

Reviews

MUSIC

Flanders Symphony Orchestra and Miloš Karadaglić

Usher Hall, Edinburgh



HEARTTHROB Montenegrin guitarist Miloš Karadaglić apologised to the Usher Hall audience for having to cancel his previous Edinburgh gig – back in 2016, at the same venue – because of a recurrent hand injury. But he was back on form, he assured us, and back in the capital to perform the same piece he'd been intending to play three years back: Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

Indeed, it's become something of a Miloš calling card. Which made it all the more astonishing just how unconvincing his performance was. He seemed reticent rather than confident, almost disappearing into inaudibility at times, and the outer movements' intricate runs were often approximate at best. He seemed far more at home in the noodling melody of the poignant slow movement, where his intense introspection added another layer of emotion, but even here there was little



sense of musical storytelling or connection with his listeners, as if he was so absorbed in the moment he forgot we were there. He often pulled, too, against the tempos laid down by the Flanders Symphony Orchestra's conductor José Luis Gomez, and was far more convincing and characterful, in fact, in the three solo pieces with which he opened the concert's second half.

All in all, it made for a strangely uncomfortable experience, despite the solid playing from the Flanders musicians. Their opening Rossini *Barber of Seville* Overture took a little time to find its flamboyance, but their Falla *El amor brujo* had fearsome focus, and their selection from Bizet's *Carmen* erupted in colour and energy.

DAVID KETTLE