

Nuestra política de privacidad se actualizó por última vez el lunes 24 junio 2019 [Consultar aquí](#) [Eliminar](#)

MOZART THE SERAGLIO



bachtrack

CONCIERTOS

ÓPERA

DANZA

GALERÍA DE IMÁGENES

INICIO CONCIERTOS



Prom 44: Rattle and the LSO full-throated in Walton, Koechlin and Varèse

Por Chris Garlick, 21 agosto 2019

Only [Sir Simon Rattle](#) could fill the Royal Albert Hall with a concert programme in which the first half consisted of two obscure and not exactly *easy listening* works from the mid-20th century. Of course, with Walton's crowd-pleasing *Belshazzar's Feast* beckoning after the interval was the main pull for the Proms audience, but they would apparently have to endure works by Charles Koechlin and Edgard Varèse to reach that alluring prize.



Sir Simon Rattle

© BBC | Chris Christodoulou

Koechlin's symphonic poem *Les Bandar-log* from 1940 is this prolific composer's most well-known orchestral work, which isn't saying much with only one previous Proms performance back in 1993. His individual eccentricity has been hard to sell, despite much recent advocacy in recordings by Heinz Holliger. The mystify range of styles he adopts can embrace the late Romanticism of César Franck, through Debussy, jazz and with a touch of the Second Viennese School thrown in for good measure. *Les Bandar-log* certainly reflects all these predilections and more and fastens them to the imagery of the troublesome troop of monkeys from Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*, for which he had been writing a series of tone poems since 1899, this being the last of the set.

Rattle and a sparkling [London Symphony Orchestra](#) certainly made a case for this strange work. Extremes of pitch, dynamics and tempi are juxtaposed, creating a bewildering tonal picture of a forest with dangers in dark corners and the random burst of primate high jinks. The clarity of the orchestral balance and the control of the pace impressed here, as well as the progression to the final outburst of rather aggressive colour that caps the work.

After this assault on the senses one might have longed for something more soothing, like a Mozart concerto, but instead we were launched into Round 2 in even more boisterous form. Unlike Koechlin, who laboured away without really having an impact on the course of musical history, Varèse was to become one of the darlings of the post war *avant-garde*. However, it was mainly his later work which dealt with musical brutality and electronic music that were focused on by Boulez and his cohort, rather than *Amérique* which was his early foray into post-*Rite of Spring* excess.



The LSO, London Symphony Chorus, Orféo Català and Orféo Català Youth Choir

© BBC | Chris Christodoulou



Finished in 1921 it is usually the later more practically orchestrated version from 1927 that is heard in concert, but Rattle opted for the massively scored original version, its first performance at the Proms. And what a juggernaut of a piece it is. It's evocation of the blazing glory of New York in the early years of the century is presented with the echoes of the *Rite of Spring* and Schoenberg's *Five Orchestral Pieces* firmly to fore. However, the overall effect is uniquely gritty and tinged with an ironic humour that doesn't feature anywhere else in the composer's output.

Rattle and the LSO were fully engaged throughout, never daunted by its technical challenges and relishing the backdrop of the 18 percussionists that bang and bashed and squealed their way through the score. The final extended climactic passage was delivered with devastating force and unanimity, clearly leaving the audience feeling both battered and elated.

A hard act to follow, but Walton was the man for the job. *Belshazzar's Feast* has been a popular work since it was first performed in 1931. It is perhaps the composer's most effective work with its canny balance of drama, jubilation and effective thematic material. And it certainly lived up to expectations here. The three choirs – the London Symphony Chorus, Orféo Català and Orféo Català Youth Choir – were splendid at every turn, whether in the gentle keening passage work or the full-throated final chorus. Gerald Finley was stylish as ever and resolute when needed. Rattle and the LSO understood the ebb and flow of the work and with even more extra brass than normal – left over from the Varèse – everything led to the well-earned final outburst of joy.

