

the plaintive *Going To A Town*, the dramatic indulgence of *The Art Teacher* and brother and sister in luminous harmony on *Pretty Things* and *Hallelujah*.

**FIONA SHEPHERD**

*Seen on 05.03.14*

**MUSIC**

**BBC SSO: BARBER  
AND COPLAND**

CITY HALLS, GLASGOW

★★★★

THERE was an authentically Stateside gloss to the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's strings, and a convincingly US-style gleam to the brass – guest conductor David Alan Miller had clearly brought something with him from New York's Albany Symphony, where he's music director. Whatever it was, it gave the orchestra just the right power and sheen it needed for this all-American programme – but Miller's controlled, clean-cut approach

ensured his accounts never lacked subtlety.

It was an ideal balance – so it was a shame that it felt a bit wasted on the opener, George Tsontakis's sub-Ivesian *Let the River Be Unbroken*, which blended folk melodies and Civil War songs to little lasting effect. And strangely, international superstar violinist Sarah Chang – making her BBC SSO debut – seemed determinedly uncharismatic as soloist in the Barber Violin Concerto which followed. With a vibrato as wide as a barn door in a rather overegged first movement and a look of grim determination on her face, it was hard to account for the sparkle that suddenly emerged in her helter-skelter finale, dispatched with impeccable technical prowess.

Miller's orchestral accompaniment was beautifully shaped and strongly projected in the concerto – qualities he carried over into a thrilling account of the Copland

Third Symphony. Written immediately after The Second World War, and incorporating the famous *Fanfare for the Common Man* in its finale, it's an immensely powerful work. But Miller shied away from bombast, delivering instead a touchingly sincere, warm-hearted reading. The BBC SSO can seldom have sounded grander.

**DAVID KETTLE**

*Seen on 06.03.14*

**MUSIC**

**SCO: JUPITER**

QUEEN'S HALL, EDINBURGH

★★★★

AT the outset of this concert, conductor Richard Egarr promised happy, uplifting music and he did not disappoint. With the crackle of original timpani and strident natural trumpets adding a period edginess throughout, he quickly had the orchestra whipping up a storm of bonhomie.

Schubert's Symphony No 2