

American Record Guide

independent critics reviewing classical recordings

Critics' Choice Best of 2025

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Here & There

Appointments, Awards and News



Esa-Pekka Salonen, 67, has 3 new jobs. He will become creative director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic next season with responsibilities including conducting for 6 weeks and programming with an emphasis on multi-disciplinary projects. (He was the orchestra's music director from 1992 to 2009.) Then in 2027 he will become principal conductor of the Orchestre de Paris and become creativity and innovation chair for the Philharmonie de Paris, where the orchestra plays.

Slovak conductor **Juraj Valcuha**, 49, music director of the Houston Symphony since 2022, extended his contract to 2028. He was music director of Teatro di San Carlo in Naples from 2016 to 2022.



Conductor **Ken-David Masur**, 48, a native of Leipzig, Germany, became the newest artistic partner of the Oregon Bach Festival in October. He will lead the festival's modern orchestra initiatives, joining artistic partner Jos van Veldhoven, who oversees historical performance practice. Masur is music director of the Milwaukee Symphony and principal conductor of Chicago's Civic Orchestra.



American Music Director **Jonathon Heyward**, who turns 34 this year, extended his contract with the Baltimore Symphony another 3 years until 2031. He began with the orchestra in 2023. Since he arrived, ticket sales have increased by 58%, and the audience is now broader and more diverse.

Carlos Miguel Prieto, 60, extended his contract as music director of the North Carolina Symphony until 2031. He began with the orchestra in 2023.



Philadelphian **Na'Zir McFadden**, 25, became assistant conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony this season. From 2022 to 2025 he held the same position with the Detroit Symphony.



Finnish conductor **John Storsgard**, 62, will become music director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa this coming season. He currently is its principal guest conductor. He is also chief conductor of the BBC Philharmonic in Manchester and of Finland's Turku Philharmonic.



José Luis Gomez, music director of the Tucson Symphony since 2017, extended his contract for another 3 years to 2030. The orchestra will celebrate its centennial in the 2028-29 season.



Andreas Delfs, 66, music director of the Rochester (NY) Philharmonic since 2021, extended his contract in September for an additional 3 years until 2029.

Bernard Labadie, 62, who founded the Quebec's Violons du Roy in 1984 and was its music director until 2014, will return to that position again starting in September, until a new permanent director is



found. Jonathan Cohen, 47, who had led the ensemble since 2018, left this past June after leading the orchestra on 4 international tours. He returns this season for 3 concerts.



Karen Kamensek, who turns 56 on January 2, became principal guest conductor of and artistic advisor to the Calgary Philharmonic in September. She served as music director of the Hanover Opera from 2011 to 2016.

music director of the New Jersey Symphony. Lü Jia is music director of the NCPA Orchestra.

Australian **Simone Young**, 64, chief conductor of the Sydney Symphony, extended her contract for an additional 3 years until 2029. She started there in 2022.

Andrés Orozco-Estrada, 47, will become music director of the Swedish Radio Symphony next season. The 48-year-old Columbian conductor (he has dual citizenship in Colombia and Austria) was music director of the Houston Symphony from 2013 to 2022. Starting this season, he is music director of the City of Cologne, including the Gürzenich Orchestra and Cologne Opera.



American conductor **Carl St Clair**, 73, was appointed music director of the Thailand Philharmonic in October. He has held the same position with the Pacific Symphony since 1990 and will leave the Costa Mesa-based orchestra at the end of this season.

Alexander Shelley, 46, signed a 3-year contract to become principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra Ireland (NSOI, formerly the RTE) in 2026, succeeding Jaime Martin, who left in 2024. Shelley also becomes artistic and music director of the Pacific Symphony in 2026, while remaining in 2 other posts: music director of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra, and artistic and music director of the Naples Philharmonic in Florida. (Whew!)



Finnish conductor and violinist **Pekka Kuusisto**, 49, will become chief conductor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony in April 2028, succeeding Kazushi Ono. Kuusisto is also artistic director of the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, principal guest conductor and artistic co-director of

the Helsinki Philharmonic, and principal guest conductor of Sweden's Gothenburg Symphony.

Conductor **Xian Zhang**, 52, became principal guest conductor of the China National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) Orchestra in September, when she also began as music director of the Seattle Symphony. Also, she is in her 10th season as



German conductor **Elias Grandy**, 44, will become chief conductor and artistic director of the Prague Radio Symphony next season, succeeding Petr Popelka. This season he became chief conductor of Japan's Sapporo Symphony, and from 2015 to 2023 he was music director in Heidelberg in Germany.

Beatrice Venezi, 35, was appointed in September as the next music director of La Fenice in Venice, effective October 2026, La Fenice's staff voted for a one-day strike on October 17, the opening night of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*, in protest over her lack of sufficient conductorial experience. She is close to conservative Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who named her "councilor for music". One critic wrote, "Venezi is not a famous conductor who happens to be right wing. She's famous because she is right wing." Others call her a *fascistella*.



Spanish conductor **Pablo Gonzalez** signed a 4-year contract to become music director and principal conductor of the Orchestre National d'Île de France in September 2027, succeeding American Case Scaglione, 43, who began in 2019.



French conductor **Lucie Leguay**, 35, signed a 3-year contract to become music director of the Sinfonietta de Lausanne in September, succeeding David Reiland. Leguay is a specialist in contemporary music.



Peter Gelb, who turns 73 this year and has been general manager of the Metropolitan Opera since 2006, extended his contract in September for an additional 3 years until 2030. Also, the Met reached a deal with the government of Saudi Arabia to perform 3 weeks each winter at the Royal Diriyah Opera House in

Riyadh, set to open in 2028. The deal is expected to bring the Met more than \$100 million, enough to keep the company from making further withdrawals from its endowment fund, from which over a third (about \$120 million) has been withdrawn since the pandemic.

Teddy Abrams, 38, music director of the Louisville Orchestra, will become the Ojai (CA) Festival's artistic and executive director in 2027, succeeding Ara Guzelimian. Abrams is a Grammy-winning composer and was Musical America's 2022 Conductor of the Year.



English opera director **Katie Mitchell**, 61, said in October, "I'm bringing my work in opera to a close because of misogyny. Across the 30 or so operas I have directed, I have never had a working process free of sexism." Mitchell has directed at the Welsh and English National Operas, Glyndebourne and Salzburg Festivals, Berlin State and Royal Danish Operas, Paris's Opera-Comique, and Aix-en-Provence Festival.

British social media personality **Daria Challah** became the Elbphilharmonie's Creator in Residence in Hamburg in September. In this new position she will introduce her TikTok and Instagram followers to the concert hall that opened in 2014, showing its architecture and introducing artists, concerts, and festivals. Challah studied at St Andrew's in Scotland from 2009 to 2013.

Zurich-born **Aviel Cahn**, 51, who will become general director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin next summer, will not replace Donald Runnicles, who leaves next summer, with another music director. Instead, he has hired two principal guest conductors: Maxine Pascal with deep roots in 20th-Century repertoire, and Michele Spotti with roots in Italian Romantic repertoire. Titus Engel will be conductor-in-residence.



Dutch conductor **Arjan Tien** will become principal conductor of the Cape Town Philharmonic in 2026. He succeeds Bernhard Gueller, now conductor laureate for life. Tien will work closely with newly

appointed CEO and Artistic Director Adrian Fuchs, who is in his mid-40s. Fuchs succeeds Louis Heyneman, who held the job for 25 years. Since 2017 Fuchs has been director of festivals and special projects at Carnegie Hall. Before that, he was director of artistic planning and touring for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Earlier in his career he was business development manager for the Cape Town Opera.



The winners on August 31 of the 2025 Banff String Quartet Competition were: **Poiesis Quartet** (USA, pictured), first prize, including US \$18,000, and tours across North America and Europe; **Arete Quartet** (South Korea), second prize (\$8,700); and **Quartet KAIRI** (Japan/China), third prize (\$5,800).

The Poiesis Quartet is the graduate quartet-in-residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. They are graduates of the Oberlin College and Conservatory. Poiesis in Greek means “to make something that has never existed before”.

Canadian **Elisabeth Pion**, 29, won the Gold Medal of the 2025 Honens Piano Competition in Calgary, Canada, in October, receiving CAD \$100,000 and a 3-year artistic development and career accelerator program. Canadian Carter Johnson, 29, won the Silver Medal and \$40,000, and Russian Anastasia Vorotnaya, 30, the Bronze and \$20,000.



North Carolinian composer **Dan Locklair**, 76, has been named the winner of the 2025 American Prize (Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music) for his Requiem for chorus, soloists, organ, and string orchestra (which



we have reviewed). The prize recognizes the best composers in America of works for orchestra, chorus, concert band, chamber ensemble, theater, opera, dance, or film that have been both performed and recorded.



American **Eric Lu**, 27, from Massachusetts, won the Gold Medal on October 20 at the Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland. He was awarded 60,000 euros (about \$69,000). When he was 17, he placed fourth in the same competition

and graduated from Philadelphia’s Curtis Institute of Music in 2020. Canadian Kevin Chen, 20, won Silver and 40,000 euros, and China’s Zitong Wang, 26, won Bronze and 35,000 euros. Andrzej Boreyko conducted the Warsaw Philharmonic. The competition takes place every 5 years and is open to pianists 16 to 30 years old.



Composer and performer **Meredith Monk**, 82, received the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the Venice Biennale Musica in October. In 2012 she was Musical America’s Composer of the Year.

St Louis Symphony musicians signed a 4-year contract on September 4, one year before the current contract expires. It will run from September 2026 to August 2030, and it provides a \$10,000 increase per musician the first year, followed by yearly increases of 3%, 3.25%, and 3.5%, reaching a musicians’ base pay of \$128,036 in 2030. This coincides with the reopening of Powell Hall after 2 years of renovation and expansion.

The musicians of the **Atlanta Symphony** (ASO) agreed to a new 3-year contract in which wages will increase 15%. 2 additional musicians will bring its roster to 90 players by the third year. Of note: the ASO has balanced its budget for the past 11 years!

San Francisco Symphony musicians averted a strike in September and reached a tentative 3-year contract with management, hours before the new season’s opening con-

cert. Musicians' pay will increase cumulatively by 15% from \$3,450 to \$3,960 per week. The contract is retroactive to November 2024 and runs to November 2027.

The musicians of the **Tucson Symphony** have a new 3-year contract that includes wage increases of 4% the first year, 5% the second, and 6.5% the third. It also includes a 5% annual increase in employer contributions to retirement plans and healthcare premiums for musicians, and restores pay for substitute players. Also, the orchestra received an anonymous \$9 million bequest for its endowment fund early in 2025.

The Eastern Music Festival's board of directors voted in October to dissolve the organization permanently, after the players' union and management reached an "intractable" impasse. The 64-year-old festival was cancelled in summer 2024 after contract negotiations failed. The musicians voted to unionize in 2023. Gerard Schwarz, 78, was its music director from 2008 to its final act.

Other way around: In September the Henry Stambaugh Auditorium Association acquired the 52-member Youngstown (OH) Symphony. At the same time the musicians agreed to an extension of their present contract for an additional 2 years until August 31, 2027. Erik Ochsner is their new music director.

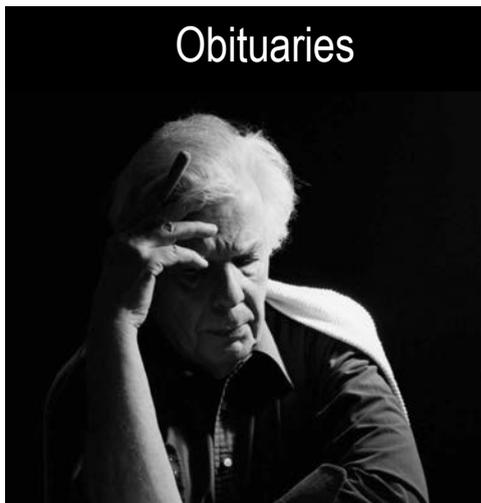
Calgary Philharmonic musicians reached a new contract with management that raises salaries from \$56,764 to \$63,846 over 3 years through 2028. It also includes a 10% pension contribution.

The Vancouver (BC) Symphony went on strike in September for the first time in its 107-year history. They have been without a contract since July 1 and gave a 72-hour strike notice. They are seeking a 23% wage increase over 3 years to bring their pay closer to their peers in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa, who earn about 30% more, according to their union.

Kuke Music Holding, a Beijing-based music services platform, now has a controlling interest in Naxos Music Group. Naxos encompasses about 17 labels. Kuke has positioned itself as a hub for classical music in China, offering streaming, licensing, and educa-

tional platforms. Naxos sued Kuke in 2024, alleging that they had missed over \$1.8 million in payments over a 3-year period.

Universal, Sony, and other record labels settled a \$621 million copyright infringement suit against the non-profit Internet Archives (IA) on September 15. The Archives argued for fair public use of the 78-rpm recordings it is digitally preserving. This follows a similar suit brought by book publishers in 2023 in which IA's lending practices were judged to be not protected by fair use.



German conductor **Christoph von Dohnanyi** died in Munich on September 6, two days short of his 96th birthday. His grandfather was composer Ernst von Dohnanyi. He was best known in the US as music director of the Cleveland Orchestra from 1984 to 2002—a prolific era of recordings as well as good will between the conductor and musicians, whom he called “the Rolls-Royce of orchestras”. Some found his conducting reserved, even pedantic. Before Cleveland he was assistant conductor to Georg Solti at the Frankfurt Opera in 1952, succeeding him there when Solti resigned in 1968. He was chief conductor of the Hamburg State Opera. From 1997 to 2008 he was also chief conductor of London's Philharmonia Orchestra. He held the same position with the North German Radio Symphony from 2004 to 2010.



