

THE TIMES

Andrei Ionita with Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra at Cadogan Hall

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[...]

Unless a programme of Debussy, Wagner, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov pops is your cup of tea, I'd advise staying at home. **Except that would mean missing one of the most exciting cellists to have emerged for a decade: the 20-year-old Andrei Ionut Ionita, whose reading of Haydn's Cello Concerto in C major coupled an intense beauty of tone with articulation of startling wit and playfulness.**

Born in Bucharest and trained in Berlin, Ionita has a soloist's sound but plays like a chamber musician. Historically informed phrasing, much of it in close dialogue with the leader Stanislav Izmaylov, and creamy double-stopping brought out the best in the orchestra. In an otherwise dully determined performance, for this concerto every musician on stage listened and responded to each other — an imperative in the quasi-baroque fizz of the final movement.

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