

Those anecdotes ranged from behind-the-scenes Star Trek stories and his fondness for pranking his co-stars, to his complex relationship with Leonard Nimoy and his early days treading the boards doing Shakespeare. His phasers, however, weren't set to stun when it came to his interlocutor, former Scotland international rugby star turned broadcaster John Beattie. After catching him rifling through his notes in the middle of an anecdote, Shatner mocked him every chance he got. It was excruciating yet hilarious, a pointed reminder that there was only room for one star on that stage.

**ALISTAIR HARKNESS**

## MUSIC

### SCO, Nicola Benedetti & Lawrence Power

Usher Hall, Edinburgh

★★★★★

Just hours after the First Minister advising against large gatherings from next week, you might have expected a feeling of trepidation as crowds filed in to fill the Usher Hall. Not a bit of it: it was an excited,



↑ Nicola Benedetti provided a deeply involved performance

enthusiastic, near-packed-out audience that welcomed the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Nicola Benedetti.

That feeling extended to the stage too: under co-leader Benjamin Marquise Gilmore, the orchestra gave a fresh, bouncing, fiercely committed account of Mendelssohn's teenage String Symphony No. 10, high on contrast and with a wonderfully velvety yet focused sound.

They handled their opener after the interval – the Overture to Mozart's opera *La clemenza di Tito* – with similar care and eagerness, point-

ing up its rhetoric to dramatic effect.

But inevitably, Benedetti was the star of the show, and she gave a vividly characterised, deeply involved performance of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, each movement carefully differentiated: a turbulent, troubled opener, brisk and poised slow movement, and appropriately crisp, strongly defined finale. Even without a conductor, it was a remarkably supple account, with tasteful rhythmic inflections here and there adding to its abundant charm.

Benedetti was joined by violist Lawrence Power for Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante* K364, and they made a well-matched pair, displaying a similar sweetness of tone but contrasting muscularity, and adding some tasteful ornamentation to returning melodies.

Maxwell Davies's *Farewell to Stromness* made for a thoroughly captivating, poignant encore.

A last hurrah before a pause on large gatherings? At the time of writing, who knows? If it was, what a way to go out.

**DAVID KETTLE**

GLASGOW COMEDY