Russian composer **Rodion Shchedrin**, 92, died in Munich on August 29. No cause was given. He married ballerina Maya Pliset-skaya, and they became leading figures in Russia's cultural life. He wrote

several ballets for her, most famously his *Carmen Suite* (1967). His works have ranged from clever transformations of classics to trivial banalities.



Cincinnati-born lyric soprano **Roberta Alexander**, 76, died on October 14 from a heart attack at her home in Ouderkerk aan de Amstel, Netherlands. She said in 1997 that she moved there in 1972 when she was 23 because she found freedom and profes-

sional opportunities there that she couldn't find in America as a black person. That was also the year she became the second of Dutch conductor Edo de Waart's 6 wives.



American lyric soprano **Benita Valente**, 91, died on October 24 in Philadelphia. In 1973 she debuted at the Metropolitan Opera, where she appeared more than 70 times. She also sang chamber music (her husband, Anthony Checchia, once led the Marlboro Music Festival), but perhaps her specialty was as a recitalist for 4 decades.



Cristian Ganicenco, 58, a member of the Cincinnati Symphony since 1998 and its principal trombone since 1999, died on October 2 after a long battle with cancer. He was a native of Iasi, Romania.



Guitarist **Joanne Castellani**, 73, died on September 18 in Williamsville NY. She was part of the Castellani-Andriaccio Duo. A professor emerita at SUNY Buffalo, her leadership roles in the guitar world in-

cluded her work with the JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Competition and the Fleur de Son Classics recording label.



Leslie Kandell, 89, a long-time concert reviewer for ARG (concert reviews ended in 2020), died at her home in Manhattan following an 8-month illness. Her dry style and wit always got to the point and kept the reader engaged in her unadorned evaluations.

Critical Convictions

Marketing at our orchestras is getting dumber and dumber. They are overdoing the celebrity angle. They are assuming no one knows the music or cares about it.

The Cincinnati Symphony on their website doesn't even list the music scheduled at a concert. In a few cases they say "Petrouchka" (as if no one cares who wrote that or what else is on the program). In October a program is listed as "Barber and Shostakovich". Well, what Barber and what Shostakovich? We are not told. And is there a soloist? (Apparently he is not famous enough to be brandished.)

People who know music are not drawn by this kind of sloppiness, even if the publicity people think it's "cool". After all, publicity people generally don't know or love the music they are trying to get people to come and listen to—that much is obvious.

I think I am part of the orchestra's natural audience—I really love the music—but they aren't "marketing it" to me. I don't feel attracted to the concerts of an orchestra that I delighted in for more than 30 years!

I did go to a wonderful organ concert at the end of October, in the Museum Center (Union Terminal). Vincent Dubois (organist at Notre Dame in Paris) played a mostly French program on our glorious EM Skinner organ in that huge space. It was thrilling music, played elegantly. As the concert was coming to an end (in Reubke's Psalm 94) I was filled with joy, and it dawned on me anew that classical music is the greatest single achievement of western culture. Yes, medicine has made great strides; but that is not specifically cultural. Technology also fails that test. Our music ushers us into a spiritual dimension of greatness and beauty; its richness and complexity enhance life more than anything else we have produced.

Political thoughts

I always thought I was pretty liberal, but then (in 2022) I was "cancelled" by my church for being unwoke. I hate "political correctness" and the ideas that go with it. But I also despise Donald Trump and almost everything he has said and done—and the whole movement that cheers him

on. Is it just that as we get older we get mellow? Why can't US politicians be sensible and dignified and rational instead of always fighting and combative? Can that childish belligerence be good for the country? I don't think so.

In most of the world now—including this country—"democracy" has become dysfunctional. That's not a surprise, because it has for a long time been mostly a slogan or a facade. People often elect dictators or would-be dictators. And most people are not very intelligent or informed. Politicians are increasingly low class and of questionable morals and principles. Of course, this is to be expected, because "democracy" naturally becomes populism. Elections are showmanship—popularity contests. One gets votes by making people angry or afraid—and by flattery. A politician has to manipulate the stupid masses rather than meet the challenge of a few intellectuals.

I am also saddened when singers and musicians are rejected because of their politics or lack thereof (Israel, Russia, etc). The concert hall is no place for political confrontation or demonstration. Musicians do not represent their governments and cannot be held responsible for what a government does. Music is above all that, in its very nature. So is religion. But politicians (including Trump and Putin) and the politically minded politicize anything and everything.

This is not a political magazine, and I wish politics were not an issue at all and could be ignored. I am shocked quite often by people and writers I always respected apparently thinking they have to stand with one side or the other. Why? Refuse to polarize.

I can't resist adding that I would not attend a concert that had to begin with 'The Star-Spangled Banner'. It's not good music, and it's heard way too often, for non-musical reasons. Note that "had to". I don't think musicians and orchestras should be pressured by a politician or government in deciding what to play.

VROON

Critics' Choice 2025

Paul Althouse

BACH: *5 Piano Concertos; Italian Concerto* (Gile Bae) Arcana 542, J/F
BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concertos* (Lonquich) ECM 2753, M/J
SMETANA: *Trio*; **SCHUBERT:** *Trio 2* (Bohémó Trio) Supraphon 4344, M/J
HAYDN: *Trios 26, 31, 34, 36* (Trio Gaspard) Chandos 20330, S/O
Fischer-Dieskau: Warner 475459 [79CD] S/O
BRITTEN: *Sinfonia da Requiem* (Gardner) LPO 134, N/D

Allan Altman

WEBER: *Der Freischütz* (Mazzola) C Major 768308, M/A: vid
MASSENET: *Griselidis* (Zeitouni) Bru Zane 1058, M/J
VIVALDI: *La Fida Ninfa* CPO 555646, J/A
GRETRY: *La Caravan du Caire* (Niquet) Versailles 114, S/O: vid
BIZET: Operas, Cantatas, songs, piano pieces (Glassberg) Bru Zane 1059, N/D

Cary Ballew-Renfro

Michael Tilson Thomas DG & Argo Recordings: DG 4846836 [14CD], M/A: 124
Carlo Maria Giulini: Warner 441218 [60CD], N/D 108

Charles Brewer

SCHMIKERER: *Overtures (L'arpa Festanta)* CPO 555636, J/F
TELEMANN: *Quatuors ou Trios 1733* (Camerata Köln) CPO 555 427, M/A
TELEMANN: *Gamba Fantasias* (Ruiz) Challenge 720034, N/D
Destinies (De Baronneche, Boulanger, Taylor) Alpha 1078, M/J: 138

Timothy Chi

Pas de Deux: Violin and Cello (Guo & Lipstein) Oehms 1736—N/D: 120

Robert Delcamp

STANFORD: *Part Songs* (Christophers) Coro 16207, J/F
DUPRE: *Organ at St Louis Invalides* (Dupre) AAAMD 305302, M/J

HANDEL: *Messiah Choruses* (Christophers) Coro 16211, J/A
Fire and Fantasy (Conte) Raven 195, J/A: 141
Female Students of Marcel Dupre (Spritzer) Raven 196, N/D: 129

John Dutterer

BRAHMS: *String Quintets* (Gringolts Quintet, Maijala) BIS 2727, J/F

Nate Faro

HETU: *Symphony 5* (Shelley) Analekta 8890, M/A
RIHM: *Jakob Lenz* (Ollu) Oehms 981, M/A
BACEWICZ: *Symphony 2; Musica Sinfonica; Variations; Overture* (Borowicz) CPO 555660, M/J
ZORN: *Quartets*, all (JACK Quartet) Tzadik 9318, M/J
SUMERA: *Symphonies 1+6* (Lets) Ondine 1449, S/O
GINASTERA: *Quartets* (Miro Quartet) Pentatone 5187412, N/D
PART: *Stabat Mater; Berlin Mass; Festina Lente; Trisagion; Silouan's Song* (Kaljuste) Berlin 303739, N/D
RAUTAVAARA: *Piano Pieces* (Grigaliunaite) Piano Classics 10331, N/D

Elliott Fisch

Paraphrases de Salon (Miceli) Grand Piano 943, N/D:135
20th Century Foxtrots 7 (Wellisch) Grand Piano 950, N/D:136
Ninne Nanne (Redaelli) DaVinci 1008, N/D:135
YOUNG: *Nosferatu—A Symphony of Horror* (Strobel) Warner 457929, M/A

Gil French

IVES: *Concord Sonata* (Dinnerstein) Supertrain 73, M/J
BRIDGE & FRANCK: *Piano Quintets* (Pinkas, Apple Hill Qt) MSR 1815, M/J
DVORAK & SUK: *Serenades for Strings* (Kukal) Animal 129, J/A
TOURNIER: *Images; Sonatine; 4 Songs* (Ceysson, Gens, Quatuor Voce) Alpha 1133, S/O

Hevel: Polish Piano (Wachowski) Dux 2020, S/O: 153
Journey Home (Feltsman) Nimbus 6461, S/O: 146
Women of Legend (Arghamanyan) Hanssler 25026, N/D: 132

William Gatens

BACH: *Leipzig Chorales; Schübler Chorales* (Suzuki) BIS 2731+2741, M/J, S/O
Bach's Roots—Early Influences (Kallweit) Arcana 566, M/A: 158
BYRD: *Great Service; anthems* (Skinner) Inventa 1015, M/A
BUXTEHUDE: *Organ Pieces 3* (Flamme) CPO 555 408, S/O
HANDEL: *Jephtha* (Glover) Reference 755, J/F

Todd Gorman

DRUSCHETZKY: *Oboe Quartets 2* (Grundmann Qt) CPO 555370, M/J
MARAIS: *Flute Pieces* (Musicians of St Julian) Alpha 1126, S/O
TELEMANN: *Recorder Chamber & Concertos* (Bosgraaf) Brilliant 97411, N/D
UEBAYASHI: *Flute Sonata*, with **LIEBERMANN & PROKOFIEFF** (Liu & Li) Centaur 4100, M/J
Wind Piano Trios 1926-2001 (Ausias March Trio) IBS 82025, S/O: 157

Phil Greenfield

BEETHOVEN: *Missa Solemnis* (Karajan) Urania 121420, M/J
ELGAR: *The Kingdom* (Temple) Signum 896, S/O
Maitres de Notre Dame (Dauce) Harmonia Mundi 902679, J/F: 138
MENDELSSOHN: *Sacred Choral* (Klava) Ondine 1459, J/A
MENDELSSOHN & HENSEL: *Sacred Choral* (Doyle) Harmonia Mundi 902742, N/D
RUNESTAD: *Earth Symphony*; **LAURIDSEN:** *Lux Aeterna* (Olefrowicz) BR 90035, N/D

Lawrence Hansen

BARTOK & ROZSA: *Violin Concertos* (Simovic) LSO 886, M/A
IVES: *Ragtime Dances & Early-Rare Orchestral Works, Fragments & Arrangements* (Sinclair) Naxos 559954, M/J
SHOSTAKOVICH: *Quartets 1-6* (Asasello Quartet) Genuin 25908, J/A
SHOSTAKOVICH: *Quartets 6-12* (Casals Quartet) Harmonia Mundi 902733, N/D

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake* (Juwowski) Pentatone 5187, J/F

Patrick Hanudel

GIPPS: *Oboe Pieces* (Koch, Bliss, McHale) Chandos 20290, J/F
Szinerzia (Barragan, Sarkozy Trio) Accentus 30637, M/A: 130
WINTERBERG: *Chamber Pieces* (Vegry, Linder, Bitter, Morth, Andre Schoch, Groschopp) Eda 53, J/A
MOZART: *Oboe Quartet*; **GATTI:** *Oboe Quartets* (Moinet, Hiber, Mohamed, Park) Berlin 303728, S/O
Eva Zalenga, soprano (Wong, Schuler, Ambarzumjan, Tchakarova) Genuin 25921, S/O: 172

Rob Haskins

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonatas 30-32* (Sandrin) Evil Penguin 68, M/J
SCHUBERT with Vorisek, Chopin, Scriabin (Cakmur) BIS 2710, M/J: 125
BACH: *WTC excerpts & Chopin* (Garben) Musicaphon 56993, J/A
BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata 31*; **BRAHMS:** *Sonata 3* (Liu) Orchid 100359, J/A
ANDRES: *The Blind Banister*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Piano Concerto 2* (Biss) Orchid 100375, S/O
BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata 29*; **LISZT:** *Sonata* (Zhang) BIS 2781, S/O

Roger Hecht

GIPPS: *Symphony 1; Horn Concerto; Ambarvalia; Cringlemire Garden; Coronation Procession* (Gamba) Chandos 20284, M/J
ROZSA: *Sinfonia Concertante; Cello Rhapsody; Notturmo Ungherese* (Gregor) Capriccio 5535, J/A
SMETANA: *Ma Vlast; Festive Symphony; Richard III; Wallenstein's Camp; Hakon Jarl; Quartet 1*, arr (Popelka) Supraphon 4347, J/A
WILLIAMS: *The Parlour* (Bawill) Lyrita 1147, S/O
Jewish Vienna: Mahler, Grunfeld, Korngold, Winter, Zemlinsky (Grossman) Onyx 4253, S/O

Ned Kellenberger

LEMBA: *Violin Sonatas* (Ruubel, Lassmann) Toccata 753, N/D
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Guide to Records

ADES: *Violin Concerto*; see ELGAR

AHO: *Clarinet Concerto*;

LINDBERG: *Clarinet Concerto*

Julian Bliss; BBC Scottish Symphony/ Taavi Oramo

Signum 898—61 minutes

British clarinet soloist Julian Bliss collaborates with Finnish clarinetist-conductor Taavi Oramo and the BBC Scottish Symphony on two early 21st Century Finnish clarinet concertos.

