



Omer Meir Wellber
Proms 7 & 14
BBC Philharmonic

‘Since I’m doing two Proms before I officially start, I feel it’s important I should really put my stamp on the programmes.’ Israeli-born conductor Omer Meir Wellber becomes the BBC Philharmonic’s Chief Conductor in September, and his Proms on 23 and 29 July offer a foretaste of his far-reaching plans.

For the first, he contrasts two kinds of music-making – ‘from a minority and a majority, or from an immigrant and a local’. He explains: ‘Alongside Mozart and Schumann, we have the famous immigrant Schoenberg – more than half his music was written outside his home country. There’s also Paul Ben-Haim, who emigrated from Germany to what became Israel and put the German school in the Mediterranean. His First Symphony is like Mahler, but with Middle Eastern melodies. These issues of accepting cultural mixtures and collaborations are serious, given everything that’s going on in Europe and America at the moment.’

His second concert, featuring Haydn’s oratorio *The Creation*, is inspired by his passion for the composer. ‘I’ve become a huge admirer. Apart from period ensembles, hardly anyone plays much Haydn these days, and bigger orchestras need to be able to play his music. I’m going to be conducting a lot of Haydn with the BBC Philharmonic.’