

# AMERICA

Royal Festival Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall  
Saturday 23 – Sunday 24 March

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*The Rest Is Noise* is a year-long festival that digs deep into 20th-century history to reveal the influences on art in general and classical music in particular, inspired by Alex Ross' book *The Rest Is Noise*. We have brought together some of the world's finest orchestras and soloists to perform many of the most significant works of the 20th century. We reveal why these pieces were written and how they transformed the musical language of the modern world. If you're new to 20th-century music, then this is your time to start exploring. There has never been a festival like this.

**Jude Kelly, Artistic Director, Southbank Centre**

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## AMERICA 1900 – 1950

One of the 20th-century's dominant stories was the emergence of America as a world power – in music, culture and world politics. The fascinating story of America finding its voice takes in the Jazz Age, the Wall Street Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal, in a heady mix of race, culture and politics. The world would fall in love with America's spirit and culture but this young nation had a glaring contradiction at its heart. The tension between the democratic ideals of America as a nation and its history of slavery would soon demand resolution. When Dvořák predicted the emergence of an

American classical tradition in 1890, he could scarcely have foreseen the extraordinary explosion of creativity during the first half of the 20th century.

By the end of the Second World War, America was host to a wealth of musical innovators creating radical, internationally renowned music that was completely American in spirit and could thrill and move audiences in equal measure. These innovators were not writing classical music however – they were blues, jazz and swing musicians, and more often than not, they were African-American.

**All sessions are of a limited capacity and seating is allocated on a first come first served basis.**

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### Foyles Bookshop: *Continue the Journey*

Throughout *The Rest Is Noise* festival, Foyles will be stocking books by many of the writers featured in the programme, as well as books that provide a historical and cultural overview of the period. Why not browse the stall during a coffee or lunch break, and take your enthusiasm for particular subjects and artists a stage further? You can find the book stall in Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer, or visit Foyles bookshop on Queen's Walk.

**Sign up to the journey email at [southbankcentre.co.uk/therestisnoise](https://southbankcentre.co.uk/therestisnoise) for further content, to catch up on any talks you missed, and to delve deeper into the festival.**

**[southbankcentre.co.uk/therestisnoise](https://southbankcentre.co.uk/therestisnoise)**

The next stop in *The Rest Is Noise* is *Art Of Fear: music of oppression and war*, from Saturday 11 – Sunday 12 May. See festival brochure for full listings, or visit [southbankcentre.co.uk/therestisnoise](https://southbankcentre.co.uk/therestisnoise)

*The Rest Is Noise*  
is inspired by  
Alex Ross' book

THE  
REST  
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## SATURDAY 23 MARCH

