• Baaba Maal makes Proms debut

• Anniversary composers Tippett, Tallis, Pärt, Berio, Boulez and Maw celebrated

• Haydn’s ‘Nelson’ Mass highlights Sea theme

Once again, the Late Night Proms offer a wide and eclectic range of music. From the rhythm and songs of Senegal, anniversary celebrations of Tallis and Arvo Part, to Haydn’s mighty ‘Nelson’ Mass, there are 12 concerts to appeal to every taste.

Senegalese master musician Baaba Maal makes his BBC Proms debut (Prom 40), with his band Daande Lenol (The Voice of the People). Known as The Nightingale, because of his clear, high-pitched voice, Baaba Maal sings in Pulaar, the language of a nomadic people in Senegal, and plays guitar for songs that weave tales of Africa.

Continuing the celebration of Proms anniversary composers, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, conducted by Paul Hillier, performs works by compatriot Arvo Part for his 70th birthday (Prom 45). The 100th anniversary of British composer Sir Michael Tippett is marked with a combined BBC Singers and Nash Ensemble concert (Prom 70) which includes Tippett’s Four Songs from the British Isles, conducted by Stephen Cleobury, and the suite from The Tempest, featuring soloists Mark Padmore and David Wilson-Johnson, conducted by Martyn Brabbins. Also celebrated is the 500th anniversary of the birth of the composer Tallis, as the voices of The Sixteen, directed by Harry Christophers, perform a programme including Nine Tunes for Archbishop Parker’s Psalter and the famous 40-part motet Spem in alium (Prom 64).

In a major highlight of the season, Sir John Eliot Gardiner returns to the BBC Proms with the Monteverdi Choir and the English Baroque Soloists in an all-Haydn programme, including the monumental Missa in angustiis, known as the Nelson Mass (Prom 7). Performed as part of the Proms Sea theme and to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar, the piece was written in 1798 after Nelson’s victory at the Battle of the Nile and was performed in honour of a visit by Nelson to Eisenstadt and the court of Prince Esterházy, where Haydn was Court composer. It became popularly known as the ‘Nelson’ Mass after the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

Making their Proms debut, the acclaimed period-instrument ensemble Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin perform orchestral suites by Telemann and Bach, and Handel duets with...
soprano Maria Cristina Kiehr and countertenor Daniel Taylor (Prom 29). Also appearing at the BBC Proms for the first time are the toe-tapping gaelic fiddle group Blazin' Fiddles, who round off Violins!! with a Late Night concert of reels from the Scottish Highlands and Islands in a double-bill with the 2001 Proms sensation, Romanian gypsy group the Roby Lakatos Ensemble (Prom 22).

Also visiting the BBC Proms for Late Night Prom appearances are ensembles from around the UK. The London Sinfonietta perform Weill's Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, and are joined by the London Sinfonietta Voices for anniversary composer Berio's Coro, conducted by Diego Masson (Prom 26); violinist Clio Gould (left) brings the Scottish Ensemble to the BBC Proms (Prom 48) to celebrate Nicholas Maw's 70th birthday and the London première of Stuart MacRae's Hamartia (Cello Concerto), featuring soloist Li-Wei, alongside 20th-century masterpieces by Elgar and Shostakovich; and in their Proms debut, the Manchester Camerata, conducted by Douglas Boyd, perform Beethoven and Tippett's Divertimento on Sellinger's Round, (Prom 17) and are joined by soprano Kate Royal for Mozart concert arias.

BBC performing groups provide Late Night highlights: the first late night appearance from the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Atherton with soprano Susan Bullock for Henryk Mikolaj Górecki's Symphony No. 3 'Symphony of Sorrowful Songs' (Prom 54), one of the most powerful testimonies to the Second World War; and the BBC Singers and BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Robertson (who takes up his position as Principal Guest Conductor immediately after the Proms season), celebrate Pierre Boulez's 80th birthday, alongside music by his teacher Messiaen, as well as classics by Stravinsky (Prom 61).