In 2002, while enjoying his summer vacation in the Gulf of Finland, Magnus Lindberg (b. 1958) sent his Concerto page by page via boat to his former Sibelius Academy classmate Kari Krikku (b. 1960). Then, in 2005, Kalevi Aho (b. 1949) replied to a commission from Swedish clarinetist Martin Frost (b. 1970) with his Concerto; and as with his other 40-plus efforts in the medium, he vowed with the instrument “to find its soul”. Both works dare the soloist with arduous passages, taxing length, several movements without break, and a large cinematic orchestra with extended wind families and a varied percussion section.

Knowledgeable listeners will feel the spirit of Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) in the dramatic episodes, mournful soliloquies, athletic cadenzas, and vivid Nordic soundscapes. Some readers may lament how the conventional multi-movement concerto has given way to a travelogue of fluid clauses where the soloist and the orchestra seamlessly combine—a development that Nielsen facilitated in his own Clarinet Concerto (1928). Yet among the peculiar utterances and terrifying dissonances, each composer maintains a foot in the past with sincere neo-romantic lyricism, as well as their generous splashes and blazes of symphonic color.

As expected, everything here is fully professional. Bliss navigates each selection with a clear tone, sympathetic phrasing, superb multiphonics, marvelous control and dynamics, and dazzling fingers and articulation; and the BBC Scottish Symphony infuses each score with skill, authority, and brilliance.

HANUDEL

ALFANO: *Piano Quintet; Concerto for Violin, Cello, & Piano*
DaVinci Ensemble

Brilliant 97310—61 minutes

Franco Alfano was born in Naples in 1875 and was director of conservatories in Bologna, Turin, and Pesaro. He died in 1954. These works are from his Turin period. He was a second-rate composer whose music is pleasant and even sometimes emotional, but not compelling or remarkable. Craftsmanship without inspiration.

After I wrote that I realized that Carl Bauman had reviewed the piano quintet on Naxos. It was a 1945 composition and his last chamber piece. (Grove Dictionary says it was 1936, by the way.) Carl described it as “meandering and dull” (Jan/Feb 2012). It is possible that the Naxos recording is duller than this one, but the music itself is “meandering” no matter how you slice it. These musicians do make very nice sounds.

The 1929 concerto for piano trio (no orchestra) is certainly not a stunning piece, but again it is pleasant. (Wikipedia lists it as 1932. I wonder why no one agrees on the dates of these works.)

This is the man who finished Puccini’s *Turandot* (final scene). Of course, there he had Puccini’s incredible melodic gift working in his favor.

VROON

AMFITHEATROF: *Trio*; see Collections

ANDRONIKOU: *Helio stigma*

Panos Megarchiotis, g; Elektra Karali, voice
Da Vinci 1066—43 minutes

This recording presents *Helio stigma*, or “sun drop”, a 15-poem work by Giorgos Mastrogiannopoulos, himself both a poet and a guitarist. The poetry is set for voice and solo guitar accompaniment by Greek composer Michalis Andronikou, who currently teaches at the University of Calgary.

Guitar accompaniments are often arpeggiated, always conservatively tonal, sometimes folklike but usually including more developed chords and frequent melodic interludes that make good use of

the guitar. They are well-crafted but not virtuosic and do not detract from the singing.

The movements supply a variety of moods, but in general are introspective and subdued. One, titled simply, 'Guitar', is a pleasant setting with guitar tremolo accompanying the voice, somewhat unusual in music composed for voice and guitar. Other movements, 'The River' and 'The Day Broke', also use tremolo in their introductions. 'Destination' has more inventive melody and harmony, and 'The Day Broke' is supremely gentle and sweet. No movements stand out as high-energy.

Recording quality is realistic, with Karali's soft, un-operatic voice a clear and pleasant companion to Panos Megarchiotis's clean and capable guitar playing. Liner notes are succinct but give the listener a sufficient understanding of this new music. The translations of every movement are much appreciated!

The music here is very tonal and doesn't stretch our ears the way a great deal of contemporary music does. It is very listenable and gives a good sense of Greek idioms with poetry that connects us to deeper meanings.

MCCUTCHEON

ASSAD: *Concertos*

Thanos Mitsalal, g; Thessaloniki Symphony
Da Vinci 1063—55 minutes

Brazilian Sergio Assad first became known as half of the bar-setting Assad Duo with his brother Odair in the 1970s. More recently he has been using his considerable musical skills to compose for solo guitar as well as guitar in chamber music settings, and his compositions have found their way onto stages and recordings around the world. This one presents first recordings of two excellent concertos with Greek guitarist Thanos Mitsalal, an excellent performer and longtime collaborator of the composer who has been reviewed many times in ARG.

Assad's *Naoussa Concerto*, named after the Greek city where it was premiered in 2022, opens with a spacious orchestral introduction using strings, harp, and winds and concludes by forcefully adding brass. Assad creates a luscious, interesting environment for the carefully balanced guitar entrance. The rich orchestral harmonies constantly move and evolve but never stretch the listener beyond comprehensible limits. A virtuosic cadenza shows Assad's

knowledge of the instrument and its capabilities, both musical and technical—ably delineated by Mitsalal. II flows serenely, and III erupts with blinding passagework that could only be accomplished by a performer of the highest caliber.

Composed in 2013, *Concerto Popular do Rio* opens in a playful mood, with effective writing for all orchestral sections as well as percussion and harp. II is reminiscent of the best guitar concertos of the 20th Century; one can hear overtones of Rodrigo, shades of Ponce, and tinges of Castelnuovo-Tedesco, all superb orchestrators, but with an added flair of Assad's own brilliance as he weaves lush orchestral passages with solo guitar writing that is perceptive and indicative of the command he has of the instrument. We revel in beauty. The concluding movement, a tour de force of orchestration, with its driving and infectious rhythms, reminds me of the Assad Duo's groundbreaking performances of Latin American music, and establishes Mitsalal as completely owning this work.

Recording quality is first-rate, and liner notes are succinct and satisfying.

This is a recording that clearly rises to the top of the genre in both composition and performance. Prepare to be enlivened.

MCCUTCHEON

BACEWICZ: *Quartet 4; Piano Quintet 1*

Karski Quartet; Jams Coleman, p
Evil Penguin 78—52 minutes

By turns eerie, playful, celebratory, and somber, these chamber works from 1951 and 52 represent Grazybna Bacewicz at the height of her powers. The music is tonal, often lyrical, full of dissonance for sure, but never alienating. It has an appealing directness and intimacy. She is coming into her own as a major force in Polish music, thanks in part to the pioneering recording of the Silesian Quartet, which followed their Grammy-winning Bacewicz Quartets album with a Chandos release of 4 chamber pieces that I reviewed for ARG in 2018 and put on my Best-of-Year list.

Now we have new performances of Quintet 1 and Quartet 4 by Karski, a young Polish-Belgian quartet, joined by the excellent pianist, Jams Coleman. These readings are passionate, polished, and utterly committed. I especially love their way with the fast movements in both pieces, full of syn-

copated, rambunctious joy. Much of this music is steeped in folk motifs, though it is complex and highly contrapuntal.

Quintet 1, from 1952, opens with an austere unison motif that haunts the entire piece. This is a big, expressive work, with a wacky, heavily accented Presto based on the Polish oberek, an eloquent slow movement, and a fast-flying finale, all played here with freshness and a sense of adventure.

The quartet is just as captivating, especially the triumphant finale. The piece opens with a somber, hymn-like introduction that becomes increasingly tender before an ostinato ushers in vigorous fast music, the movement building toward a bright, affirmative major chord at the end. The album closes with a folk tune arranged for quartet—a charming coda. The recorded sound is intimate and appealing.

SULLIVAN

BACH: *Art of Fugue*

James Johnstone, hpsi & org; Carole Cerasi, hpsi—Metronome 1111 [2CD] 100 minutes

If you ever need a dose of feeling that everything might turn out OK for at least your own small part of the world, here it is. Everything goes perfectly, like a platonic ideal. Patience and nobility win the day. Johnstone's simple interpretation is never hurried, letting the music make its own way. His wife, Cerasi, produced the sessions and played second harpsichord in the several pieces needing that. (They took the same approach when Johnstone produced Cerasi's sublime set of Couperin's complete harpsichord music, Nov/Dec 2019.)

This is what I hoped would show up someday, imagining 45 years ago how my ideal rendition of this marvelous music might sound. I have heard at least 30 other harpsichord interpretations. Some of them are astounding in different ways. You need this one for the uncommon purity of Bach.

This recording is compiled from sessions 2019-22, and the *Wenn wir* organ chorale for the end is from 2017. Johnstone includes everything in the print from soon after Bach's death, even the early version of Contrapunctus 10a, along with the normal longer one. He stops the *Fuga a 3 Soggetti* (Contrapunctus 14) where Bach's print did, on a half cadence, not bringing in the several extra bars from the earlier manuscript.

Johnstone is competing with himself a

little bit. He played an improvised continuo part in some of the excellent set by the Richter Ensemble (July/Aug 2023), and he played 2 of the 3 voices in Contrapunctus 13 there, allotting the third part to a violinist. That was in summer 2019, half a year before starting this solo harpsichord recording. This time around, he played Contrapunctus 13 entirely solo, had Cerasi join him for Bach's two-player arrangement of it, and had her play 2 of the 4 voices in Contrapunctus 12, as well. (Contrapunctus 12 and 13 are both very awkward as solos, barely playable with very wide stretches of the hands.)

Let's go Twilight Zone on this. If aliens would ever come along, pick through the rubble, and wonder what the human species was like at its best, I would want them to find this harpsichord set and a CD player. Experts composed and published intricate music. Experts cooperated to perform and record it, so anyone could listen to it. Expertise was important to humans.

Metronome's US distributor is Naxos.

LEHMAN

BACH: *Cantatas 82+170; arias fr cantatas 34, 120, 125*

Alois Mühlbacher, ct; Ensemble Pallidor/
Franz Farnberger—Solo Musica 541—69 min

This recording is a showcase for Austrian countertenor Alois Mühlbacher. At the age of 10 he joined the St Florian Boys' Choir, then under the direction of Franz Farnberger, who became Mühlbacher's artistic mentor and is the director of these performances. Mühlbacher's extraordinary artistry as a boy soprano has been captured on several recordings. Farnberger observed in his foreword to the present recording that Mühlbacher's "transition into a new vocal realm happened so gently that he was able to retain much of the magic of his boyhood voice: the emotional depth, the fragility—now combined with a newly honed technical mastery". In 2023 he and Farnberger founded the period instrument ensemble Pallidor, the pseudonym of the poet Georg Christian Lehms (1684-1717), who wrote many of the texts of the Bach cantatas. For this recording there is one player to a part.

The program consists of two complete solo cantatas—*Ich Habe Genug* (82) and *Vergnügte Ruh, Beliebte Seelenlust* (170)—and arias from 3 other cantatas. 82 is

undoubtedly Bach's best-known solo cantata. First composed for bass voice for the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and Purification of the Blessed Virgin (February 2) in 1727, it survives in several versions for other solo voices. This recording gives the third version of 1735. The point of departure for the cantata is the *Nunc Dimittis*, that most valedictory of all biblical canticles, declaimed by the elderly Simeon as he takes the child Jesus in his arms. Here Bach and his librettist develop a devotional theme that may seem strange to modern listeners—namely the joyful anticipation and even impatience for death. This theme recurs in the other pieces on the recording. We find it in 170, the other solo cantata given in its entirety, intended for the 6th Sunday after Trinity (July 28, 1726). Mühlbacher's program begins with an aria from Cantata 125 (*Mit Fried und Freud*), written for the Presentation in 1726. The aria from 34 (*O Ewiges Feuer*, for Pentecost of 1746 or 1747 and adapted from a wedding cantata) speaks longingly of the blessed souls in heaven. The aria from 120 (*Gott, Man Lobet dich in der Stille* for the inauguration of the town council in July of 1729) may seem to be an exception to this pattern, but can it be entirely coincidental that this text, the first verse of Psalm 65, is also the Introit psalm verse in the Catholic Requiem Mass (Vulgate Psalm 64)?

Farnberger's description of Mühlbacher's artistry quoted above is spot on. He preserves a remarkably boy-like vocal quality with exquisite purity of tone and technical control. These are sensitively nuanced performances that delve beneath the surface of the music. Some of the sustained low notes from 82 are faint and sound uncomfortably low, but that is the exception in these performances. One could not ask for a more robust tone than we get in the aria from 120. Listeners who collect recordings of 82 will want to add this one to their collections.

GATENS

BACH: *Concertos after S 1052, 1053, 1056, 1057*

Ensemble Odyssee
Challenge 720025—71 minutes

One of the least surprising statements about Bach (and many other baroque composers) is that he rearranged music of his own as well as music by other composers. The pres-

ent recording consists of 3 Bach concertos (S 1052, 1053, 1056) rearranged by members of Ensemble Odyssee plus one (S 1057) in an adaptation by Bach himself. These pieces come from a manuscript compiled by Bach around 1738 of 8 harpsichord concertos (S 1052-1059). The last of the collection is incomplete. 3 of the concertos (1054, 1057, 1058) are reworkings of violin concertos from the Köthen period. That has led some scholars to conclude that the other concertos in the compilation are harpsichord arrangements of lost originals for wind or stringed instruments. Bach scholar Christoph Wolff does not share that assumption. He believes that S 1052 and S 1053 are harpsichord versions of organ concertos.

Several musicologists have produced "reconstructions" of the "lost" Bach concertos. That is not the objective of the present recording. Instead, the members of Ensemble Odyssee put themselves in the position of a Bach contemporary adapting an existing work for their own instrument. There is no pretension to authentic historical reconstruction, but the arrangements stay in the boundaries of period instrument writing. There is nothing here that could not have been written by Bach or one of his contemporaries. It is worth noting that some of these concerto movements reappeared as instrumental sinfonias in Leipzig church cantatas, sometimes with an obbligato organ part.

