

# Suburb Proms equal their record

“Stand by for ecstasy in Hampstead Garden Suburb!” These were the words of BBC Radio 3 presenter, Georgia Mann, as she prepared listeners for the broadcast of a Proms at St Jude’s concert in June. And how right she was!

That particular concert, featuring Jack Liebeck on violin and Katya Apekisheva on piano, was reviewed by the Evening Standard as “passionate, pensive and atmospheric”. But the audiences each day had good reason to be ecstatic about other events too.

At the opening LitFest weekend, many talks played to full houses. Political commentator Steve Richards wowed the audience not only with his trenchant analysis of the state of British politics, but also with his brilliant impressions of Tony Blair, David Cameron and Boris Johnson, to name but three. Guardian editor Alan Rusbridger pulled a big crowd, and so too did Bart van Es, talking movingly about the experiences of the eponymous star of his Costa prize winning memoir, *The Cut Out Girl*. Suburb born Simon Lewis again displayed his talents as an interviewer, this year quizzing his former Oxford tutor, Vernon Bogdanor, on his book *Beyond Brexit*.

The young star pianist, Isata Kanneh-Mason, generated another ‘wow’ as soloist for Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No 3 with the Fantasia Orchestra, masterfully conducted by Tom Fetherstonhaugh.

Proms’ ability to attract top talent shone throughout the week. One fan on Twitter described hearing Arvo Pärt’s *Fratres* by violinist Fenella Humphreys and the Covent Garden Sinfonia as, “something I’ll never forget – hairs still standing on end tbh”. Charismatic guitarist Miloš impressed with his charm as much as his repertoire. And the superb King’s Singers made spines tingle as their work resonated, thanks in part to St Jude’s excellent acoustic.

The Gershwin evening, presented by the Julian Bliss Septet, was fully sold out, as was the Last Night with the North London Symphony



School Prom



Teeny Prom

Orchestra conducted by Suburb resident Robert Max, and the opening concert performance of *Così fan Tutte* performed by Nevill Holt Opera and Royal Northern Sinfonia, supported by principal sponsor Argent Related.

The sun shone brightly on the last Saturday, bringing a real festive atmosphere as the audience came to eat pizza on Central Square, washed down with Pimm’s. Liza Pulman followed in concert with her tribute to Barbra Streisand, and hardy festival goers then went on to hear the late-night stand-up. Athena Kugblenu, a local from East Finchley, won much applause, as did Scottish newcomer, Eleanor Morton.

Part of Proms’ mission is to bring live classical music to younger audiences. At the youngest end of the scale, the two Teeny Prom events for babies and toddlers, supported by the DaCapo Music Foundation, were highly successful, with under-fives singing and playing with musical instruments. Slightly older children really enjoyed the Junk Orchestra, giving them a chance to make music from recycled products, and to attend the Journey through Space, presented by the BBC Elstree Band, conducted by Noah Max. On the final Sunday afternoon, the Magnard Ensemble was magnificent with its concert bringing music to life for everyone from five years old upwards.

Proms also brought 11 local schools together for a big school concert one afternoon, having

given them a chance to practise in various workshops. It was wonderful to watch such enthusiastic performances.

Winner of Proms Fanfare Competition for students was Michelle Mubiru of Mount House School, who heard her winning piece played on Proms’ Last Night. Judges said she had truly captured the character and essence of a fanfare.

Thanks to the support of the HGS Residents Association, Proms was able to put on a great series of free lunchtime concerts. Violinist Sophie Rosa and pianist Sholto Kynoch particularly impressed with their programme of Spanish music, as did prize-winning pianist Chiyan Wong playing Liszt.

Lovers of fresh air and exercise are never disappointed with Proms Heritage Walks, and virtually all were sold out. Paul Capewell of the HGS Trust was especially informative about the Wonderful World of Charles Paget Wade as he took walkers around the Suburb buildings Wade had designed.

All of these events raised money for Proms’ two target charities, North London Hospice and Toynbee Hall. Thanks to the support of ticket buyers, sponsors, advertisers, donors and Friends, Proms has managed to donate a whopping £60,000 this year, up from £55,000 in 2018.

The festival will back in 2020, running from 27 June to 5 July. Put the dates in your diary now!

RON FINLAY



Charles Paget Wade walk led by Paul Capewell of the HGS Trust



Suburb born Simon Lewis (left) interviews Vernon Bogdanor, on his book *Beyond Brexit*

## Fellowship Concert Series news

Hardly have the last chords of the Proms at St Jude’s died away, then the Suburb is on to its next musical event. The intimate bijou Autumn Concert Series will again take place at Fellowship House, opposite Willifield Green, this year. They are at 3pm on six consecutive Sunday afternoons from October 20 to November 24.

This tenth anniversary of the Series marks a change, which we hope to make seamless. Peter Falk who originated, inspired and managed the concerts so well over many years has decided to step down from this role and management has now reverted to HGS Fellowship.

Little will change. Thanks to the continuing support of our traditional sponsors – the

HGS Residents Association, the John S Cohen Foundation and the HGS Trust – seat prices will remain at an attractive £11. This includes free drinks after the concerts and a chance to mingle and chat with the musicians. Buy tickets for four or more concerts and you’ll enjoy a 10% discount.

Most important of all, the talented Artistic Directorial team of Deborah Calland and Barry Millington remain in place. This year they present another glittering roster with artists ranging from top international performers to the latest prize-winning young talents. The leading cellists, Thomas Carroll and Gemma Rosefield, both make welcome returns, and we

are delighted that the pianist Clare Hammond has found time in her increasingly hectic schedule to visit us. The musical programme too encompasses both the reassuringly familiar (Beethoven’s ‘Archduke’ Piano Trio, Mendelssohn, Rachmaninov and much more) and the carefully selected lesser-known repertoire that audiences here have enjoyed exploring in previous years. The popular local composer David Matthews and Rhian Samuel will both be present to talk about their music.



Clare Hammond

For details contact Andrew Botterill on 07973 186729, or at [andrew@northsq.com](mailto:andrew@northsq.com).

If you want to come, don’t delay – tickets go like hot cakes!



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