornings, made an appearance in the context of the bigger piece we hear tonight and finally launched a Late Night Prom from the Venezuelan Brass Ensemble.

© David Gutman

> "Your Third Symphony is one of the most moving experiences I have had in years. Having played the recording about seven times, there was no time when I was not moved, excited and stirred generally beyond and above myself … As for the music itself, dear Aaron, it is as lofty in nature as we in America have yet expressed. Of this there is not the slightest doubt – the loftiest our country has yet expressed in music."
>
> **American playwright Clifford Odets in a 1953 letter to Copland**

AARON COPLAND



Roman Freulich

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn to immigrant parents from Russian-occupied Lithuania (on the way to America, 'Koplan' or 'Kaplan' became 'Copland') and he grew up comfortable with many kinds of music-making. In New York City, he heard popular music and jazz on the streets and went to the Old Met (Metropolitan Opera) to hear Bizet and Wagner. After high school he played in dance bands at hotels in upstate New York. At the same time he studied composition with Rubin Goldmark, a former pupil of Dvořák.

In 1921 Copland enrolled at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. There, from Nadia Boulanger, he received his most important training and launched his professional career. Boulanger introduced him to Russian–French modernism and to famous musicians, including Stravinsky and Serge Koussevitzky. She encouraged him to take jazz in particular more seriously. Sailing home in 1924, Copland felt ready to lead – to 'make music and life touch'.

Soon Copland developed his own techniques to handle jazz and popular music within a modernist context. Enduring works from this period include *Music for the Theater* (1925) and the Piano Variations (1930). Later, during the early stages of a folk revival, fed by the anxieties of the Depression and war years, Copland shifted his vernacular base from commercial music to folk traditions. *El salón México* (1932–6), *Billy the Kid* (1938), *Rodeo* (1942) and *Appalachian Spring* (1943–4) have established his stature as the creator of an 'American sound'. Many other compositions, such as the Piano Quartet (1950), the *Piano Fantasy* (1952–7) and the Nonet for strings (1960), still strive for more prominence in the repertoire.

Copland also wrote solid music criticism as well as books on music appreciation and contemporary music. The centenary of his birth prompted a new wave of scholarship, including the first academic biography of a composer somewhat taken for granted. In addition, the Music Division of the Library of Congress (USA) digitised its Aaron Copland Collection, including musical autographs and correspondence, all now available online.

Programme note © Judith Tick

The Proms Listening Service

As Radio 3's *The Listening Service* revisits earlier episodes reflecting some of this summer's Proms programming, presenter **Tom Service** takes a wide-angle view of the common themes in this weekly feature

Week 3 Concertos: All for One and One for All?

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

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

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

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

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

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

➜ Next week: **Transcendence**

Join Tom Service on his Proms-themed musical odysseys in *The Listening Service* on BBC Radio 3 during the season (Sundays at 5.00pm, repeated Fridays at 4.30pm). You can hear all 220-plus editions of the series on BBC Sounds. Tom's book based on the series was published last year (Faber).

Carlos Miguel Prieto *conductor*

PROMS DEBUT ARTIST

Carlos Miguel Prieto was born into a musical family in Mexico City. He is currently Music Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra (since 2006), the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México (since 2007), the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México (since 2007) and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería (since 2008). Last year he was announced as Music Director Designate of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, a post he took up on 1 July.

Recent highlights include engagements with the London, Royal Liverpool and Strasbourg Philharmonic orchestras, Bournemouth and Frankfurt Radio Symphony orchestras, NDR Elbphilharmonie, Hallé, Spanish National Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Auckland Philharmonia. He has also worked with leading North American orchestras, including the Cleveland and Minnesota orchestras and the Chicago, Dallas, Houston, New World, North Carolina, San Francisco, Toronto and Washington Symphony orchestras.

He is a passionate advocate of music education and has, since 2002, been associated with the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, which draws young musicians from the entire American continent. He has also worked regularly with the National Youth Orchestra and the NYO2 in New York.

