

I travel the Spaceways' title lyric. Where the music relaxed, it was into the dreamlike state of Astro Black, with the band processing drowsily through the crowd, or the upbeat bliss of Watch the Sunshine. As long as Allen can play, and with the Star Trek kitsch of the costumes balanced by the biting relevance of the songs played, the future this music promises will remain before us all.

**DAVID POLLOCK**

## MUSIC

### The SCO & Håkan Hardenberger

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh



IT FELT like a comedy sketch. Twelve tiny Contredanses by Beethoven, none lasting more than a minute, were separat-

ed by pauses of almost as long as the SCO's two horn players carefully removed and replaced the crooks—differing lengths of tubing tuning their instruments to different keys—of their natural horns. Conductor John Storgårds made sure the two players got a special bow at the end—but with all eyes on them during their endless instrumental adjustments, how could he not? Despite its acknowledgement of instrumental authenticity, it made for a frustratingly start-stop conclusion to what had been a surprisingly patchy concert.

Swedish trumpeter Håkan Hardenberger was the evening's star soloist. He gave an unexpectedly thoughtful, mellow account of Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, which showcased his effortless agili-

ty and impeccable articulation marvellously, not to mention the golden glories of his rich, oily tone. But his bigger work—the 2007 Busking by Vienesese iconoclast HK Gruber—was less convincing. It began wittily enough, with Hardenberger parping a little tune through his trumpet mouthpiece alone, to the accompaniment of banjo twangs and wheezy accordion interjections. But the overly complex, multi-layered textures of its second and third movements didn't live up to the work's initial promise, and offered little that was particularly distinctive or memorable, despite some beautifully shaped playing from Hardenberger.

Storgårds was in his element in the concert's engaging opener, the bracing 1914 Serenade by Erwin Schulhoff, but even here, with its large-scale repetitions of material, there was a feeling that the piece had rather outstayed its welcome.

**DAVID KETTLE**

