



Otto Tausk • Prom 24

conductor

‘I had my very first Proms experience as a conductor a few years ago, but actually I never made it to the stage – although I was even wearing my concert suit ...’ What was it that prevented Dutch conductor Otto Tausk from making his Proms debut in 2003? ‘At the time I was Assistant Conductor to Valery Gergiev and, being the stand-in for the busiest conductor in the world, I was always more than prepared to take over! But he did finally arrive, and I remember a phenomenal Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique* with the Rotterdam Philharmonic.’

Tausk makes his official Proms debut in Prom 24, conducting one of his favourite concertos. ‘Dvořák’s Cello Concerto makes a heroic statement in the way that the cello is in musical conversation with the orchestra – although the orchestra is much stronger, the cello is a completely equal voice in its musical and emotional expression.’

The heroic theme continues in Richard Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*. “‘A Hero’s Life’ is not just Strauss celebrating himself but a work that puts the orchestra’s musicians in the spotlight. Every one of them is a hero in this piece – as we all are in our own lives.’ Tausk is delighted, too, to be appearing with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, with which he’s enjoyed a long history. ‘It’s one of the most versatile orchestras I’ve had the privilege and joy of joining.’