

# Reviews

## MUSIC

### SCO/Klaus Mäkelä

Usher Hall, Edinburgh

★★★★

MOZART the child and Mozart at the end of his brief life were both on stage in this enterprising programme from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Klaus Mäkelä.

The young Finnish conductor approached the composer's First Symphony – written, astonishingly, when Mozart was just eight – with all due seriousness and purpose, his restraint and smoothness giving way to propulsive power in its thrusting opening movement, though he found less to highlight in its less inspired slow movement. Mäkelä cunningly ran his brief first half together, however, providing a blunt but telling contrast between the grinning child composer and the more tortured soul of the C minor Adagio and Fugue and the Masonic Funeral Music of more than two decades later, both delivered with panache and a deliciously raw edge. Mäkelä was particularly impressive in teasing apart the voices competing for attention in the

gutsy fugue, and in the heavy tread of the latter work.

But the star of the show was Mozart's Requiem, famously left incomplete by the dying composer, and given an urgent, sharply defined account by Mäkelä and his vocal and instrumental forces. The SCO Chorus, in particular, was on excellent form, perhaps a little underpowered at times, but lithe, energetic and biting – committed, its singers pleasingly mixed on the platform to add to its nuanced blending. If only the four vocal soloists had been quite so well matched: instead, they were disconcertingly contrasted, from bronzed bass Markus Suihonen to strangely strident soprano Simone Kermes, whose tuning even sounded a little doubtful at times. Nevertheless, a thoroughly convincing account, fresh and forthright.

**DAVID KETTLE**

## MUSIC

### The Divine Comedy

Old Fruitmarket, Glasgow

★★★★

THE Divine Comedy have committed admirably to the concept of current album,