

Reviews & Reports

Edinburgh Incidental Orchestra Summer Concert

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Edinburgh Incidental Orchestra

Formed only last year as a youth orchestra, Edinburgh Incidental Orchestra (EIO) operates under the entrepreneurial influence of conductor Calum Zuckert. Not content with ambitious programmes, they also mount concerts independently of professional or experienced adult support. That they succeeded so well is a tribute to their team spirit.

With commissioning now part of EIO's portfolio, the premiere of *Metal in a Jeweller's Hand* by Peter Longworth was an important milestone. A vividly atmospheric piece inspired by those who served in the First World War, its shifting colours swayed round the orchestra, the compelling bells of home providing sonorous gravity.

The challenge of the EIO's first staging of a full-scale concerto – Bruch's *Violin Concerto No 1* – was most ably met, with Josephine Robertson as soloist. Popular to the point of overexposure, its familiar lines took on a compelling freshness courtesy of her formidable talent. Technically and musically assured, she performs with the conviction that marks out young players as extraordinarily gifted.

Zuckert tends to keep tempi brisk, perhaps too brisk in the opening of Brahms' *Symphony No 1*, with a conducting style that is mostly clear and encouraging. Though intonation in Brahms' inner workings took the occasional wayward turn and the ensemble playing wasn't always together, this was a committed performance which bodes well for the future.

Carol Main