He has conducted over 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers.

His extensive, award-winning discography includes works by Elgar, Finzi, Korngold and Rachmaninov.

Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha *soprano*

This season South African soprano Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha returned to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Liù (*Turandot*), and performed Mathilde (*William Tell*) and the title-role in *Iphigénie en Tauride* at Theater Bern, where she appeared previously as Elisabeth of Valois (*Don Carlos*) and Elettra (*Idomeneo*). This season's concert highlights have included Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* in her US debut with the National Symphony Orchestra, Washington D.C., and for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 2 with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and Mahler's *Das klagende Lied* at Theater Bern, and her Edinburgh Festival debut, performing Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, as well as recitals at Wigmore Hall and Opéra National de Bordeaux.

Next season she makes house debuts with Hamburg State Opera and Washington National Opera, and tours to Japan with the Royal Opera; she also gives concerts with the Atlanta, Chicago and London Symphony orchestras and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Recent concert highlights have included Verdi's Requiem at the 2022 First Night of the BBC Proms under Sakari Oramo, Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Ádám Fischer, Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* with the Hallé and Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* in Bordeaux under Paul Daniel.

She won the Song Prize at the 2021 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition and is a current BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist.

Benjamin Ealovega (Prieto); Vera Elma Vacek (Rangwanasha)

The National Youth Orchestra

The National Youth Orchestra is the UK's leading organisation championing orchestral music as a powerful agent for teenage development. It's a welcoming community where every teenager can play a part in shaping their world through playing music together and one in which young people develop much more than musical skills.

The internationally celebrated NYO Orchestra is at the heart of this community; its 160 exceptional musicians, from different backgrounds across the UK excite audiences with thrilling concerts and play their part as change makers for their generation; performing and leading workshops to inspire thousands more young people.

Hundreds more musicians get involved through the NYO Inspire, a free programme for teenagers from state schools and those underrepresented in classical music, who want to make music a bigger part of their lives.

The National Youth Orchestra was founded in 1948; for over 70 years it has been a leader in music education and a champion of teenage potential. NYO alumni can be found in leading roles in orchestras all over the world and in all walks of life.

Music-lovers, teachers and parents all play a vital part in making this much-needed adventure possible for thousands of teenagers. This includes making sure that there are no financial barriers to getting involved.

Associate Conductor
Pablo Urbina

Assistant Conductor
Tess Jackson

First Violins
Isabell Karlsson
leader
18, Chessington
Rose Gosney
co-leader
17, Southampton
Eleanor Holmes
18, Winchester
Ines Choi
18, London
Amber Sun
17, Stanmore
Rhys Sutthakorn-Evans
17, London
Aki Blendis
15, London
Rhia Thomas
18, Woking
Skye El-Shirbiny
string leader
18, Oxford
Paloma Bharucha
18, Tonbridge
Tamara Redmond
18, Pinner
Volodymyr Romanenko
19, Ruislip
Finn Kjaergaard
string leader
16, London
Teagan Craggs
16, Wells
Joe Netley
16, Canterbury
Zachary Bacon Darwin
16, London
India Reilly
17, Edinburgh
Tara Spencer
17, Reading
Charlotte Sanderson
17, London
Zoe Drysdale
15, Glasgow

Second Violins
Jennifer Wells *
16, Orpington
Sebastian Watt †
14, London
Antonia Zadrag
17, London
Alice Younger
17, St Leonards-on-Sea
Charlotte Slater
17, Ellon
Leonard Behrend
15, Liverpool
Beth Peat
18, Glasgow
Samuel Cole
16, Guernsey
Eleanor McKenzie-Jones
string leader
16, Tonbridge
Helena Landis
17, Oxford
Elena Tomey
15, Maidenhead
Richard Eichhorst
16, London
Joseph Ryan
15, Guildford
Kikuko Kato
16, London

Eve Ward
string leader
15, Dartford
Mark Leung
18, Redhill
Benedict Schofield
18, York
Sophie Jobanputra
18, Sutton Coldfield
Lilly Ho
18, York
Edythe Qua
18, Armagh

