

question whether this torrent of pain and outrage really makes for excellent theatre.

The show, directed by Ben Harrison, begins at a shouting-pitch of fury and sarcasm, and leaves itself with little room for variation. The storytelling is sometimes clumsy and over-complicated; Stewart Porter's voice sounds on the point of collapse. Yet for all its rawness, Factor 9 says what it has to say about a mighty public scandal, in a vividly theatrical style that no-one who sees it is ever likely to forget and that, so far as this show is concerned, is all that could possibly matter.

JOYCE MCMILLAN

Seen on 24.04.14

MUSIC
MICHAEL NYMAN
BAND

QUEEN'S HALL, EDINBURGH

★★★★★

WITH the composer himself directing proceedings – hammering away with characteristic abandon at the piano – you couldn't have asked for more authentic performances. The Michael Nyman Band musicians played with breathtaking energy and enthusiasm (not to mention stamina), as if the music was running through their veins – and after several years together performing Nyman's joyfully raucous pieces, it probably is. All that, plus a standing ovation from the appreciative Nyman fans and a couple of (properly) impromptu encores. If that doesn't deserve five stars, there's not much that does.

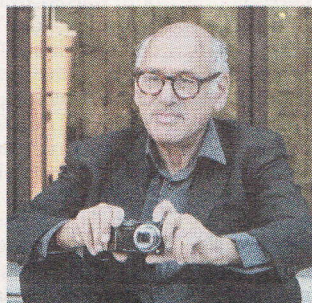
Everything in Nyman's unmistakable music that the

fans were expecting – the propulsive basslines, the manic violin tremolos (dispatched with glee by Christophe Clad), the roaring, parping brass and saxes – was there in generous quantities, but it was never over-exaggerated for empty effect. In fact, experiencing Nyman's music live served to dismantle his blaring wall of sound into its individual instrumental parts, highlighting the lyricism and sheer inventiveness of his creations.

The only thing missing was any indication as to what they were actually playing – with no programme and no on-stage announcements, all but the most devout fans were left somewhat in the dark. As it happened, the mix of music from Nyman's Greenaway film scores and more recent concert pieces – the intricate, Reichian *The Musicologist Scores* ending the first half stylishly – proved an ideal balance. And Nyman's glowingly lyrical *Water Dances*, played with affection and surprising restraint, brought the evening to a touchingly radiant close.

DAVID KETTLE

Seen on 23.04.14



Michael Nyman and band were raucous but never exaggerated