

PROMS ANNIVERSARY COMPOSERS

- **William Walton** (b.1902)
- **Richard Rodgers** (b.1902)
- **Maurice Duruflé** (b.1902)
- **Xavier Montsalvatge** (b.1912)
- **Per Nørgård** (b.1932)
- **Rodion Shchedrin** (b.1932)
- **Oliver Knussen** (b.1952)
- **Simon Bainbridge** (b.1952)
- **Dominic Muldowney** (b.1952)

WILLIAM WALTON (1902–83)

The birth of William Walton, 100 years ago, is a major cause for celebration during the 2002 Proms season, particularly because of his relationship with the BBC during his lifetime. The Viola Concerto was Walton's first BBC commission, and the first of his works to be premiered at the Proms (1929). Some of his subsequent major works, including *Belshazzar's Feast*, were also commissioned by the BBC. He wrote the incidental music for Louis MacNeice's BBC radio play *Christopher Columbus*, and even composed the music for the unveiling of a memorial window to Proms founder-conductor Sir Henry Wood in St Sepulchre's Church, High Holborn. Irrespective of Walton's connections to the BBC and the Proms, though, Proms audiences, and indeed audiences around the world, have always welcomed performances of his music.

The 2002 season explores the many spheres in which Walton was involved – from orchestral, choral and chamber music to his acclaimed work for film. The celebrations begin on the First Night with one of his most famous works, *Belshazzar's Feast*, with Willard W. White as soloist. Festivities come to an end on the Last Night with a suite from his film score for *Henry V*, arranged by Sir Malcolm Sargent, as well as the *Orb and Sceptre March* written for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Between are more of his best-loved works – the Viola Concerto, the Sonata for Strings and the First Symphony – as well as some rare treats – the *Christopher Columbus* Suite and *The Twelve*, a setting of a W. H. Auden text on the lives of the Apostles.

Particular highlights of the Walton centenary celebrations come in the Proms Monday lunchtime Chamber Music concerts at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Three of Walton's exquisite choral miniatures give the BBC Singers the opportunity to explore the quintessential English choral tradition which Walton encapsulates.

Façade, given at the opening Proms Chamber Music concert, and performed by mother and son actors Prunella Scales and Samuel West with the Nash Ensemble, promises to be one of the major highlights of the whole 2002 season.

Walton at the Proms

Prom 1, Friday 19 July, 7.30pm

Belshazzar's Feast

Willard W. White (bass-baritone), Choral Arts Society of Washington, BBC Symphony Chorus, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin (conductor)

PCM 1, Monday 22 July, 1.00pm (Lecture Theatre, Victoria & Albert Museum)

Façade

Samuel West and Prunella Scales (reciters), Nash Ensemble, Martyn Brabbins (conductor)

Prom 11, Saturday 27 July, 7.00pm

Christopher Columbus – Suite (arr. Christopher Palmer)

BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Richard Hickox (conductor)

Prom 25, Wednesday 7 August, 7.30pm

Viola Concerto

Lars Anders Tomter (viola), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Ion Marin (conductor)

Prom 34 (Late Night), Wednesday 14 August, 10.00pm

Variations on a Elizabethan Theme (Sellinger's Round)

(collaborative work with I. Holst, Oldham, Tippett, L. Berkeley, Britten and Searle)

BT Scottish Ensemble, Clio Gould (director/violin)

Prom 40, Monday 19 August, 7.30pm

Sonata for Strings (arr. from String Quartet in A minor)

Australian Chamber Orchestra, Richard Tognetti (director/violin)

Prom 60, Wednesday 4 September, 7.00pm

Symphony No. 1

BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Richard Hickox (conductor)

Prom 61 (Late Night), Wednesday 4 September, 10.00pm

The Twelve

BBC Singers, City of London Sinfonia, Stephen Cleobury (conductor)

PCM 8, Monday 9 September, 1.00pm (Lecture Theatre, Victoria & Albert Museum)

A Litany

Set Me as a Seal upon Thine Heart

Where Does the Uttered Music Go?

BBC Singers, Stephen Layton (conductor)

Prom 73 (The Last Night of the Proms), Saturday 14 September, 7.30pm

Anniversary Fanfare [leading into]

March: Orb and Sceptre

Henry V Suite (arr. Sargent) with narration

Samuel West (speaker); BBC Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin (conductor)

RICHARD RODGERS (1902–79)

The centenary of the birth of Richard Rodgers, most famous for such Broadway classics as *The Sound of Music*, *Carousel*, *South Pacific* and *The King and I*, is celebrated with a performance of one of his best-loved musicals. *Oklahoma!*, packed full of famous numbers like ‘People Will Say We’re in Love’, ‘Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin’ and ‘The Surrey With the Fringe on Top’ was the first fruit of Rodgers’s successful collaboration with lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II. It not only broke box-office records in its first run, but broke the boundaries of how Broadway shows were written. A 75-minute concert version is given by an all-star cast, including Maureen Lipman, who revives her acclaimed performance of Aunt Eller from the recent National Theatre production.

Rodgers’s music gets the party atmosphere into full swing during the Last Night of the Proms. Broadway star soloist Audra McDonald tops the bill in a 20-minute medley of the best-loved tunes from some of his 40 Broadway musicals, including numbers such as ‘You’ll Never Walk Alone’.