Violas
Patrick O'Reilly *
18, Kenilworth
Jao-Yong Tsai †
18, London
Florence Cope
18, Witham
Danya Rushton
17, Barnet
Max Rayworth
16, Chepstow
Rebecca O'Shea
16, Bath
Constance Hayward
string leader
18, Newcastle upon Tyne
Charlie Rose
18, Beaconsfield
Alexandra Harrison
18, Huddersfield
Maryam Giraud
18, Royston
Elizabeth Broomhead
17, Blackburn
Theodore Hayward
18, Larne
Clio Proffitt
string leader
16, London
Daisy Richards
18, Dunblane
Jessica Elliott
15, London
Tifany Rodas
17, London
Marni Benson
16, Wells
Rebecca Wells
14, Orpington
Hannah Killick
17, Bristol

Cellos
Harry Scott-Burt *
18, Rugby
Andrew O'Reilly †
17, Kenilworth
Ella Harrison
16, Harpenden
Megan Clarke
string leader
17, East Molesey
Madeleine Murray
15, Berkhamsted
Jim Goss
18, Guildford
Ben Cummings
19, Balerno
Leo De Flammineis
18, London
Gabriel Ward
string leader
16, London
Sebastian Loerstad
15, Stockholm
Ben Matson
17, Stockport
Matty Oxtoby
16, Reigate
Ivanna Oliinyk
17, Chippenham
Dohyeon Ryu
14, Sevenoaks
Frederick Carter
18, Tring
James Zweimueller
15, New Malden
Evie Mills
18, Bangor
Kit Cookson
17, Vale of Glamorgan

Double Basses
Annabel Beniston *
19, Chatham
Brooke Simpson †
17, Bromley
Emily Chambers
string leader
16, Chipping Norton
Amelie Jones
18, Elstree
Laurence Flower
17, London
Callum Campbell
14, Glasgow
Aiyana Rennie
18, London
Elliot Cundy
15, Guildford
William James
16, Esher
Louis Richardson
17, London
Thomas Judge
string leader
18, Northampton
William Priest
18, Derbyshire

Flutes
Sofía Patterson-Gutiérrez *
18, Stockport
Lucy Barrett
17, Sandy
Kiera Exall
17, Northamptonshire
Erika Khederian
16, London
Emma Loerstad
19, Stockholm
Lily Owens
16, Calne
Isaac Skey
16, Haywards Heath

Oboes
Emily Long *
18, London
Alasdair Cottee
15, Dunbar
Niall Dowling
18, Hemel Hempstead
Daniel Fergie
17, Stockton-on-Tees
Rhea Jo
17, Sutton
Myfanwy Meeran
16, London
Josephine Russell
17, London

Clarinets
Alex Buckley *
19, London
Raj Bhaumik
19, Glasgow
Ruxi Deng
17, Glasgow
Lucas Dick
18, Esher
Alicia Li-Yan-Hui
16, Cambridge
Gemma Winfield
16, Solihull
Luming Zhang
17, Oxford

Bassoons
Marcel Cress ‡
16, Northwich
Thomas Donkin ‡
17, Newton Stewart
Nahuel Angius-Thomas
15, London
Megan Belshaw
16, Reading
Harriet Hillier
16, London
Smera Sachin
16, Cambridge
Kwasi Sefa-Attakora
17, Hyde

Horns
Chloe Harrison ‡
18, Harpenden
Daniel Hibbert ‡
18, Liverpool
Polly Bishop
15, Harpenden
George Brady
15, Berwickshire
Noah Hall
17, Kingston upon Thames
Toby Johnson-Jones
18, Oldham
Robert Johnston
18, Perth
Claire Marsden
16, York
Georgia Paxton
15, Altrincham
Gemma Preston
18, Tunbridge Wells

