



Fatma Said • Prom 26

BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, 2016–18

‘My Egyptian identity is not only important to me – it *is* me!’ Soprano Fatma Said is describing how her background feeds into her performances. ‘Egypt is the Middle East, it’s Africa, it’s part of the Arab countries and it’s part of the Mediterranean – all these different impulses affect my interpretations and musical understanding.’

This breadth of vision is one of the things that marks Said out as a distinctive figure among her generation of singers. As a BBC New Generation Artist from 2016 to 2018, she broadened her outlook even further, she says: ‘It was one of the most beautiful experiences, and gave me a great deal of studio recording practice – there’s so much to learn about oneself in that area. It also gave me the opportunity to sing in many venues across the UK, not only in London.’

Mozart’s *Requiem* on 7 August offers Said more than one first. ‘I’ve never actually attended a BBC Proms concert, although I used to watch the concert broadcasts and dream of being there one day. I’ve never performed the *Requiem* before, either. Mozart’s music is as sacred as the text, and he treats the voice like a holy instrument. His way of composing for soprano teaches us about the voice and how to use it. The more I indulge in Mozart’s music, the more I learn about my own vocal technique.’