10.30am – 6pm The Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Life upon the Wicked Stage: Part 1</b> Activities exploring the American musical, taking <i>Show Boat</i> and its composer Jerome Kern as inspiration. Curated by Mary King and Southbank Centre's Voicelab, you can sing, watch film clips and even tap dance. See signage on site for the full list of activities.
11am – 12 noon Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>Kevin Jackson: America Forges the Modern Age</b> From Hollywood to Jazz, from Gershwin to Steinbeck, America was the cultural heartbeat of the world from the 1920s onwards, as it threw off the shackles of Europe and created its own cultural voice.
12.30pm – 1.30pm The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>Listen to this with Richard Bernas</b> Conductor Richard Bernas talks about and plays recorded extracts of the music from <i>America</i> , including Ellington, Gershwin, Copland and Ives.
Level 4 Blue Bar at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Noise Bites: A whistle-stop tour through history</b> A quick journey through the key artists, social movements and scientific breakthroughs of an era. Topics explored in this session by a range of speakers and performers include <b>Theodore Dreiser, the Wall Street Crash</b> and <b>race relations</b> .
Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall	<b>The Old World Comes to America</b> Writer Paul Griffiths, in conversation with Southbank Centre's Gillian Moore, discusses how major European figures established the classical music scene in the US in the early 20th century.
Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Early American Shorts</b> Featuring <i>The Land Beyond the Sunset, Manhatta, We Work Again, Marian Anderson – The Lincoln Memorial Concert</i> , and <i>The Autobiography of a Jeep</i> . Rarely seen short films provide a taste of America's evolving sense of identity.
2pm – 3pm Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>Hugh Brogan: Keynote talk</b> Hugh Brogan, author of <i>The Penguin History of the USA</i> , discusses the political and social convulsions in early 20th-century America as it became the world's most powerful economy.
Level 4 Blue Bar at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Noise Bites: A whistle-stop tour through history</b> A quick journey through the key topics of an era. This session: <b>Works Progress Administration, Pearl Harbor</b> and <b>Duke Ellington</b> , with a range of speakers and performers.
Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Stravinsky</b> A 1965 documentary following Stravinsky as he conducted the CBC Symphony Orchestra in a recording of <i>Symphony of Psalms</i> , written in 1930 for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and a key piece of the composer's neo-classical phase.
Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Geoff Dyer: American Photography</b> Drawing on work by photographers such as Walker Evans, Paul Strand and Dorothea Lange, this event examines how the great migration from the American South, the Gold Rush and the rise of a consumer culture were captured by the camera lens.
3.30pm – 4.30pm The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>Listen to this with Richard Bernas</b> Please see 12.30pm.
Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>Julian Joseph and Mike Phillips: Shadowball</b> The jazz opera <i>Shadowball</i> combines stories of Black baseball players and jazz musicians from the 1930s and '40s. Composer Julian Joseph and librettist Mike Phillips discuss the themes and inspirations of the opera with images and music extracts.
Level 4 Blue Bar at Royal Festival Hall	<b>ee cummings and Wallace Stevens: Poets of America</b> In the early 20th century, American poetry took a series of radical turns. Matthew Caley looks at the unusual syntax of ee cummings. Oli Hazzard considers the poems of Wallace Stevens. *Unfortunately, John Stammers had to withdraw from this event.
Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall	<b>The Old World Comes to America</b> Please see 12.30pm.

Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall  
**Martha Graham: The Dancer Revealed**  
The definitive documentary of dancer, choreographer and teacher Martha Graham, who shaped the major dance form of the 20th century. Narrated by Claire Bloom, with interviews from leading figures such as Agnes de Mille, Erick Hawkins and Ron Protas.

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5.30pm – 7pm  
The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall  
**The 1938 Project**  
Specially programmed for the festival by composer Julian Joseph, some of the UK's leading jazz musicians play Joseph's arrangements of classic 1938 American music.

Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall  
**Early American Shorts**  
Please see 12.30pm.

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6.45pm – 7.45pm  
Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall  
**Stravinsky**  
Please see 2pm.

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8pm – 10.10pm  
The Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall  
**The Cotton Club**  
Francis Ford Coppola's 1984 film looks back to the peak of the legendary Harlem nightclub where only blacks performed and only whites listened. Set in the 1920s and '30s, it features Richard Gere, Gregory Hines, Diane Lane and Nicolas Cage.

## **SUNDAY 24 MARCH**

10.30am – 7pm  
The Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall  
**Life upon the Wicked Stage: Part 2**  
A day exploring the American musical, taking *Porgy & Bess* and the Gershwins as its inspiration. Sing, tap dance, and watch film clips. The day ends with a performance at 4.30pm followed by a jazz social dance led by Perry Louis and The JazzCotech Dancers.

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11am – 12 noon  
The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall  
**Breakfast with Duke Ellington**  
Grab a coffee and delve inside the workings of some of the music behind the festival in this informal and practical session. Led by composer Fraser Trainer and Nu Civilisation Orchestra's Musical Director Peter Edwards.

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12.30pm – 1.30pm  
Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall  
**Ben Winters: Korngold in America**  
Ben Winters from The Open and Liverpool Universities gives a talk about Erich Korngold, who arrived in America to adapt the music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This celebrated Viennese opera composer went on to score Warner Bros films before returning to the concert hall to infuse it with Hollywood glamour.

Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall  
**Early American Shorts**  
Please see Saturday 23 March, 12.30pm.

Level 4 Blue Bar at Royal Festival Hall  
**Noise Bites: A whistle-stop tour through history**  
A quick journey through the key artists, social movements and scientific breakthroughs of an era. Topics explored in this session include **Mondrian in New York** and **the Spanish Civil War** with a range of speakers and performers.

Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall  
**The Great American Musical**  
Writer Edward Seckerson and Southbank Centre Artist-in-Residence Mary King discuss the American musical, from Jerome Kern to the Golden Age of Broadway in the 1940s and '50s.

