



Image Nadia F. Romani

Worth the Wait

András Schiff contrasts Classical elegance with thrilling 20th century masterpieces

For a pianist of the outstanding international reputation of András Schiff, it took a long time for him to get round to tackling Beethoven. Until the age of 50, in fact. Schiff explained that he was waiting until he felt he was ready for the philosophical and emotional demands of the great composer's music. And when that moment arrived, in 2004, he went for it in a big way, with a cycle of Beethoven's complete piano sonatas plus a lecture-recital series that has gone down as one of the greatest public projects of musical insight and communication. 'It's very hard to talk about this music,' Schiff nevertheless argued in one of his lectures, 'because it's too great to put into words.'

It is two unusual Beethoven sonatas that Schiff brings to his Festival recital – the short but

emotionally complex Sonata in E minor Op 90, and the intimate A major Sonata Op 101. He complements them with the 1926 Piano Sonata by his compatriot Béla Bartók – a work whose thrillingly percussive music draws heavily on the earthy, rowdy folk music of Hungary and Romania – along with Janáček's *Sonata 1.X.1905*, and Schubert's Sonata in G D894. **David Kettle**

András Schiff

Monday 25 August 8.00pm
Usher Hall
eif.co.uk/andrasschiff