Rodgers at the Proms

Prom 37, Saturday 17 August, 7.30pm

Babes in Arms – Overture

Victory at Sea – Symphonic Scenario

On Your Toes – Slaughter on Tenth Avenue

Oklahoma! (concert version)

Maureen Lipman (Aunt Eller), Lisa Vroman (Laurey), Klea Blackhurst (Ado Annie), Tim Flavin (Will), Brent Barrett (Curley), Karl Daymond (Jud Fry), Maida Vale Singers, BBC Concert Orchestra, David Charles Abell (conductor)

Prom 73 (The Last Night of the Proms), Saturday 14 September, 7.30pm

A centenary sequence to include **Cinderella Waltz** and **Songs with orchestra**

Audra McDonald (singer), BBC Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin (conductor)

MAURICE DURUFLÉ (1902–86)

Maurice Duruflé, a pupil of Tournemire, Gigout and Dukas, and a contemporary of Olivier Messiaen, enjoyed a career as an organist and as a composer. His legacy goes well beyond his native France and is due mainly to his Requiem. His sense of colour and harmony in the Requiem, as well as in his organ pieces and unaccompanied motets, encapsulates the essence of French religious music of the 20th century.

Duruflé’s centenary is marked in the 2002 season by the first ever Proms performance of his most famous work, the Requiem, given by the BBC Singers and the City of London Sinfonia under Stephen Cleobury. The 2002 BBC Proms also features for the first time his only piece of chamber music, the *Prelude, Recitative and Variations*, which is performed by principal players from the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in a lunchtime chamber concert.

Duruflé at the Proms

PCM 6, Monday 26 August, 1.00pm (Lecture Theatre, Victoria & Albert Museum)

Prelude, Recitative and Variations, Op. 3

Emily Beynon (flute), Gregor Horsch (cello), Andrew West (piano)

Prom 61 (Late Night), Wednesday 4 September, 10.00pm

Requiem

Louise Winter (mezzo-soprano), Roderick Williams (baritone), BBC Singers, City of London Sinfonia, Stephen Cleobury (conductor)

OLIVER KNUSSEN (born 1952)

The Proms is celebrating the 50th birthday of Oliver Knussen in 2002 with performances of his highly acclaimed pair of fantasy operas based on Maurice Sendak's enchanting tales for children, *Where the Wild Things Are* and *Higglety, Pigglety, Pop!* As a composer, a conductor and Music Director of the London Sinfonietta, Knussen's position at the forefront of the international contemporary music scene is firmly established. His music occupies a respected and regularly revisited place in concert and opera programmes worldwide.

Where the Wild Things Are also forms the basis of a major education project in 2002, *A Wild Rumpus*, which takes the Proms out of the Royal Albert Hall and into classrooms. Last year's Town and Country project saw five schools from Stockport and Cumbria working on a project which culminated in the creation of a teachers' pack and CD-ROM widely distributed to UK schools. This year students from Westminster and Wanstead schools retrace Knussen's steps to realise their own dramatic interpretation of Sendak's story's many levels on film, using music, dance, drama, puppetry and video art. The film made as a result of the children's work is featured in the Pre-Prom event before Prom 10.

Knussen at the Proms

Prom 10, Friday 26 July, 7.30pm

Where the Wild Things Are; Higglety, Pigglety, Pop!

Rosemary Hardy (soprano), Valdine Anderson (soprano), Mary King (mezzo-soprano), Christopher Gillett (tenor), Quentin Hayes (baritone), David Wilson-Johnson (bass-baritone), Stephen Richardson (bass), London Sinfonietta, Oliver Knussen (conductor)

OTHER COMPOSER ANNIVERSARIES AT THE PROMS

The BBC Proms is also marking the 50th birthdays of two other major British composers, **Simon Bainbridge** and **Dominic Muldowney**. Simon Bainbridge's *Chant*, a BBC commission for the Millennium, receives its London premiere in a Late Night Prom on 4 September (Prom 61), whilst Dominic Muldowney makes a contribution to *The Oriana Collection*, the BBC Proms and King's Singers joint commission in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee (25 July, Prom 9).

The 90th birthday of Spain's leading Catalan composer, **Xavier Montsalvatge**, is marked on 24 July (Prom 7) by Lawrence Foster and the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona, when Proms debut artist Jennifer Larmore performs his *Canciones negras*, a collection of five songs about black heritage and culture.

The 70th birthdays of **Per Nørgård** and **Rodion Shchedrin** are also celebrated in Proms 2002. The music of Danish composer Per Nørgård, characterised by its unfolding Sibelian lyricism, drama and infectious rhythms, makes a belated Proms debut with the UK premiere of his Symphony No. 6 on 30 July (Prom 15) given by the Danish National Symphony Orchestra under Thomas Dausgaard. Russian composer Rodion Shchedrin, now entering his eighth decade, brings a Russian twist to the Proms' Spanish theme. Vassily Sinaisky conducts the BBC Philharmonic in his arrangements of Albéniz's colourful Tangos (3 August, Prom 19), and his take on Bizet's opera *Carmen* is played by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin on 18 August (Prom 39).