

major league with their clever, classily populist mix of folk, rock and pop.

SUE WILSON

MUSIC

BBC SSO: PROMS IN THE PARK

GLASGOW GREEN

★★★★

SPANDAU Ballet, Fritz Kreisler, Pirates of the Caribbean, Scottish airs and reels – hardly music you'd find together in an ordinary concert programme. But the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's celebratory Proms in the Park was anything but conventional.

It might have pushed eclecticism to the point of diffuseness in appealing to the broadest cross-section of listeners. But it worked. There was no doubting that the huge and gratifyingly mixed audience, including toddlers, young hipsters and pensioners, was having a fine old time.

The BBC SSO itself was the glue that held it all together, on sparkling form under the

sure baton of Stephen Bell – its colourful account of John Williams's *Superman* theme showed just what a fine late-Romantic band it is, and the audience humming along to a warm-hearted *Waltz* from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* was a magical moment.

The orchestra adapted to the evening's diverse styles with ringing confidence. Heartthrob tenor Alfie Boe gave a pretty antiseptic Elvis medley, which nevertheless went down well, but Melanie C was convincing in her new musical-theatre guise, especially in a breathy *I Don't Know How to Love Him*. Glasgow-born folk fiddler John McCusker cut through the evening's pomp with some strikingly pure and lyrical playing in a set of Breton music.

Despite the evening's memorable music making, though, it was the black mini-kilt and shocking-pink sporran of Dumfries tenor Nicky Spence – whose supreme vocal talents more than lived up to his flamboyant image – that remained etched on the retina.

DAVID KETTLE