

15 June Critics' choice

And this is a power chord: Little plays in Cockenzie



Pick of the day

The South Bank Show (ITV1, 10.45pm)

An excellent edition profiles the violinist Tasmin Little during a busy spring period that includes performing, website administration, taking up the conductor's baton and working on a new composition. This schedule suits a woman whose resourcefulness stretched to making her own dress for participation in the 1982 young musician of the year competition.

Particularly striking are the scenes in which she takes her instrument out on the road to play in environments that offer contrasting challenges to those posed by an Albert Hall Prom. Wearing

hard hat and protective glasses, she plays to the workers at Cockenzie power station, East Lothian; at a homeless hostel in Brighton, where the audience is clearly moved; and at Belmarsh prison, London, where she discusses music with an inmate. "I've tried learning to play the guitar," he says, "but I ended up just smashing them up."

We also see her working with the composer Roxanna Panufnik on a new piece called Spring, which evokes seasonal sounds such as the call of the Japanese bush warbler. Those particular notes may prove difficult re-create, but Little does not need her 1708 Stradivarius to charm the birds from the trees.

Martin James