



Paul Lewis • Prom 52

Ryan Wigglesworth: Piano Concerto

‘It’s going to be a very Mozart-focused concert, that’s for sure!’ British pianist Paul Lewis is talking about the theme behind his BBC Proms performance in Prom 52, which features music by the great Austrian composer alongside tributes from more recent figures. ‘Mozart is constantly challenging,’ Lewis continues, ‘but in the best possible way. As a pianist you always have to emulate the vocal quality in his music. The piano can certainly sing, but it doesn’t sing by itself – you have to achieve that somehow.’

Ryan Wigglesworth joins Lewis not only as conductor, but also as composer and co-soloist. ‘We’ve worked together several times before and we’ve always felt we’ve seen eye to eye,’ Lewis explains. He’s the soloist in Wigglesworth’s own tribute to Mozart, giving the British composer’s Piano Concerto its very first performance. And, the two men team up as joint soloists in Mozart’s own Concerto for two pianos, which Lewis considers more exacting than you perhaps might expect. ‘It’s always a challenge for two pianists to play together,’ says Lewis. ‘If it doesn’t work, I actually think the sound of two pianos together isn’t great. You have to integrate your sound with that of the other pianist. But, when it works, you feel something of the sheer delight of playing the piano, which I hugely enjoy.’