Andrea Friggi, the ensemble's harpsichordist, had a hand in making the adaptations. With Anna Stegmann, the ensemble's recorder player, S 1053 (Harpsichord Concerto in E) was recast as a recorder concerto in E-flat. Bach himself included movements from that concerto in cantatas 49 and 169. Violinist Eva Saladin worked with Friggi to turn S 1052 (Harpsichord Concerto in D minor) into a violin concerto in the same key. Movements appear in cantatas 146 and 188. Oboist Georg Fritz and Friggi transformed S 1056 (Harpsichord Concerto in F minor) into an oboe concerto in G minor. The slow movement reappears as part of Cantata 156. The booklet contains brief essays by Stegmann, Saladin, and Fritz on the sometimes complex considerations that went into the production of the rearranged concertos. The fourth concerto on this recording is Bach's own adaptation of the fourth Brandenburg Concerto (S 1049 with solo violin and two solo recorders in G). In S

1057, the solo violin is replaced with a solo harpsichord and the whole concerto transposed to F major.

Period performance practice is a specialty of the Amsterdam-based Ensemble Odysee. Their past recordings have included little-known rarities. The present recording presents more familiar material but with a twist. One can hardly find fault with the technical standard of these performances. Quick movements are delivered with a bouncy lightness that is immediately engaging, while the slow movements embody a coherent lyricism. The recorded sound is immediately attractive: intimate in character but not excessively close. The ripieno violins are two-to-a-part while the other orchestral players are one-to-a-part. Listeners interested in hearing these rearrangements of familiar Bach concertos will not go wrong.

GATENS

BACH: *Goldberg Variations*

Sophia Weidemann, p
Genuin 25941 [2CD] 90 minutes

As piano performances go, Sophia Weidemann does nothing unusual anywhere, other than being a tick or two slower than average in some variations. I checked this by revisiting a stack of older pianistic renditions that I mostly enjoy: Rosen, Sims, Zhu, Rangell, Rana, Dershavina, Papastefanou, Jando, Perahia, Demus (the 1963 stereo one in the Eloquence box), and Tureck (of hers, I like only the VAI rendition drawn from performances at William F Buckley's house, 1979-84). Those are listed in haphazard order from a busy month of overdosing on Goldberg Variations on piano.

Most of the pianists italicize many more details in the music than Weidemann does, but the music doesn't really need it when the listener already knows the piece. Her simpler interpretation is a welcome contrast after all the (also worthy) efforts by others to differentiate themselves from the field. And there are more than 500 other recordings of this piece available, played on various instruments.

Weidemann's prevailing relaxation governs much of this performance. Wherever Andrew Rangell plays like an Olympic gymnast hitting impressive combinations in a tumbling run, Weidemann is more like a calmly poised chess player making her win-

ning moves without ostentation. She never speeds through anything for the sake of showing off her dexterity, which seems to be the case with many other pianists not on the above list. Her variations 14 and 23 have a strong drive that shows this isn't only a gently moderate reading. Around those liveliest points, her whole performance has a coherent sequence of characters. It is not 32 short and isolated pieces, as we got from Fazil Say.

Weidemann's weakest variation is the sluggish 25, where she is too strict at reading the rhythmic values from the page. She takes "adagio" to mean merely slow, not the "at ease" character of flexible expression. Meanwhile, I was pleased to hear again how good Demus, Rana, Perahia, and Tureck (et al) were at letting the music flow forward at ease in Variation 25, not getting bogged down with subdivided beats. If you want to hear an exceptionally beautiful Adagio in variation 25, look for the recent arrangement played as a violin solo (with continuo) by a Baroque ensemble named Nevermind (wooden flute, violin, viola da gamba, and Jean Rondeau playing organ and harpsichord).

Weidemann plays all the repeats, hence the 90-minute timing and two discs. She scarcely embellishes anything beyond the page. I have listened to this whole performance a dozen times, and it is not dull. It is simple, refreshing, and genial. I have said enough for you to know if you want this.

Reviews of the other recordings mentioned: Rosen (1969, Mar/Apr 2014), Sims (Mar/Apr 2016), Zhu (Sept/Oct 2016), Rangell (July/Aug 1991), Rana (July/Aug 2017), Dershavina (1996, none), Papastefanou (Nov/Dec 2021), Jando (May/June 2005), Perahia (Jan/Feb 2001), Demus (May/June 2023), Tureck (Nov/Dec 1993), Say (Sept/Oct 2023), and Nevermind (2024, none). I especially appreciated many of these pianists in the review of Oliver Schnyder's recording (Jan/Feb 2024).

LEHMAN

BACH: *Violin Concertos 1+2;*

ALBINONI: *Sinfonias 1+6;*

TELEMANN: *Viola Concerto*

Sophie Gent, v; Kathleen Kojioka, va; Ensemble Masques/ Olivier Fortin

Alpha 1140—61 minutes

This is a beautiful, very pleasant program. I

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was familiar with the Bach and Telemann concertos, but the Sinfonias by Tomaso Albinoni (1671-1751) are new to me. They are lovely and very sensuous, and much of the credit for their effect should go to the recording crew. There are only 6 musicians in Ensemble Masques, but the sound they make belies such small forces. I have noticed that many recent recordings of small baroque ensembles have very full sound. This is sensible, as many rooms in aristocratic houses or churches that they would have performed in would have been built from reflective stone and resonant wood.

I need only say that I enjoyed every minute of this disc, and the musicians are first rate. The Telemann Viola Concerto, which is one of the finest written for the instrument, gets the best performance here that I have heard. That is good, because it is underrecorded.

MAGIL

BACH: *Violin Sonatas*

Isabelle Faust, v; Kristin von der Goltz, vc;
Kristian Bezuidenhout, hpsi

HM 902698—61 minutes

Bach's Sonatas for Violin and Continuo are pleasant but lack the wonderful invention of his 6 Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord. These were not written at the same time as those works but were instead scattered around his career. I find them pleasant to listen to but not entrancing like the Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord. This isn't must-have music.

Faust is one of those musicians who invites your attention but does not command it, so I found my mind wandering occasionally.

Her violin was built by Stephan von Baehr in 2019 and is a copy of the "Sleeping Beauty" Stradivarius of 1704 that she regularly plays.

MAGIL

BACH, CPE: *Piano Concertos in A, C minor, F*

Michael Rische; Berlin Baroque Soloists

Hansler 25009—63 minutes

The album cover says "Piano Concertos"! Yep! Played on a full-blooded, romantic piano with an orchestra whose "aim is to present early music on modern instru-

ments", even though the instruments used are 8 violins, 3 violas, 3 cellos, and one violone, plus two horns in the concertos in C minor and F. (I've got to go away someplace and figure this thing out!)

Pianist Michael Rische plows through groupings of 16th notes with articulation that usually becomes sloppy in the middle of passages. The legato-laden, lazy-phrased ensemble sounds like Eugene Ormandy conducting a chamber-Philadelphia Orchestra minus the sheen and fine tuning. In the Concerto in A, W 7 (1740), Rische's playing is soggy rather than crisp and tends to be lardy rather than fleet. Even the jig in III of the Concerto in C minor, W 37 (1762), lacks uplift; attacks by both pianist and orchestra are spongy. And the orchestra sounds slightly sour, lower than 440 (even though my pitch pipe confirms they're playing at 440). Even the Concerto in F, W 42 (1770), which initially sounds suddenly alive, succumbs to smudged articulation and soggy rhythms.

I usually find CPE's music bright, subtle, and interesting. But these 3 concertos, which are new to me, seem unimaginative and rote. Or is it these performances that make them seem so?

FRENCH

BALBASTRE: *Harpsichord Pieces*

Marek Toporowski

Brilliant 97560 [2CD] 97 minutes

Christophe Rousset (May/June 2018) and Korneel Bernolet (2012, no review) both have splendid single disc sets of the standard 17 pieces from Claude Balbastre's 1759 publication. Elizabeth Farr (Naxos 2CD, May/June 2010) is grander, not only because of her big harpsichord including a 16-foot register, but also with more inclination to bring out points of interest in spontaneous-sounding manner. She also included more pieces beyond the manuscript prelude and the printed 1759 book. Some older recordings exist as well. There is no shortage of good Balbastre on harpsichord.

How is Marek Toporowski's record as a first or only venture into this rather decadent music? He does very well. I wouldn't be disappointed with this as an introduction to it. One bonus is the unmeasured prelude that he got from a 1777 manuscript (or from Alan Curtis's edition), a beautiful opening for this program. Toporowski's most charm-

ing extra piece is a depiction of a cuckoo, an excerpt from a 1749 sonata. (Farr included both these pieces, too.)

If you want Balbastre's pieces to sound outrageously over the top and intensely theatrical, Toporowski is too safely objective. He does go into more personalized interpretation near the end of *La Castelmore* with its drone bass, pushing the melody faster and faster like (perhaps) a crazed folk-instrument player riling up a crowd. *La Lugeac* should please anyone who likes a rollicking jig.

This is a splendid project. He fully documents the composer, the pieces, and the French-styled harpsichord in his booklet essay (English only, in translation from Polish). His own career is a long one in Poland and Germany.

To hear the full range of Balbastre's musical imagination, you need at least Farr and Bernolet in addition to Toporowski.

LEHMAN

BARBER: *Souvenirs*; see RACHMANINOFF

BARSANTI: *6 Sonatas, op 2*

ConSerto Musico
Brilliant 96243—67 minutes

The notes tell us that after Francesco Gemiani this figure was the most interesting and original Italian musician to make his career in London, though he also spent years in York and Edinburgh. From the notes we learn that Franz Schubert was born in 1787—alas 10 years off (it was 1797). Francesco Barsanti was born in Lucca around 1690 and died in the British capital April 30, 1775. Around Great Britain he managed to create an independent existence as an oboist, flutist, violist, and probably violinist too, teaching, arranging, or copying music and producing concerts. Barsanti did not write ballet, opera, or oratorio. Building on Corelli's Opus 5, this set of sonatas was first published in 1728, reprinted soon, and reissued in 1787, more than a decade after he died. They are interspersed with old Scots tunes from the 1742 collection published while he was in Edinburgh, here with one exception on the bass instrument and keyboard, matched by key to the sonatas that follow. Making the album this way varies the texture and allows the cellist to shine. The options listed by publisher John Walsh on the title page pres-

ent these works on flute, oboe, violin, cello, and harpsichord, though not all at once. Since there are 6 sonatas, we hear flute, oboe, and violin twice.

Much Barsanti has been recorded on collections, including the Spohr Collection series from distinguished English flutist, professor, and arts administrator Ashley Solomon. This ensemble uses period instruments. Our Italian musicians recorded this album at Trebaseleghe, a town in the Venetian region of northern Italy. There is nothing about them in the booklet other than their names and instruments. The treble soloist is placed to the fore slightly. The sounds are smooth and pleasant, complemented by superb coordination and intonation. All 3 treble players add a subtle, quick vibrato to notes when they sustain. The cellist does not. Paces are as apt as balances, but tend toward British moderation more than Italian dazzle. Heard on oboe, Lord Aboyne's 'Welcome on Cumbernauld House' sends us away with a drone in the cello evoking bagpipes.

A figure significant in the 20th Century revival of Barsanti was the German lawyer, recorder and keyboard player, editor, and translator Walter Bergmann, who lived in England from 1939 until he died in 1988, worked for the British office of publisher Schott, and promoted the early careers of Frans Bruggen and Michala Petri, among others. Although no mention of him is made here, he ought not to be forgotten, since any recording of Barsanti or similar figures like Schickhardt is a component of his legacy.

The image chosen for the cover is a summer scene of the Chinese Pavilions and Boxes in Vauxhall Gardens by Thomas Bowles III, an elegant structural background with people milling about, a canopy of trees in the distance, and two groups of 4 tall trees flanking the center of the composition. It suits music like Caldara and Gluck's operas *The Chinese Women*. Although this scenery is British and local, why wasn't something Scottish and contemporary used?

GORMAN

BARTOK: *Violin Sonatas*;
SZYMANOWSKI: *Mythes*

Frank Peter Zimmermann; Dmytro Choni, p
Bis 2787 [SACD] 73 minutes

These are among the best recordings of all

of these works. Bartok wrote his two violin sonatas inspired by his meeting with fellow Hungarian violinist and niece of the great Joseph Joachim, Jelly d'Aranyi, in 1921; and Szymanowski wrote his *Mythes* in 1915. Jelly already knew the *Mythes* and introduced them to Bartok, who appropriated their innovative violin techniques for his sonatas. As Bartok was guided by d'Aranyi in his writing for the violin, Szymanowski was guided by fellow Polish violinist Pawel Kochanski. So, on a certain level, these works are collaborations between a pianist composer and a virtuosic violinist.

Aside from Kochanski's guidance, the *Mythes* show the influence of avant-garde composers like Debussy and Scriabin. The 3 movements are inspired by Greek mythology and are titled 'The Fountaine of Arethusa', 'Narcissus' and 'Dryads and Pan'. The first movement is the best and is often performed alone. Music with these themes naturally benefits from an impressionist style.

Bartok's sonatas, on the other hand, use impressionist colors in the service of a more aggressively barbaric folk style. He must have known Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*.

There are other outstanding recordings of these works. Gidon Kremer and Martha Argerich are superb in Bartok's Sonata 1. Barnabas Keleman and Zoltan Kocsis are wonderful in both sonatas (Jan/Feb 2015). We are fortunate to have Szigeti and Bartok performing Sonata 2 in recital in 1940 (Jan/Feb 1989). The *Mythes* have recently been recorded by James Ehnes in superb performances (Nov/Dec 2023, 142).

