

JoAnn Falletta

what the critics say ...



JoAnn Falletta's Proms Debut with the Ulster Orchestra, Ulster Youth Orchestra & James Galway

August 4, 2012

JoAnn Falletta steered the combined groups through an exciting performance to a fevered finale. It was a strong Proms debut for the Ulster Orchestra's new Chief and a heartening showcase for the strength of music-making in Northern Ireland.

Andrew Morris, The Classical Source

New chief conductor JoAnn Falletta steered the young players through a delightful *España* (Chabrier). Together the two orchestras brought many good things to the 1910 suite of *The Firebird*.

Neil Fisher, London Times

Earlier in the day, the Ulster Orchestra had shared its Prom with the Ulster Youth Orchestra, with whom it also shares a principal conductor, JoAnn Falletta. That, too, had contained a BBC commission. Elaine Agnew's *Dark Hedges* was composed for the combined orchestras and for the solo flute of James Galway, who also played Mozart's *D Major Flute Concerto K314* with his unfailing fluency and wit. A group of percussionists stationed in the middle of the arena punctuated and coloured Galway's ruminations, while the orchestra intervened more stridently; Agnew's depiction of the Antrim countryside is certainly eventful.

Andrew Clements, The Guardian

It's a wonderful idea! The Ulster Youth Orchestra of Northern Ireland continued the 2012 focus on youth at the Proms but they shared the platform with the Ulster Orchestra under American conductor JoAnn Falletta, musical director of both the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Virginia Symphony Orchestras in the USA. It's a wonderful chance for the young players who stand to gain so much invaluable experience drawing on the knowledge and ways of seasoned players and simply 'being there' in this wonderful hall.

JoAnn Falletta was recently appointed principal conductor of the Ulster Orchestra and who better to share her first Prom with her new orchestra than Sir James Galway. As well as a Mozart *D Major Concerto*, Galway whizzed through Bach's *Badinerie* in just over a minute much to the delight of the audience. The climax of the concert came as both orchestras joined together, that's around 150 players, for the 1911 *Firebird Suite*.

Christopher Lawrence, ABC Classic FM