

## MUSIC

### SCO: The Paris Concert

★★★★

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh

The publicity shot of the Eiffel Tower felt a century too late. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra's 'Paris Concert' focused not on the belle époque but on the effervescence and opulence of the French capital decades earlier. And there were generous helpings of effervescence and opulence in conductor Laurence Cummings's compelling accounts.

Music from Rameau's *Les Boréades* made a bracing opener – a blast of the high Baroque amid an otherwise Classical programme – and Cummings indulged us with a flamboyant, tongue-in-cheek commentary usefully placing the music in the opera's convoluted storyline. His Mozart Paris Symphony was a delight, full of gesture and rhetoric – seldom can its first movement's rushing scales have had so much sheer meaning – but superbly balanced in a buoyant slow movement.

It was a shame, then, that things went slightly off the boil after the interval. A Sinfonia concertante in E flat by JCBach was worth an outing for its unusual use of no less than six woodwind soloists – giving the SCO's famously fantastic wind players a welcome chance to shine – but it had less going for it musically. Cummings's closer – Haydn's Oxford Symphony, originally written for a Paris-

an optimistic show after the breakup of her relationship, then she absolutely needed to post-Brexit. Avowedly, self-harmingly of the Left, conceding that she didn't read the small print when she signed up to being perpetually beaten at the ballot box, *Something Better* is a typically playful but defiant howl of pain.

The political and personal have grown inseparable in her stand-up, with her incomprehension at the rise of the alt-right underscored by her newly-found millennial angst and a ticking biological clock as she approaches 35. Few comics exploit the differences between their lofty ideals and feet of clay with such effectiveness. Yet Long revels in them, open about her messy contra-

ian audience – returned to his opening vigour.

It was a beguiling evening, shining new light on the a couple of decades, and under Cummings's inspirational direction, as illuminating as it was entertaining

**DAVID KETTLE**

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### BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra

★★★★

City Halls, Glasgow

If there was a thread to be found running through the three works in this concert, it was perhaps the element of surprise. All three compos-