

# BBC Proms

## BBC Proms presents a feast of Iraqi music

Monday 9 August, 10pm

Iraqi *Oud* player, **Khyam Allami**, and his *BBC Radio 3 World Routes Academy* mentor, the pioneering Iraqi guitarist, singer and composer, **Ilham al-Madfai**, come together at the BBC Proms to reveal the results of a unique nine-month mentorship. The event marks the culmination of their musical journey together as Ilham returns for his first major performance in the UK in over five years for this celebration of Iraqi music. Renowned as the first artist to mix Iraqi and Western influences, Ilham introduces a group of international musicians to present a selection of his own songs, as well as modern arrangements of Iraqi standards.

Khyam Allami is a young and active London based musician of Iraqi descent. His early forays in violin, drums and bass guitar lead to the search for a new tonality and the discovery of his Iraqi roots through the 'Ud (or *Oud* – Middle Eastern Lute). BBC Radio 3's *World Routes* places Ilham al-Madfai in the position of 'mentor' to Khyam, who is the first recipient of this scholarship. Ilham is hugely popular across the Arab world, having transgressed the politics of the region and played a significant role in the development of Iraqi musical heritage. As they draw on their mutual roots, they continue to pioneer the ongoing modernisation of traditional Arabic music.

As Ilham and Khyam work together, BBC Radio 3 follows their partnership through regular interviews, recordings and performances, while also taking a wider look at Iraqi music and cultural traditions (Saturdays, 3pm). As part of the scheme, Khyam Allami curates an afternoon dedicated to Iraqi culture and diaspora on London's South Bank. *Celebrating Sanctuary Festival* takes place on Sunday June 13 and features live music, spoken word, theatre, workshops and discussions.

In preparation for their joint Proms appearance, Khyam will be shadowing Ilham over a three week period of concerts and collaborations in Beirut, Damascus and Amman. Lucy Duran will be on location and her report can be heard on BBC Radio 3 on 7 August. The BBC Proms on 9 August presents a remarkable opportunity to see the results of this distinctive collaboration.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/worldmusic/worldroutesacademy/>  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio3/khyam\\_allami/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio3/khyam_allami/)

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**Notes to editors:**

**World Routes** is broadcast on Saturdays at 3pm. Lucy Duran presents music from around the world featuring a mix of interviews with top performers, live concerts, a monthly CD round-up, and special location features.

**The BBC Proms** is the world's largest classical music festival, with more than 90 concerts – featuring many of the world's greatest artists and orchestras – as well as a host of extra events including talks, workshops, free performances and family events.

The Proms runs from Friday 16 July to Saturday 11 September 2010, and full information on the season is available at [bbc.co.uk/proms](http://bbc.co.uk/proms).

The BBC Proms presents a wide range of music and artists and is renowned for its low ticket prices. Highlights this year include a huge opening weekend with Mahler's 'Symphony of a Thousand', Wagner's *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* with Bryn Terfel and Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* with Plácido Domingo. There are two starry Broadway Proms dedicated to the music of Stephen Sondheim and Rodgers & Hammerstein, and the hugely successful Doctor Who Prom returns. Featured artists include Paul Lewis – who plays all of Beethoven's piano concertos – John Eliot Gardiner, Valery Gergiev, Sir Charles Mackerras and Sir Simon Rattle. Maria João Pires returns to the Proms after more than 10 years for an all-Chopin concert, while virtuoso violinist Nicola Benedetti, and jazz star Jamie Cullum make their Proms debuts.

The season culminates with the famous Last Night of the Proms, with BBC Proms in the Park and Big Screen events across the UK.

The BBC Proms are broadcast on BBC Radio 3, and many are broadcast on BBC television (BBC Two and Four primarily, but also BBC Three and BBC HD), and all broadcasts are available via the BBC iPlayer for 7 days.

**Full details are now on the Proms website: [bbc.co.uk/proms](http://bbc.co.uk/proms).**

**Booking is now open:**

**online at [bbc.co.uk/proms](http://bbc.co.uk/proms) by telephone 0845 401 5040 in person at the Royal Albert Hall**