

## THE PROMS AND THE QUEEN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

The Queen's Golden Jubilee inspires a number of special concerts during the BBC Proms 2002 season and leads to an exploration of music composed for coronations in centuries past. The Last Night of the Proms, observing the strong traditions of British culture, opens with a fanfare by Walton leading into his Coronation March *Orb and Sceptre*. Hubert Parry's setting of Psalm 122, 'I Was Glad', first used at the Coronation of Edward VII in 1902, is also a major part of the Last Night.

Robert King with the choir and instrumentalists of the King's Consort revisit October 1727 with a performance of the music given at Westminster Abbey for the Coronation of King George II. It was for this occasion that Handel wrote his famous Coronation Anthems, including *Zadok the Priest* which has been heard at every coronation since. That coronation included earlier anthems by Gibbons, Tallis and Blow, and Purcell's setting of Psalm 122, 'I Was Glad', the opening words of which have been sung at the entrance of every sovereign since 1661. The King's Consort also recreates the resplendent trumpet and drum fanfares used on that occasion.

The centrepiece of the Proms' Jubilee celebrations is a new work co-commissioned by the King's Singers and the BBC Proms in which seven composers and seven poets have been invited to create a 21st-century equivalent to *The Triumphs of Oriana*, a celebratory set of madrigals assembled in 1601 in honour of Elizabeth I. Poet Laureate Andrew Motion was asked to approach six other British poets interested in creating a contemporary response. Motion himself has written one of the texts, and Gracie Nichols, U. A. Fanthorpe, Ian Sinclair, Jo Shapcott, Simon Armitage and Kathleen Jamie provide the others. The British composers chosen to set the texts are Jocelyn Pook, Howard Goodall, Joe Duddell, Joby Talbot, John McCabe, Dominic Muldowney and John Harle. The collection does not concentrate on the monarchy, but evokes aspects of our age, and the past 50 years. Andrew Motion says that these collaborations are 'a challenge to our received ideas – a celebration of this anniversary, of our changed and changing society, and of the central role that art of every kind plays in our lives'.

In 1953, the year of the coronation, many composers wrote music not for use during the ceremony itself, but simply in honour of the occasion and Queen Elizabeth II. The Aldeburgh Festival commissioned Imogen Holst, Arthur Oldham, Michael Tippett, Lennox Berkeley, Benjamin Britten, Humphrey Searle and William Walton to compose a variation each on the English dance *Sellinger's Round*. Clio Gould and her BT Scottish Ensemble play their *Variations on an Elizabethan Theme* at a Late Night Prom on 14 August. This set of variations is echoed by *BBC Music Magazine's* 10th Birthday commission, performed on the Last Night.

The final Proms Chamber Music concert is devoted entirely to coronation music. It features extracts from another coronation collaboration, *A Garland for the Queen*, by Tippett, Finzi and Vaughan Williams, as well as choral songs in honour of Queen Victoria by Elgar and Charles Wood. The concert closes with the Choral Dances from Britten's *Gloriana*, and brings both the Jubilee and Walton celebrations full circle with some of Walton's choral miniatures.

## **Jubilee Celebrations at the Proms**

Prom 9 (Late Night), Thursday 25 July, 10.00pm

### **The Oriana Collection**

Including new works (with specially commissioned poems) by **Joe Duddell** (Gracie Nichols), **Howard Goodall** (U. A. Fanthorpe), **John Harle** (Ian Sinclair), **John McCabe** (Jo Shapcott), **Dominic Muldowney** (Simon Armitage), **Jocelyn Pook** (Andrew Motion) and **Joby Talbot** (Kathleen Jamie) *world premiere*

King's Singers

Prom 32, Tuesday 13 August, 7.30pm

### **The Coronation of King George II**

Music performed at Westminster Abbey on 11 October 1727

Choir of the King's Consort, King's Consort, Robert King (conductor)

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

### **Variations on an Elizabethan Theme (Sellinger's Round)**

I. Holst/Oldham/Tippett/L. Berkeley/Britten/Searle/Walton

BT Scottish Ensemble, Clio Gould (violin/director)

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

**Britten** Choral Dances from Gloriana

**Elgar** To Her Beneath Whose Steadfast Star

**C. Wood** A Century's Penultimate

BBC Singers, Stephen Layton (conductor)

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

**Walton** Anniversary Fanfare [leading into] March: Orb and Sceptre

**Parry** I Was Glad

BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Chorus, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin (conductor)

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