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MUSIC

MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

USHER HALL

IT'S good to have Osmo Vanska, the former chief conductor of the BBC SSO, back conducting his current band, the Minnesota Orchestra. Together on Friday they turned in an exhilarating performance of Stravinsky's 1947 version of *Petrushka*.

Vanska always demands, and gets, that extra mile from his players, and here they delivered a fairly definitive reading of this work. Even without the ballet, the characters appear larger than life in this ravishing and often surreal score.

Stravinsky wrote the work when he was 28, just a year older than Samuel Barber when he penned his *First Essay for Orchestra Op 12*. This is an elegant piece, which benefited from Vanska's detailed attention to dynamics. Llyr Williams's textbook approach to Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No 3 in C minor* was almost too precise and perfect. There was little warmth or edginess in his playing, and only

in the final rondo was there a thawing of the coolness.

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