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2pm – 3pm  
The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall  
**Focus on Ruth Crawford Seeger**  
A performance of Seeger's 1931 String Quartet, by musicians from the Royal Academy of Music. Plus a talk on the legacy of one of America's finest composers.

Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall  
**American Mavericks**  
Composer Stephen Montague gives an insight into the individuals who created an eccentric but truly American classical music style, from Charles Ives to John Cage.

Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall  
**Science keynote: Marcus Chown**  
Marcus Chown, cosmology consultant of *New Scientist*, takes us on a mind-expanding tour of the universe. How did we ever discover that the Universe had a beginning, and how can we see direct evidence of the big bang today?

Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Gershwin at the Proms</b> In this documentary Charles Hazlewood conducts the BBC Concert Orchestra, featuring from 2006 the ever popular <i>Rhapsody in Blue</i> with pianist Kevin Cole; and from 2008, Gershwin's 'Strike Up The Band' and – from <i>Porgy &amp; Bess</i> – 'My Man's Gone Now.'
3.30pm – 4.30pm The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>The American City</b> During the 1920s and '30s, artists and writers reacted to the new and unique energy of American cities. Professor David Peters Corbett discusses the realist painter George Bellows; Fiona Anderson looks at the writing of John Dos Passos and Hart Crane.
Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Bonnie Greer: Rise of Black Music</b> As a writer and critic, Bonnie Greer has explored the history of Black migration, art and music in America. In <i>Obama Music</i> , Greer traced her family's journey from the American south to Chicago, uncovering the heart of jazz, blues, gospel and soul in the process.
Level 4 Blue Bar at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Ben Lewis: Modern Art in America</b> During the late 1920s, a boom in visual arts took place which influences the way we create and teach in the present day. The Museum of Modern Art was founded in 1929 and in South Carolina, Black Mountain College became the nucleus for cross-art-form exploration.
Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Martha Graham: The Dancer Revealed</b> Please see Saturday 23 March, 3.30pm.
Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion, Hayward Gallery	<b>Aura Satz in conversation with Stephanie Rosenthal</b> Artist Aura Satz discusses her new installation for the Hayward Gallery Project Space, exploring the invention of 'frequency hopping' developed by Hollywood star Hedy Lamarr and composer George Antheil.
5pm – 6pm Level 5 Function Room at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Invisible Men: African-American Composers</b> Radio and TV presenter Paul Gambaccini chairs a panel with writer Candace Allen, composer Philip Herbert and conductor Scott Stroman, looking at hidden figures of American music: African-American classical composers, jazz musicians and Jewish immigrants.
Level 4 Blue Bar at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Noise Bites: A whistle-stop tour through history</b> A quick journey through the key topics of the era. This session's topics include <b>jazz and painting and the New Deal on film.</b>
Purcell Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>The Harlem Renaissance</b> This closing session looks at the cross-cultural legacy of The Harlem Renaissance, centred on the poetry of Langston Hughes with musicians Cleveland Watkins and Byron Wallen. Plus readings of some of Hughes' poems from actor Ray Shell.
6.15pm – 7pm Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>BBC Concert Orchestra Pre-Concert Talk</b> Jazz expert Dr Catherine Tackley from The Open University is joined by musicians from Dune Music and Tomorrow's Warriors to give an introduction to the blues and how they influenced the music of William Grant Still and Duke Ellington.
6.30pm – 7.30pm Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Gershwin at the Proms</b> Please see 2pm.
7.30pm – 10pm Queen Elizabeth Hall	<b>*BBC Concert Orchestra: Hidden Voices</b> Hear William Grant Still's <i>Afro-American Symphony</i> , the first symphony by a Black American composer to be performed by a major orchestra. *Not included in Day or Weekend Passes. Book at the Ticket Office. Tickets from £12.
8pm – 9pm Blue Room, Spirit Level at Royal Festival Hall	<b>Martha Graham: The Dancer Revealed</b> Please see Saturday 23 March, 3.30pm.

The next stop in *The Rest Is Noise* is *Art Of Fear*, Saturday 11 – Sunday 12 May. See your festival brochure for more information.

Principal orchestra partner:



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