Zimmermann plays the "Lady Inchiquin" Stradivarius of 1711.

MAGIL

BEACH: *2-Piano Suite*; see Collections

BEETHOVEN: *National Airs with Variations, opp 105+107*
Johannes Hustedt, fl; Sontraud Speidel, p
Audite 97822—77 minutes

This recording uses modern instruments and sounds excellent. 93 tracks present everything as precisely as any audiophile could desire. It makes sense that some people want to hear these, but more than once? Given other possibilities like the flute sonatas or quartets of Ries, sonatas or quin-

tets of Kuhlau, or the Schneider sonatas later this issue, why bother?

ORMAN

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto 3; Sonatas 24+28*

Karim Said, Liverpool Philharmonic/ Domingo Hindoyan—Rubicon 1111—69 minutes

Here Beethoven does all the thinking and the pianist scrupulously, literally executes Beethoven's directions. Said's tempos are so steady, they could calibrate a metronome. His pedaling and touch are utterly clean and immaculate—there's no denying his technique is polished. The orchestra sounds large and applies standard romantic vibrato. Booklet photos show Said to be around 40. If an artist hasn't developed any interpretive ideas by 40, will he ever? I think it's never too late.

WRIGHT

BEETHOVEN: *Theatre Music*

Valda Wilson, Raffaella Lintl, s; Simon Bailey, b; Sidonie von Krosigk, Bernd Tauber, Frederic Böhle, narr; Czech Philharmonic Choir of Brno, Cappella Aquileia/ Marcus Bosch
CPO 555754 [4CD] 4-1/2 hours

The orchestra is a small festival orchestra—that is, about 35 musicians who come together yearly for a festival in Heidenheim. There are 2 small German cities called Heidenheim, and I can't figure out which one this is. Both are in or close to Bavaria.

The first disc was issued in 2020 and reviewed (Jan/Feb 2021). It has *The Ruins of Athens* (around 40 minutes) plus the *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage Overture* and a 5-minute *Opferlied*. The narration (by a woman) is in German, and only one stretch is melodrama (accompanied by orchestra). I estimate the narration takes about 15 minutes. I got really tired of narration. The music itself is well performed but a little fast and aggressive at some points. I cannot be too enthusiastic (I'm not a fan of fast and aggressive), but it makes a good first impression—and, after all, Beethoven does sound impressive when played aggressively.

The second disc was issued in 2021 (July/Aug 2021). It is 32 minutes of music for *King Stephen* plus all the overtures for *Fidelio* (38 minutes). The narration is again irritating and involves a lot of old-fashioned German shouting—by a man this time.

The third disc is *Egmont* (39 minutes), which has been recorded by George Szell (among others—maybe 15 recordings), followed by 3 overtures (*Coriolan*, *Consecration of the House*, *Name-Day*) and *Wellington's Victory*. The (male) narrator does a lot more German shouting—which I suppose can be quite thrilling when it's not downright frightening. Certainly the *Egmont* is the best of Beethoven's theatre (incidental) music.

The fourth disc is the complete ballet, *The Creatures of Prometheus*. Stephen Wright reviewed it (July/Aug 2023) and liked the enthusiastic performance, which is fast and buoyant and recorded in a lively acoustic. The strings seem radiant, though they play without vibrato (except the cello solo).

The chorus is wonderful wherever you hear it—they are only on the first two discs. *Egmont* has a soprano solo, but I don't like the singer here. *Prometheus* is completely orchestral. I don't think anyone hearing it would consider Beethoven a great ballet composer.

The booklet has notes and texts in German and English, with pictures of all who take part.

VROON

BEETHOVEN: *Trios 3+4; Symphony 1* (arr. *Wosner*)

Emanuel Ax, p; Leonidas Kavakos, v; Yo-Yo Ma, vc—Sony 90884—78 minutes

Familiar music in a different guise, and two much-loved works in their original guise. This is the latest installment in a series of albums by these players that pairs Beethoven's piano trios with transcriptions of his symphonies for piano trio. The prototype for the transcription is the arrangement Beethoven's pupil Ferdinand Ries made of the Symphony 2, purportedly under the master's supervision. Ax, Kavakos, and Ma have already recorded that on a disc that includes Symphony 5 transcribed by Colin Matthews. The arrangement of Symphony 1 recorded here is by pianist Shai Wosner.

If you can accept turning over the duties of Beethoven's full classical orchestra, with trumpets and timpani, to 3 instruments, the result is actually quite charming and enjoyable, especially when it is as alertly and sensitively played as it is here. I've known and enjoyed Ries's transcription of Symphony 2

for many years, and I found it just as easy to shift over to chamber music mode for the less expansive, already more chamber music-like First Symphony.

Of course, 3 instruments cannot replace the breadth and intricacy of Beethoven's orchestration, even when one of the instruments is a piano played with the energy and nuance of Emanuel Ax. Like Ma and Kavakos, he has deep experience in chamber music; and the group plays with the cohesiveness of a seasoned chamber group. That is not always the case with chamber music performances by "All Star" soloists, but here the give-and-take between the players is superb, with nobody trying to grab the limelight. I get the impression the players are really enjoying this opportunity to set aside the concerto showpieces and get back to the simple enjoyment of making music with other devoted musicians. (I also picked that up from an interview of the players on a broadcast from the Tanglewood Festival.)

If not the high point of the program, the symphony stands out for its uniqueness and originality. The Piano Trios 3 and 4, the latter the one famously nicknamed *Ghost*, figure fairly often on concert programs. Or at least they did, when chamber music concerts were much more common than they are now. The recorded competition is much stiffer, and while nicely paced and beautifully played, these performances are not going to be on my "desert island" list. Outer movements bounce along briskly with verve and but not hurried, but the famous slow movement of No. 4 is decidedly lacking in mystery or ghostly spookiness, though it is beautifully played.

While No. 4 comes from the period when Beethoven composed the Fifth and Sixth symphonies, the much less well-known Trio No. 3 dates from 1797 and was originally scored for piano, clarinet, and cello (which can be replaced by a bassoon). No, Mr Kavakos does not switch to playing the clarinet, so we get this work in its standard piano trio form. The players' interpretation is suitably lively and unforced—perfectly suited to the music's lighter, more entertaining nature. I actually found this performance more satisfying than No. 4—perhaps my expectations were not as high? I certainly appreciate the gentle handling of the simple, songful second movement and

the lively romp thru the theme-and-variations finale.

Although recorded in two different places—Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood in 2022 for Trio 4, the “EMPAC” hall at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 2023 and 2024 for the other two—the excellent sound is uniform. Balance between the 3 instruments is darned-near ideal, with just a little bit of hall reverberation to give us a sense of real, physical space.

The booklet is bare-bones: no notes at all, which would be helpful to many listeners, at least, for the Symphony 1 transcription. Nor do we get any movement timings in the booklet or the back of the jewel box. But with such superb music-making and sonics, that’s a minor quibble. A purchase decision is going to ride mostly on the symphony transcription and perhaps the very fine rendering of Trio No. 3. Consider the very good performance of the *Ghost* Trio a substantial bonus.

Editor’s Note: Newer recordings, including this one, follow a renumbering of the Beethoven trios that includes the clarinet trio. This recording calls it No. 4 and the *Ghost* No. 5. The latter was No. 4 in most recordings. Who makes these decisions?

HANSEN

BEETHOVEN: *Violin Sonatas 2+10*

Viktoria Mullova; Alasdair Beatson, fp
Signum 920—42 minutes

Phrasing, sound, and style are painful blights in this performance. The violin sounds clunky and awkward in places that should sound lithe. The sound quality deteriorates in loud sections, in crescendo passages, and in passages with accents. Neither crescendos nor subito fortes are a license to pound with impunity, and music should never be beaten out of a piano or violin. The vibrato does not always match the bow strokes, creating odd notes that stick out. The *mesa di voces* sound artificial, even comical, especially in II of 2. Gestures are overwrought, hijacking the phrasing. The phrases themselves are not always connected as in 10:I. In III the accents sound ridiculous again, and the phrase disappears altogether when they appear. They should adjust to the context they appear in, both in volume and character. The performers play with too much of a rustic, folk-like character. The music has a nobility that should

come across with grander, more majestic brushes. Some of the rubato works well, and some of the ideas are good, but it is often far too difficult to know what is happening in the music. It makes me want to go listen to a good recording to remember what I’m supposed to hear.

KELLENBERGER

BENEDICT: *Piano Sonata 1; Pieces*

Nicolo Giuliano Tuccia
Naxos 547586—66 minutes

This release initiates a new “Romantic Piano” series from Naxos, evidently intended to revive forgotten repertoire. In this issue we review several additional releases in this series, which promises to be interesting.

The composer, conductor, and pianist Julius Benedict (1804-85) was born in Stuttgart and studied with Hummel and Weber before moving to England, where he had much success and even was knighted in 1871 along with another composer, William Sterndale Bennett. We have reviewed only one previous recording of his music, with two piano concertos (N/D 2009). Steven Haller’s review offers interesting information about the composer and sympathetic descriptions of the concertos.

Here we have 7 works from different times in Benedict’s life, all but two without opus numbers, some without dates, two of them published posthumously. The two major pieces are an early Sonata in E, Op. 2, and Andante and Rondo Brillante in A-flat, a piano solo version of a concerto movement that itself was based on an earlier composition. The latter, not fast but with much elegant filigree, shows the influence of Hummel and even resembles early Chopin, who also learned from Hummel.

I find the 4-movement sonata, which Benedict wrote at the age of 19, most interesting. There are touches of Hummel, too, especially in I, but Benedict uses fewer notes. Textures are sparse in II, with just minimal harmonic support for melodies and even occasional monophony. III, the Minuet, is very fast, really a scherzino. IV is slower than the marked *allegretto*, more like *moderato espressivo*. The whole work, lasting 33 minutes here, shows considerable originality. There are no pauses between movements; I wonder whether that was the composer’s wish.

The 5 shorter compositions include an *Etude for the Left Hand Alone*, probably composed much later because it is considerably more romantic in spirit, a nice *Reverie*, Op. 39, a charming Scherzo with a rather moderate tempo, an Etude in A-flat with many repeated chords, and a lightweight 'Gigue Ecossaise'. All this is played very engagingly by the young Italian pianist (b 1999), a graduate of Rimini Conservatory. Excellent sound.

REPP

BENJAMIN: *Romantic Fantasy*;

see WALTON

BENNETT & DUKE: *Violin Concertos*

with **BENNETT:** *Hexapodia*

Chloe Hanslip, v; Singapore Symphony/ Andrew Litton—Chandos 5371 [SACD] 61 minutes

At the very beginning of his invaluable informative album notes, Mervyn Cooke postulates that these mid-20th Century concertos are neglected because their composers are far better known for their work in popular music (Duke) and musical theater (Bennett). I'm going to suggest they're not better known because they have each had only a handful of performances. Music can't catch on with audiences if they never hear it. The obscurity of both concertos is unjust, and I hope this album introduces many listeners to them and gets them into our concert halls more often. The performances on this superbly played and produced album certainly make a strong case for both concertos.

If you like Broadway musicals, then you are already familiar with Robert Russell Bennett's work, because he orchestrated many, if not most, of the great musicals from the 1920s thru the 1960s, including ones by George Gershwin and Rodgers and Hammerstein. Some of us also appreciate him for his spectacular orchestrations of the Richard Rodgers score for the World War II TV documentary series *Victory at Sea*. Like many of the composers of popular music of the period, Bennett also studied "serious" classical composition, including the obligatory stint with Nadia Boulanger in Paris in the late 1920s.

Bennett's Violin Concerto in A "In the Popular Style" was written for Louis Kaufman in 1940, who worked for MGM performing in movie scores (some 400 of

them), but like both composers here had deep roots in classical traditions. If you're expecting a collection of show tunes, you'll be disappointed. The "Popular Style" subtitle almost seems like a hedge to keep audience expectations reasonable. The music is a little more casual than, say, Prokofieff or even Miklos Rosza, but overall this is a work of ambitious proportions that, well, lives up to its ambitions.

The structure is almost conservative: a large, complex opening movement, then a warm, lyrical slow movement, followed by a brief (barely a minute and a half) transitional movement marked 'Vivace', and capped off a brilliant finale.

The first performance was given in December 1941, shortly after Pearl Harbor, on Bennett's radio program, not by Kaufman but rather by Joseph Coleman, the concertmaster of the radio orchestra on *Russell Bennett's Notebook*. Kaufman finally played it the following March with Bennett providing the accompaniment on the piano, and eventually there was another performance with full orchestra at Carnegie Hall in 1944. Then Bennett drastically revised the concerto. The revised version was performed by Kaufman with the London Symphony under Bernard Herrmann in 1956. A recording of that performance was eventually released on LP in the 1970s—the only recording until the present one.

The energetic yet warmly expressive and unforced performance here by Ms Hanslip and the Singapore players led by the ever-capable Andrew Litton is superb, making a very strong case for the work as an unjustly obscure, major addition to the violin concerto repertory.

Having studied music at the Kiev Conservatory, Vladimir Alexandrovich Dukelsky changed his name to Vernon Duke after coming to the United States and embarking on a career writing popular songs and musicals. His violin concerto is a thornier, more abstract work than Bennett's, and it had its premiere with no less an ensemble than the Boston Symphony in March 1943 with Ruth Posselt as the soloist. After a later performance, reported to have been indifferently conducted by Artur Rodzinski, the score disappeared and was not performed again until 2014. That performance was recorded, so the present one is actually the work's second commercial recording.

