

pires up well. The performance itself lacked the sharpness and energy which the Shostakovich later exhibited. In Yekwon Sunwoo we heard an impressive and flamboyant pianist, particularly in those absorbing unaccompanied passages of Rachmaninov's Third Concerto that focus in on the pianist, and in his lengthy encore.

But there were too many moments where this performance didn't sit right with the orchestra. Issues of balance, and occasional lapses in co-ordination let it down.

KEN WALTON

MUSIC

Brussels Phil / Nikolaj Znaider

Usher Hall, Edinburgh



You can see why Nikolaj Znaider and Stéphane Denève get on so well – as Znaider explained in these pages barely a week ago.

Both the violin soloist and conductor in this compelling concert from the Brussels Philharmonic clearly share the same fastidious ear for detail and crystal-clear articulation, but without ever being

pedantic or pernickety.

Znaider's Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1 was a thing of wonder from start to finish, etched with piercing clarity but full of big emotions, fearsomely focused but played with a voluptuous sense of give and take.

All of which was reflected impeccably in the Brussels musicians' vigorous playing.

After the interval, Denève brought a wonderful suavity to his own collection of movements from Prokofiev's Cinderella, delivered with a depth and richness to match his precision. And he was in his element – as were the Brussels players – in Ravel's Daphnis and Chloe, surging ever forward with barely contained enthusiasm.

It was the concert's opener and wild card – Mark-Anthony Turnage's Passchendaele, played on Remembrance Sunday and a century after the battle it memorialises – that will stay longest in the memory, in Denève's sensual yet monumental reading that gently led the ear through the work's anger, sadness and nobility. A remarkable concert, full of joy and compassion.

DAVID KETTLE