Trumpets
Florence Wilson-Toy *
18, Saffron Walden
Hetty Christopher
17, Chard
Michael Fashesin-Souza
17, Brentwood
Christopher Gibson
16, Rugby
Edward Hinchliff
18, Farnham
Markus Sadler
18, Chatham
Amelia Stuart
18, Warrington

Trombones
Anna Bailey ‡
17, Cambridge
Benjamin Haslam ‡
19, Northumberland
Morgan Bland
15, Leicestershire
Eleanor Curson
17, Sevenoaks
Arthur Easey
17, London
Edward Pettitt
17, Ipswich
Dewi Thistlewood
18, Cardiff
Brandon Wong
16, London

Tubas
Nona Lawrence *
18, Woking
Sean Linton
18, Caldicot

Percussion
Sana Abu-Jabir ‡
19, Ipswich
Joshua Gearing ‡
18, Hatfield
Kate Broadbent
17, London
Wilamena Dyer
17, Falmouth
William Ewins
16, Edinburgh
Jacob Spence
18, Salisbury
Emma Taylor
18, Telford

Harps
Defne Anar *
17, Bristol
David Ingham
17, Swansea
Jamaal Kashim
16, Egham
Rosie Scott
18, Chatteris

Keyboard
Eliza Ruffle *
17, Sevenoaks
Alexander Kwon
17, Edinburgh

* *Principal*
† *Co-Principal*
‡ *Joint Principal*

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

NYO Tutors
David Aspin
Adrian Bradbury
Liz Burley
Sarah Burnett
Lyn Fletcher
Dawn Hardwick
Kyra Humphries
Tim Lines
Jo Lively
Jim Maynard
Elizabeth McNulty
John Miller
Graham Mitchell
Janet Richardson
Beth Randell
Kiyomi Seed
Ben Thomson
Ian Wright

Coming up at the Proms

Andy Staples

VOCES8

Nick Cutts

JENNIFER FRANCE

WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST

PROM 34 MINDFUL MIX PROM
10.15pm–*c*11.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
Relax into a late-night musical meditation with Grammy-nominated vocal group VOCES8. This Prom explores timeless themes of night, stillness and prayer through the lens of composers from William Byrd to Ola Gjeilo, Eric Whitacre and Roxanna Panufnik. Leave your troubles at the door and join us for a stress-busting treat.

FRIDAY 11 AUGUST

PROM 36 LIGETI & STRAUSS
7.30pm–*c*9.20pm • Royal Albert Hall
Edward Gardner leads the Edvard Grieg Kor, RCM Chamber Choir and London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra in a Prom inspired by music from Stanley Kubrick's iconic film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Ligeti's *Requiem* is paired with the shimmering *Lux aeterna*, while Strauss's epic *Also sprach Zarathustra* closes out the evening.

Phil Sharp

RAKHI SINGH

Chris Christodoulou/BBC

NICHOLAS COLLON

SATURDAY 19 AUGUST

PROM 46
MANCHESTER COLLECTIVE: NEON
10.15pm–*c*11.30pm • Royal Albert Hall
The Manchester Collective and director Rakhi Singh present Steve Reich's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Double Sextet* alongside other contemporary works by Hannah Peel, Ben Nobuto, Oliver Leith and David Lang in this late-night Prom.

SATURDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

PROMS 62 & 63 THE RITE BY HEART
3.00pm–*c*4.45pm & 7.30pm–*c*9.15pm
Royal Albert Hall
Nicholas Collon and the pioneering Aurora Orchestra dramatise the origins of Igor Stravinsky's ballet *The Rite of Spring*, reliving the scene of its notorious concert premiere and finally performing the whole thing from memory.

On Radio, TV and Online

SOUNDS

Every Prom at the Royal Albert Hall and all 'Proms at' chamber concerts broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and on BBC Sounds

Most Proms repeated in *Afternoon Concert* (weekdays, 2.00pm)

iPLAYER

BBC TV and iPlayer will broadcast 24 Proms, including the First Night and Last Night, available to watch on iPlayer for 12 months