Duke's concerto also follows the tradi-

tional form with a substantial first movement, followed by a short, piquant slow movement and a theme-and-variations finale that takes half the work's running time. I find it a less immediately attractive piece than Bennett's, though the slow movement is particularly lovely. The long finale contains quite a bit of hard-edged music and a very busy part for the soloist. The overall effect is restlessness, even nervousness, as if the composer has so many ideas that he can't settle on which ones he wants to develop.

Between the concertos, we get Bennett's *Hexapoda*, "5 Studies in Jitteroptera"—a reference to jitterbug jazz—for violin and piano. Written in 1940 (thus before the concerto) and in 5 very short movements, the longest of which is not quite two minutes, it is a lively, ingratiating work that complements Bennett's concerto nicely.

It's difficult to make an assessment of performances of works one has never heard. From the electric energy of these performances and knowing the outstanding podium leadership I've so often heard from Litton, I found both concertos fascinating and stimulating. Ms Hanslip's playing seems entirely at one with the music of both composers. She handles the many mood changes of all 3 works with aplomb, and I never feel as if she's not completely on top of the music. Her playing is incisive, with plenty of punch in the fast, percussive passages; and her tone soars in the lyrical passages, especially in the Bennett, which to be fair, has a lot more lyricism than the Duke.

The Singapore Symphony plays magnificently, as if they've known this music for years, and Litton guides them with a sure hand thru every twist and turn of the music.

Chandos's SACD sound is quite stunning, with plenty of heft when the full orchestra is playing, without swamping the violin, and nice detail in the soft, delicate passages. Mr Cooke's album notes are absolutely indispensable for understanding the music and the circumstances under which it was written. The historical information outlined in this review comes directly from those notes.

I am thoroughly pleased to have been introduced to both of these concertos. Now, let's hope this album helps get them "discovered" and onto concert programs.

HANSEN

BINCHOIS: *Sacred Pieces; Chansons*

Baptiste Romain, Le Miroir de Musique

Ricercar 473—74 minutes

Like most programs by Le Miroir de Musique (see Nov/Dec 2021 & Jan/Feb 2020, most recently), this album covers a single composer: Gilles Binchois. The Franco-Flemish polyphonist is recognized as one of the leading composers of the first half of the 15th Century; while he never left the Burgundian Low Countries, his music was disseminated widely. Performers today have tended to record primarily his chansons. Le Miroir de Musique makes a welcome contribution, as it includes both sacred and secular works, all recorded with the ensemble's characteristic creativity and quality.

In addition to varied genres, the album also includes a wide array of performance practices. The most interesting, to my mind, are the two renditions of both 'Je loe amours' (tracks 4 and 17, with divergent spellings) and 'Adieu mes tres belles amours' (tracks 2 and 15). The former pair is transmitted in a single codex (the Buxheim Organ Book), but they are fundamentally different: one is performed on string instruments (vielle and rebec), while the lush organ version includes ornate divisions. More surprising, the first interpretation of 'Adieu mes tres belles amours' is performed on "alta capella" instruments (bagpipes, bombard, and slide trumpet). This is not a timbre that is often associated with the chanson repertoire today, yet it does work: the drone of the bagpipes creates a harmonic foundation, and the slide trumpet interjections lend it a fanfare-like tone. (I should note that though I listened to this track several times, I still find the added introduction somewhat perplexing.)

Despite the ingenuity of these instrumental performances, the a cappella vocal works still stand out: the musical lines are long and seamless, the intonation is delightfully tight (particularly in cadences), and the tone is vibrant and luxurious. Collectively, the performance choices illustrate the flexibility of the music, but also the sheer inventiveness of Baptiste Romain and Le Miroir de Musique. Liner notes and translations are in English, French, and German.

WILKENING

BIZET: *Songs, all*

Marianne Croux, Coline Dutilleul, Cyrille Dubois, Guilhem Worms; Luca Montebugnoli, Edoardo Torbianelli, p
Harmonia Mundi 905388 [3CD] 214 minutes

20 Songs, op 21

Justina Gringyte, mz; Malcolm Martineau, p
Ondine 1458—75 minutes

2025 marks the 150th anniversary of George Bizet's death. During his short career Bizet composed a substantial quantity of orchestral, piano, and vocal works. His father's career as a singing teacher must have supplied a background for his son's interest in writing for the voice. Bizet is best known for his operas *Carmen* and *Les Pecheurs de Perles*. He also composed more than a dozen other operas that are little known. Almost as unknown are his more than 60 songs. Generally, his songs are characterized by brightness and airiness. These two releases aim to recognize his talent as a composer of songs.

To commemorate this anniversary, Ondine's release presents Bizet's major set, *20 Songs, Op. 21*. Harmonia Mundi's 3CD set is the first complete recording of all of Bizet's songs; it includes those 20 songs and numerous rarities on two other CDs (early works, different versions, pieces published individually, duets, and pieces from unfinished operas). The project was produced by the Association des Amis de George Bizet with assistance from Palazzetto Bru Zane. 8 of the 63 songs were previously unpublished, including pieces Bizet composed as a boy ('Ah! Qu'elle est Belle a Voir' and a couple of vocalises). Half of the pieces on discs 2 and 3 are first recordings.

4 singers and 2 pianists take turns. The voices are matched to the songs exceedingly well. French tenor Cyrille Dubois, a light, high-voiced singer, is the best known of them. After strongly affirming his recent album of all the songs of Gabriel Dupont (S/O 2025), I was eager to hear him again. He has consistently won high praise—especially in French repertoire but also recently for his recording of Schubert's *Schöne Müllerin*.

The program gets off to a tender beginning with the first two of the 20 Songs. The lovely 'Chanson d'Avril' begins with a sweet and almost imperceptible entrance followed by an also lovely delivery of 'Matin'. His more operatic side is evident in other

songs from this set. In 'J'Aime l'Amour' he rises to a stunning (and I assume interpolated) high D at the end, and in 'Absence' he hits a high C near the end. In the following song, 'Calm Sea', his tone changes dramatically and effectively to a soft head voice. That lovely soft voice is again evident in 'Serenade' from *Pecheurs de Perles* and the exquisite 'Aubade' from the posthumous collection. 'Aimons! Revons!' gives a chance to hear his remarkable ability to mold and shape a song. His singing is arresting in all the 16 pieces he recorded here.

I found his performances very appealing, with his exquisite technique, lucid diction, evocative phrasing, impressive palette of tonal color, dramatic use of dynamics, shaping the musical line, and close attention to the nuances of the words. His smooth lyricism, soft singing, and nicely delivered head voice are thrilling to hear. His voice is very distinct, perhaps a bit quirky. His rapid vibrato has been described as "bleating". He doesn't use it all the time, and in his Dupont album it was mostly absent. Here I occasionally found it distracting, but it did not quench my delight in listening to him. His voice is perfect for these songs, which he seems to inhabit fully. His singing is mesmerizing.

I spent more time on Dubois, because he is such an unusual singer, but the two women are also very good. Belgian mezzo-soprano Coline Dutilleul, a singer new to me, is a delight to hear. She sings 5 of the Opus 21 songs with glowing spirit and conviction, which invited a comparison with the Ondine recording (see below). Her singing of 'A Une Fleur', the first of a set of songs related to flowers, is transporting, with palpable tenderness and exquisite technique; and 'Le Colibri' (The Hummingbird) and 4 of 16 *Mélodies* shows pleasing lightness of spirit. The 6 concluding *Folk-songs of the Pyrenees* (1867) harmonized by Bizet are not terribly interesting in themselves, but her smooth, warm sound makes them well worth hearing. She is accompanied here by Torbianelli on an 1835 Pleyel (upright piano), which gives the sound a lovely salon atmosphere.

Franco-Belgian soprano Marianne Croux, another singer new to me, has a clear, bright voice and sings 5 of the Opus 21 songs, bringing a delightfully coquettish quality to the final 'Tarentelle'. She sings 4 of the 16 *Mélodies* and is aglow in 'La Nuit'.

Her agile singing of 'Guitare' in the *Feuilles d'Album* set is a delight. She gives strong readings of 'Adieux de l'Hotesse Arabe' and the dramatic 'Petite Marguerite'. In 'Voeu' (Wish) she conveys how far her faithful love will go.

French bass-baritone Guilhem Worms sings only 8 of the pieces and is in one of the 4 duets. The 4 singers are paired off for the duets. His readings are fine, but his tonal quality was at a different level than the rest.

All kinds of delights await your discovery in this set. The splendid variety of the sound landscape here is amazing. The 3 pianos used add to that variety. The extensive booklet enhanced my knowledge and appreciation of Bizet significantly. Hervé Lacombe notes that Bizet had two rosewood Pleyel pianos in his drawing room in the Rue de Douai in Paris, a grand and a cottage upright (pianino). For these recordings an 1835 Pleyel pianino is used for the unpublished early songs and the *Chants des Pyrénées*, an 1857 Pleyel baby grand for the earlier published pieces and duets, and an 1898 Erard—which once belonged to Pauline Viardot—for the Op. 21 songs and 16 *Méodies*. Luca Montebugnoli and Edoardo Torbianelli take turns accompanying—and are outstanding. The gentler sounds of these pianos drew out the delicacy of the songs.

Along with the Harmonia Mundi release, I was sent Ondine's debut album by Lithuanian mezzo-soprano Justina Gringyte of Bizet's 20 Songs. She is an acclaimed Carmen and is one of the rising stars of the opera world. She has a very fine voice and had the good fortune of partnering here with pianist Malcolm Martineau in an album that is well recorded. It is her misfortune that her Bizet album comes so close to Harmonia Mundi's. Her voice sounds rich and expressive, with a more operatic approach. She has a wonderful voice, and Martineau is one of the very best collaborative pianists these days. I found nothing unlikeable about Gringyte's release and much that was appealing. It's just that the Harmonia Mundi release is better.

In comparing the performance of the 5 songs sung in each case by a mezzo, the first thing that stands out is the tonal landscape. One sounds like a performance for a concert hall. The other sounds like a soirée. Coline Dutilleul sings with greater delicacy and with a more intimate approach to phrasing and emphasis on words. Gringyte has a rich

voice; Dutilleul has a more subtle voice. One sounds ordinary by comparison; the other sounds magical. The Harmonia Mundi singers also have the benefit of greater comfort in their native French and the delicacy of period pianos, which helps impart a feeling of a salon evening. Croux's 'Tarentelle' is more effective with a brightly voiced soprano who has the agility necessary for the song.

There's great variety in distributing the 20 songs among 4 singers accompanied by more delicate period pianos. An overall comparison between the two releases of Opus 20 strongly favors Harmonia Mundi.

The Harmonia Mundi set also includes a luxuriously illustrated and documented booklet full of valuable information and with full texts and translations

Ondine supplies notes in English and French translation, but with texts in French only.

R MOORE

BLANCAFORT: *Songs 2*

Anna Alas i Jove, mz; Miquel Villalba, p
Naxos 579170—56 minutes

This is the second volume of songs by Catalan composer Manuel Blacafort produced by Naxos. The first volume, with the same performers, was favorably reviewed (March/April 2018). Volume 2 is almost entirely world premiere recordings. Jove, with her earthy and powerful mezzo voice, sings with great nuance and brings out the idiomatic Catalan style effortlessly, her interpretive abilities shining on this recording. Villalba, who has recorded all of Blacafort's piano music for Naxos, is a sensitive and supportive collaborator, bringing an intimate knowledge of the composer's style.

Jove is joined by soprano Maria del Mar Humanes on 'Serenata a l'infant' (Serenade to the Child), their voices blending joyfully, weaving the vocal lines together and effortlessly singing the short vocal flourishes, mirroring the Lopez-Pico text, "Weave, nightingales, the curtain of shadow with the notes of your song."

A chamber ensemble performs with Jove on the last 6 selections of the program. In both 'L'aire del Montseny' (The Air of Montseny), and 'El Torrent' (The Stream), the instruments playfully represent many of the images of Ribot's and Lloist's poetry, including running water, meadow birds,

and tree frogs. Jove is brilliant in 'Sonet Penitencial', caressing the melody and using her exquisite piano dynamics, especially in her higher register.

The program is expertly performed by all. Essays by Villalba and Alex Susanna supply a brief history of Catalan music and note Blancafort's place as a member of the Group of Eight, Compositors Independents de Catalunya (CIC). Original Spanish and Catalan texts with English translations.

VALENTE

BLISS: *Miracle in the Gorbals;*
Metamorphic Variations
BBC Philharmonic/ Michael Seal
Chandos 5370—80 minutes

The Gorbals was a wretched slum district of Glasgow, Scotland. Michael Benthall's scenario for Bliss's 1944 score begins with a young girl so despondent that she commits suicide by jumping into the Clyde River. A mysterious Stranger brings her back to life. An official, jealous of the Stranger, tries to snare him in a honey trap with a prostitute. When that fails, he has a razor gang kill the Stranger. They disperse at the sound of a ship's horn. The young girl and the prostitute comfort each other over the Stranger's body as dawn breaks over the city.

Bliss's music is a combination of expressionist modern tonality and traditional dance forms. The overture, for example, is a sarabande; and the Stranger enters to a pascaglia. The music also includes a gracious waltz, and a funeral cortege for the young suicide audibly echoes Chopin. There are passages of impulsively driven rhythms for contrast. A final raucous climax is cut off by the braying of the ship's signal. The music for the two women paying homage to the body of the Stranger recaps some of the opening music in a furtive transformation. The complete score here uses both the printed edition and some additions in Bliss's manuscript.

The *Metamorphic Variations* (1972) was a commission from the Croydon Arts Festival. There were cuts made at the premiere. This is the first recording of the complete score. The music rings changes on 3 elements: a lengthy theme for solo oboe; a two-bar motif, and a dense chordal cluster. The variations are ingenious. They include a parody of a Polonaise (with "Spanish" percussion spice) and many tempo shifts.

