



← Gary Numan has reinvented himself as a seer for the end of days

of the climactic Are "Friends" Electric?

Only the dread symphony of The End of Things came close to providing a comparable hit in the encore.

FIONA SHEPHERD

## MUSIC

### Scottish Chamber Orchestra & Bertrand Chamayou

Usher Hall, Edinburgh

★★★

THERE'S something very special – and very unusual – about Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto: its lack of

bombast; its introspective lyricism; its sense of quiet, contented reflection, all of them a world away from the drama and extrovert heroics of the composer's other music of the period. But they're aspects that French pianist Bertrand Chamayou struggled to capture in his otherwise nimble, strongly characterised account with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Emmanuel Krivine.

There's no questioning Chamayou's magnificent technique and his searching musicianship. But with his rather breathless runs, the bright, steely attack of his chords and his rather percussive way of somewhat stamping on the pedal, his reading felt too nervy to settle, too restless to glimpse much that was transcendental. He and Krivine took a fascinating – and revealing – approach in the Concerto's slow movement, however, with huge contrasts between the brusque, clipped string unisons and the reflective, plangent piano answers.

But Chamayou's encore – the strikingly unconventional slow movement from a late Haydn keyboard sonata – while exquisitely sculpted, was probably about twice as long as it should have been.

It felt like a struggle, too, for Krivine to make a strongly convincing case for Schumann's Fourth Symphony, which closed the programme.

It was vivid, buoyant, and its grand paragraphs expertly conveyed, but Krivine's brisk tempos left a lot of detail unremarked, despite driving the work along with relentless energy. Perhaps overly brisk, too, was Krivine's opener – Mendelssohn's The Fair Melusina Overture – but nonetheless he captured its storytelling and shifting moods with charm and brilliant clarity.

DAVID KETTLE