There are constant interruptions for soloists playing elaborate cadenza-like passages. I wouldn't relish conducting this piece, having to keep intact the thread of a 45-minute span with so much improv-sounding material. I've been a Bliss fan since 1949 when I heard his wonderful score to the movie 'Columbus' but have to confess this music eludes me. It's one of those pieces where ingenuity outstrips inspiration.

Performances and conducting are excellent. The strings' ensemble in some tricky running passages is especially admirable. Seal paces the music for good dramatic effect in the ballet and maximum clarity of line in the variations. Booklet notes are first-rate.

O'CONNOR

BOULEZ: *Piano Pieces*
Ralph van Raat
Naxos 574398—64 minutes

This important CD gives us two early, rare, lengthy Boulez works, *Theme and Variations for the Left Hand* and *3 Psalmodies*—world premiere recordings. The Boulez heirs gave pianist Ralph van Raat special permission to record them. By turns reflective, violent, and playful, they are influenced by Boulez's early mentor, Messiaen, especially the *3 Psalmodies*; but they look forward to the mature pieces, 'Incises' and 'Fragment d'une bauch', which close out the well-balanced program with explosive energy and color.

Boulez fully understood the piano's capabilities and subtleties, as these pieces show. (Indeed, the informative notes by Ralph van Raat tell us that he initially intended to become a concert pianist.) He was known as an uncompromising modernist, interested more in theory than in pleasing an audience, yet his music often has an inviting, sensuous shimmer; it is a challenge for the mind, but more easy on the ears than many nontonal artists. "People see me as a theoretician", he said, "but my music is also seductive, even spiritual." He realized that music must have a beautiful sound if it is to engage an audience.

Ralph van Raat, who specializes in contemporary music, understands all this: he plays with poetry, virtuosity, and inviting tone, and he gets warm recorded sound. One hopes the early pieces, which are seductive and accessible, will now enter the

repertory. The Theme and Variations alone is a major addition to the left-hand repertory, and the Psalmodes are haunting and memorable. People who don't care for Boulez's mature, hyper-complex works might find this album attractive, as the early pieces make up the bulk of the album. For Boulez's admirers, this disc is essential.

SULLIVAN

BRAHMS: *Piano Concerto 2;*
Intermezzos, op 117

Francesco Piemontesi, Leipzig Gewandhaus
Orchestra/ Manfred Honeck

Pentatone 5187461—61 minutes

Excellent sound—that is, you are immediately thrown into the music-making, and it is exciting. Soon you realize that the piano is miked very close—practically inside it. So it really dominates most of the time. You also get the feeling after a while that the pianist goes his own way, the orchestra its own way. Both make a big sound, both are stunning, but they don't seem to share a concept of the work or match their tempos or phrasing or flow.

So, it's a stunning recording and a thrilling performance, but piano and orchestra are almost in different worlds. They are of course miked separately, too.

In the second movement, the piano sets the tempos, and the orchestra more or less has to follow. It's too fast for expression from the orchestra. It's all about the piano and the pianist's virtuosity. I kept thinking of Richter and Leinsdorf (RCA), who seemed so perfectly in tune with each other.

The Andante (III) is a minute faster here (than with Richter). IV seems faster than it is—which I attribute to the pianist's breathless style.

This was recorded in concert in Leipzig in April of 2025. Concert recordings do urge the soloist in a concerto to project tremendous energy and full tone—as we have here. He's playing to the audience rather than playing WITH the orchestra. If you had been there, this is what you would have heard, except that the piano would of necessity take its place in the orchestra. Only a microphone could produce this tremendous immediacy of sound.

Piemontesi is almost the house pianist of Pentatone these days. He's very good; I only heard one moment (in the last movement) where something wasn't quite right.

But I could never be happy with this recording—despite its joys—because I think that in this concerto especially the piano needs to sound like part of the orchestra rather than a high-flying antagonist.

By the way, in his notes in the booklet the pianist refers to an inscription in the Gewandhaus: "Real joy is a serious matter." I wonder if he knows that Mendelssohn said that—and it's typical Mendelssohn. (I usually translate it as "serious business".) And perhaps the pianist needed to be a little more serious in Brahms—not that this is without joy!

VROON

BRAHMS: *Viola Sonatas;*
SCHUMANN: *Marchenbilder*

Christian Euler; Paul Rivinius, p
MDG 9032353 [SACD] 62 minutes

I have reviewed two discs by Christian Euler and Paul Rivinius before, and I was not impressed by either of them. That is again the case here. Euler has a firm tone and plays very well in tune, but that is as far as it goes. He is not very charismatic, and his playing lacks the refinement and expressivity one would expect of a soloist. Others have played these excellent works much better. For the Brahms sonatas, my short list is Barbara Westphal and Ursula Oppens (Sept/Oct 1991), Pinchas Zukerman and Marc Neikrug (Sept/Oct 1994), Maxim Rysanov and Katya Apekisheva (March/April 2009), Roger Chase and Michiko Otaki (Nov/Dec 2011), Geraldine Walther and David Korevaar (July/Aug 2014), and Manchin Zhang and Albert Tiu (March/April 2020).

MAGIL

BRAHMS: *Trio 2;* see IVES

BRITTEN: *Winter Words;*
Song arrangements;

HOLST, I: *4 Songs;*

KIDANE: *3 Songs*

Nick Pritchard, t; Ian Tindale, p
Signum 952—62 minutes

This program begins and ends with songs of Benjamin Britten. In between are 6 short songs by Imogen Holst and 3 by Daniel Kidane.

In 1953 Britten composed *Winter Words*, setting 8 poems by Thomas Hardy from late

in his life, reflecting what John Evans called Hardy's "regretful stoicism". Hardy used images of nature to reflect on the innocence and experience of human life and its shortness: a nostalgic reflection on the passing of time, an innocent boy on a train travelling towards the unknown of life, another boy and his violin on a train with a convict, birds and creatures living unthreatened by the presence of a baby until "a perfect gentleman" appears and scares them away. The final song of the set, 'Before Life and After', contrasts original innocence "before" with the troubled life "after", where humanity is burdened by the "disease of feeling germed" and asks if we can ever return to that original state of well-being. Hardy's concern mirrors Britten's recurring theme of the corruption of youthful innocence.

Imogen Holst, the only child of composer Gustav Holst, was a composer, arranger, conductor, teacher, and musicologist. In the early 1950s she became Britten's musical assistant and moved to Aldeburgh, where she became joint artistic director of the Aldeburgh Festival. We hear 4 songs on 16th Century texts followed by a John Donne setting and a Hardy setting, 'Weathers', written when she was 19.

This is the first recording of *Songs of Illumination* by British composer Daniel Kidane (b.1986) commissioned for Nick Pritchard and Ian Tindale by Leeds Lieder in 2018. These 3 settings of texts by William Blake come from the point of view of the vulnerable (an ant, a grieving child, a Black boy) and are performed without pause. The album title, "Little Wanderer", comes from a line in Blake's poem, 'A Dream'.

The program concludes delightfully with 6 of Britten fine folk song "reimaginings", beginning with 'Sally in our Alley' and ending with the witty 'Oliver Cromwell', a real tongue twister where Pritchard demonstrates remarkable clarity and agility. Britten and Peter Pears often used it as an encore.

There's a lot to like about this album. The program is well planned, splendidly sung, and gorgeously recorded. These are the only recordings of the Holst and Kidane songs.

Pritchard has a high, light, lyric voice. He delivers wonderfully transparent accounts of the texts with lucid and precise diction. It is easy to see why he has been so highly regarded as a Bach singer. I listened to several other fine recordings of *Winter*

Words. Pritchard's voice reminds me of Ian Partridge, whose reading is excellent but whose recording is muddy (M/A 2007). I like Anthony Rolfe Johnson's recording with Graham Johnson. His voice has more weight than Pritchard's, but the recorded sound is not as good as this. James Gilchrist (J/F 2011) and Nicholas Phan (J/F 2012) gave excellent and well recorded readings. I find the performances by Pritchard, Gilchrist, and Phan my preferred recordings.

Notes and texts.

R MOORE

BBRUCKNER: *Symphony 8*

Philharmonie Festiva/ Gerd Schaller
Hanssler 25006—70 minutes

This is the fourth Bruckner symphony that I have reviewed from a Bruckner concert series conducted by Gerd Schaller at the yearly Summer Music Festival in Ebrach, Bavaria. Schaller founded the Festival in 2008, and the orchestra is made up of players from the Munich Bach Soloists and other German ensembles. I discussed the Festival in more detail in my review of the first 3 Bruckner symphonies from this source (N/D 2012). Don O'Connor wrote an interesting assessment of the Festival and Schaller's readings of the Fourth, Seventh, and Ninth symphonies (Nov/Dec 2011). All these reviews were positive.

Under review here is the second Festival recording of Bruckner's gigantic Eighth Symphony. This one uses the common 1890 edition; the first one was the 1888 unpublished Variant edited by William Carragan.

The first movement moves along, maybe too much—it lacks majesty and weight. The "conversation" between oboe and horns is well done, and there is good build-up to the climax that precedes a lonely flute solo followed by a menacing trumpet. Later, there is a big build-up before the trumpet calls. More mass would be welcome here, and the ending could be more dramatic.

The straightforward treatment of II goes better. It is not lacking in mass, and the soft sections are excellent. The chords flow along well, though a little more defined phrasing here and there would help. The first trio sings nicely, the horn is again impressive, and the delicate passages are good. The result is not a great interpretation, but a good one.

III may seem hurried to some listeners,

but the tempo works. The buildup to the big climax is well done, and the “Wagner climaxes” are expressive and well carried out. The militant opening of the finale with those heavy marching chords is fine, though the initial notes to those attacks are barely audible. What follows is on the fast side with no holding back, no Brucknerian pauses, and the eventual slow-down loses something as a result. The return of the opening fanfare music may be the most powerful moment in this performance. The lyrical music associated with it is expressive, the big brass passages are more together and powerful than earlier similar passages, and the ending is well done. (Schaller uses the controversial cymbal crash.)

The sound is quite good and comfortable with the big Brucknerian demands. All told this is a fine concert performance.

HECHT

BRUHNS: *Organ Pieces, all;*

LUBECK: *Ich Ruff zu Dir*

Nicolas Haigh—Raven 198—55 minutes

Nicolaus Bruhns (1665-97) died at the tragically early age of 31, and only a handful of works by him have survived. Nevertheless, he is widely regarded as representing the epitome of North German organ music of the 17th Century. Some critics believe that his achievement even surpasses his mentor, Dietrich Buxtehude (c1637-1707) in structural intricacy and sheer virtuosity, especially in pedal writing that includes double pedal.

Most of Bruhns’s organ compositions are in the genre of the North German *Praeludium*. Older editions (including editions of Buxtehude’s works) refer to these pieces as “prelude and fugue”, but they are not in the two-movement format so familiar from the works of Bach. They are multi-sectional works alternating the rhapsodic *stylus fantasticus* with its exuberant manual and pedal writing with sections of imitative counterpoint. There are two preludes in E minor, often called the “greater” and “smaller” as one is roughly twice the length of the other. The prelude in G major includes formidable double pedal writing as part of a 6-part contrapuntal texture. There is a prelude in G minor that may or may not be by Bruhns. It is also attributed to Arnold Matthias Brunkhorst (1670-1725). Nicolas Haigh omits it from the present recording.

In cases like this, I think it better to err on the side of inclusion. The piece may not be genuine Bruhns, but it is genuinely of that period and good enough to be credibly attributed to him. There is plenty of capacity on the disc for another 5-minute piece. The remaining major work of Bruhns is his expansive fantasia on the Advent hymn ‘Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland’. Here Haigh pairs it with a chorale fantasia of comparable dimension by Vincent Lübeck (c1674-1740). The remaining piece on the program is a fragmentary Adagio in D that was discovered around 2000.

This recording was made on the 1996 Taylor & Boody organ (3 manuals, 32 stops) at St Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York. Nicolas Haigh, who has been Associate Organist of the church since 2020 and acting director of music since 2025, considers this an ideal instrument for music of the North German school. The recording treats us to a spacious sound that is well pointed. Haigh makes generous use of the pungent North German reeds. My first impression was that his performances are understated, but later hearings have induced me to revise that assessment.

Two slightly earlier recordings of the Bruhns organ works impressed me. One is by Joseph Kelemen on the 1692 Arp Schnitger organ at St Ludger Church in Norden, East Frisia (Oehms 641; M/A 2010). His performances have an authoritative elegance and keen sense of style. Comparing the sound of that recording with the present one, the Schnitger organ seems to have a more substantial and imposing sound than the Taylor & Boody. The other recording that particularly impressed me was by Bine Bryndorf at the organ of Roskilde Cathedral, an instrument completed in the mid-17th-Century but containing ranks of pipes dating back to 1555 (Dacapo 6.220636; J/A 2016). As with Kelemen, Bryndorf displays her insight into the musical style to produce elegantly poised performances.

GATENS

CAMPRA: *Requiem; Miserere*

Les Arts Florissants/ William Christie
Pentatone 5187 479—81 minutes

André Campra (1660-1744) was born in the south of France and was educated in the choir school at the cathedral of Aix-en-Provence from 1674 to 1678. After holding

positions at Arles and Toulouse, he was appointed at age 34 Master of Music at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. The lure of operatic composition induced him to leave that position in 1700, but he published collections of his sacred motets and psalms in 1695, 1700, 1703, and 1706. In 1723 he accepted an appointment at the Royal Chapel at Versailles, where he remained for the rest of his life, though he resigned his official duties in 1742.

Perhaps the most important of Campra's sacred compositions is the Requiem recorded here. It was not published in his lifetime, and the occasion for its composition is not known. The most likely occasion was the funeral of Monseigneur de Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, in 1695. For many years, the best source for the piece was a manuscript where the orchestral parts were reduced to two trebles and a bass. In 1989 the Bibliothèque National de Paris acquired a manuscript in a poor state of preservation, but it had the full instrumentation of the Requiem and is thought to have been written by Campra himself.

In a foreword to the booklet with this recording, William Christie expresses his conviction that Campra's music, especially the Requiem, is underestimated. He declares that its expressive force lies in the simplicity and directness of the music, "firmly rooted in the sacred tradition". In his estimation, much the same can be said for the setting of the Miserere (Vulgate Psalm 50) that shares this disc with the Requiem. That work most likely dates from 1725-26, during the composer's time at Versailles. In both cases the music has an eloquent simplicity that impressively projects the quiet reverence of the Mass for the Dead and that most penitential of all psalms. As Christie says, "having lived with these pieces for many years, I approach them with a sense of intimacy and sincerity that reflects both familiarity and reverence".

Christie has long been one of our time's outstanding exponents of early music performance, and this recording displays him as well as his players and singers at their very best. Both pieces adopt the format of the French baroque *grand motet* in that they are scored for a small choir of solo voices and a larger full choir with orchestral accompaniment.

These readings have the character of concert performances rather than liturgical

ceremonies. The opening movement of the Requiem offers a good example. The Introit antiphon, which is repeated as a da capo after the psalm verse, begins very quietly, but Christie treats it both times as a huge crescendo. One might question the historical authenticity of that dynamic gesture, but not its effectiveness. The solo singers in particular have a clarity and lightness that is well suited to Campra's writing.

Some years ago I reviewed a concert recording of Campra's Requiem from the Royal Chapel at Versailles by the Pages (children) and Singers (adults) of the Versailles Baroque Music Center under the direction of Olivier Schneebeli, their regular conductor (K617 224; J/A 2011). Their performance standard is very good but perhaps not of the very highest degree of technical polish that one might be more likely to get in a studio recording. Schneebeli's dynamic inflections are not as dramatic as Christie's, so the music assumes a slightly more churchly character. More recently David Reynolds had good things to say about a recording of the Requiem by Ensemble 3 under Hans Michael Beuerle (Carus 83391; N/D 2016).

Texts and translations.

GATENS

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Platero and I*

Niklas Johansen, g

OUR 8.226930 [2CD] 109 minutes

Guitarist Lars Hannibal co-founded OUR Recordings with his wife, recorder virtuoso Michala Petri; and the label has established solid credibility in the world of classical guitar recordings. Acting as executive producer of this significant project, Hannibal presents Danish guitarist Niklas Johansen, heretofore unknown to this reviewer in a stellar performance of *Platero y Yo*, the 28-movement monumental work by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco based on poetry by Juan Ramon Jimenez (1881-1958) about a donkey named Platero.

Recorded in Fredensborg Palace Chapel with state of the art equipment (e.g. 352.8 kHz/32 bit), the site of important events for Denmark's Royal Family, the music immediately envelops the listener with rich, clear tone with the perfect amount of reverberation, not just from the sound but because of the sensitivity of the performer. Johansen, completely in tune with Castelnuovo-

Tedesco's style and language, eloquently shapes each phrase, encouraging the imagination to go where it will, whether listening with eyes closed or reading the poetic passages associated with each movement in a very well-produced booklet that gives a complete picture of this monumental work in a way this reviewer has not seen previously. I like the clever black-and-white sketches by Halfdan Pisket. The well-written music stands on its own, with contrasting dramatic moments as in 'Return' or the subtle, quieter passages in 'The Well' and 'Melancholy'.

Johansen confronts technical challenges with control that makes their difficulty unnoticeable, as in 'Spring' and in his handling of delicate harmonics in 'The Moon'.

One might think that 28 movements by the same composer might get boring, but Castelnuovo-Tedesco's inventive melodic, harmonic and overall musical genius shines in this work, and coupled with Johansen's musical prowess and the design of the booklet makes this recording one that should be on everyone's playlist.

MCCUTCHEON

CAVALLI: *Mass Concertata for 8*

Ensemble Locatelli; Ensemble UtFaSol; Monteverdi Choir of Crema/ Bruno Gini; MoreAntiquo/ Giovanni Conti

Dynamic 8074—59 minutes

Francesco Cavalli (1602-76) was born Pietro Francesco Caletti-Bruni in the city of Crema, then under the sway of the Venetian Republic. His father was the composer Giovanni Battista Caletti-Bruni. The boy began his musical career as a singer in the local cathedral, where his talents were discovered by the Venetian dignitary Federigo Cavalli, who took him to Venice in 1616. He became a member of the choir at St Mark's when Monteverdi was its director. In 1639, as an act of homage on the occasion of the production of his first opera, he adopted the surname of his former patron.

Cavalli led something of a musical double life in Venice. Active in church music, he was organist of the church of San Giovanni & Paolo from 1620 to 1630, and in 1639 he became second organist at St Mark's. In 1668 he was named Maestro at St Mark's, the position previously held by Monteverdi. Meanwhile, he was also the most celebrated composer of Venetian opera of his time. He

wrote 42 operas, of which 27 have survived more or less complete.

The Mass recorded here was published in a collection of his sacred music in 1656. It is an exceptionally grandiose work in the Venetian polychoral idiom. It is easy to imagine it performed from the galleries of St Mark's. It is scored for double choir and ensembles of strings, cornetts and trombones, and two organs. Each choir consists of 4 soloists plus a 4-part ripieno choir. The soloists often have florid contrapuntal lines, while the full choir writing tends to be broadly chordal.

For this recording, Cavalli's setting of the Mass Ordinary is supplemented with plainsong propers sung by the male-voice schola MoreAntiquo under the direction of Giovanni Conti. Propers for the Feast of All Saints were selected as an occasion when so elaborate a Mass setting might have been sung. The source for the plainsong is a *Graduale Romanum* published in Venice in 1646. The chanted propers are inserted where they would come liturgically.

Bruno Gini has been recording all of the sacred music of Cavalli. According to the notes with the last recording in the series (Psalms & Hymns; Dynamic 8011; M/J 2024) the present recording is the culmination of that project. All but one of the previous issues have been reviewed in ARG (M/J 2007, J/A 2010, J/A 2017, M/J 2022). As I said in my review of the 2024 release, the performance is respectable but not of the highest standard. It is possible to enjoy the music, but one should not expect the polish and precision of, say, the liturgical reconstructions of Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli Consort. Of course, given the spatial separation of the galleries in St Mark's, one can only wonder how tight the ensemble would have been in that setting.

No texts or translations, but the listener is directed to a website for "Latin texts".

GATENS

CHAUSSON: *Poem of Love & the Sea;*
see Collections

CHOPIN: *Ballades; Scherzos; Preludes*

Goran Filipec, p

Naxos 574660—77 minutes

The Croatian pianist is no unknown quantity. We have reviewed 8 of his recordings, all in the last decade. 4 of them were of Liszt's

music. Sang Woo Kang (J/A 2016) and Stephen Wright (S/O 2018) had high praise for two of them; Stephen Estep (M/J 2021) and Paul L Althouse (S/O 2023) had minor reservations about the other two. Mark L Lehman (M/A 2015) thought piano pieces by Ivo Macek were nicely played. When I reviewed two releases of pieces by another Croatian composer, Blagoje Bersa (M/J 2018, S/O 2020), and one of early Bartok (S/O 2024) I noted some tenseness and lack of delicacy in the playing. But my response to Filipec's Chopin is much more negative than the previous assessments.

Having just reviewed a very good recording of the Ballades and Scherzos (N/D 2025) and not long ago a really outstanding one (S/O 2023), I wondered why we need yet another one of these much-played pieces. An answer was suggested by the blurb on the back insert: "Star pianists such as Liszt and Anton Rubinstein were developing more virtuosic and experimental effects...to adapt Chopin's works to suit the context of their time. Goran Filipec has traced the practices of these pianists to fashion a programme of Chopin's works performed in the spirit of the 'grand style'." In other words, this recording is an attempt to deviate from current standards of Chopin performance by resurrecting practices of 19th Century virtuosos. I expected a justification and detailed explanation of this approach in the pianist's liner notes but found little beyond what the blurb says. Filipec says "for this recording different sources were used in order to try to trace the practices of these pianists", but he does not identify those sources.

Were those practices good? Did they result in convincing interpretations then, and do they convince us now? My answer is a resounding "no". This "grand style" and its mannerisms were (and are here) artificially imposed on the music; they do not come from the heart. Rather, they draw attention to the pianist's technique and ingenuity while sullyng Chopin's music.

Some general characteristics of Filipec's interpretations are perhaps not deliberately imposed but actually represent how he feels the music, even though he distorts it in the process. His playing is tense, nervous, and brusque. He rushes in fast passages, and the codas are invariably hectic and violent, so that clarity is lost. While on the whole his playing is not unfeeling, some passages

are—such as the quiet parts of Ballade 2, which are too fast, and the lyrical theme of Scherzo 2.

But then he introduces many special effects that I find highly objectionable. I would like to see him argue how he thinks any of these effects improves the performance. None of them does, in fact. They range from mannered to bizarre to tasteless. Bass notes are added here and there, asynchronies abound, there are some rhythmic alterations (dotted notes instead of two equal notes), unusual pedaling, inappropriate shortening of phrase-final notes, mannered timing, and more. To cite two particularly egregious examples: he plays the highest note of the recurrent upward run in Scherzo 1 softly rather than making it the goal and high point of the run, as everyone else does; and he plays the two final chords of Scherzo 4 *mezzoforte*, which ruins the ending.

These are grossly deviant performances, and I suffered listening to them. As always, I compared them to others. Usually I draw those from my collection, but this time, because my review coincided with the 19th Chopin Competition, I compared Filipec's interpretations to 4 young pianists playing in Round 1 of the competition, where a Ballade was required. Their playing certainly was less individual than Filipec's but much preferable in each case, even though none of them was a finalist. They played their heart out, without any unnecessary artifice. For comparison of the Scherzos I chose 4 recordings from my collection. Interpretations such as Michelangeli's (Scherzo 2) or Rubinstein's (Scherzo 4) illustrate how these pieces should be played. Why did these great artists not play like Filipec? Because they had deep respect for Chopin and his sublime music.

There are some who think the 19th Century was a golden age of pianism and deplore the loss of individuality in today's interpretations. This recording may be seen as an attempt to restore high individuality to our times. But this is a misguided effort. The greater individuality of the past reflected a lax standard. It is generally recognized that the wide availability of recordings has led to a narrowing of the range of individuality in performance, but rather than seeing this as a loss I see it as a gain. Extensive exposure has led to a more precise definition of and consensus for what constitutes a proper

performance of a well-known piece, among both pianists and listeners. There is still individuality, but one has to listen carefully to detect it. And it has to come from the artist's personality and feeling. If it is imposed artificially, it will be found eccentric and rightly rejected by educated listeners.

By the way, Filipec has arranged the Balades and Scherzos in pairs, with each pair preceded by a prelude: the one in C-sharp minor, Op. 45, and Nos. 23, 17, and 1 from Op. 28. The first is played much too fast, and all are uneven in timing and undelicate in touch.

REPP

CHOPIN: *Etudes, all; Sonata 3; 24 Preludes; Waltzes*

Alfred Cortot—APR 6046 [2CD] 153 minutes

There are many interesting things about the release of these remastered recordings by perhaps the greatest European pianist—Alfred Cortot. For example, the supreme sonic restoration of the 78 rpm records and their transfer to CD. Also, these are examples of much less known recordings by Cortot, made in wartime in Paris. Another overlooked fact is that the old recording technique didn't allow editing. These now digitalized documents are single takes that were often the very first ones, displaying the supreme mastery of Cortot, capturing his style on the spot.

The most interesting thing, however, is a story about Cortot in the memoirs of a German officer, Lange, who was stationed in France. The young officer was a Francophile, and because of this he had political differences with the more hardline Nazis. When his brother died in Sept 1942 in the front, he wanted to go join his mother for the funeral in Berlin, but he was not allowed to do so. He approached Cortot with his problem. Cortot felt compassion and pulled some strings to take him with him on his Berlin concert tour, where he played an all-Chopin program. To the concert the pianist invited Lange and his mother, gave them stage seats, and before playing the funeral-march sonata, dedicated it to the mother and her pain.

Almost all of the recordings in this album were made from November 1942 to July of 1943. By the end of 1942, the extermination camps Kulmhof, Belzec, Majdanek,

Treblinka, Birkenau, and Sobibor were already operational.

SOLOMONICK

CLEMENTI: *Piano Duets*

Carlo Mazzoli, Silva Rambaldi
Tactus 750390 [2CD] 146 minutes

This release has reached an unsympathetic reviewer, I am afraid. I have no interest in historic instruments and listen to recordings of them only with great reluctance. I disagree with the ideology that music should be heard the way it may have sounded when the composer was alive. This has not prevented me from including two such recordings among my critic's choices in previous years. But in those cases outstanding performances of worthwhile music overcame the handicap of antiquated sound.

That is not the case here. Clementi's duets, of which there are 11 plus some single pieces, are early works obviously written for amateurs and of little musical interest. Two of them are for two instruments, the others are for 4 hands on one keyboard. The Italian duo here employs 5 different instruments, 4 original ones from between 1796 to 1823 and one modern copy. The playing is unremarkable. The only things I enjoyed are the photographs of the instruments in the cardboard case and the cover art showing "Market at Covent Garden" by the Flemish painter Pieter Angelis (1685-1734), misspelled Angillis in the booklet.

REPP

CLEMENTI: *Piano Sonatas*

Xueyuan Chen
Da Vinci 1064 [2CD] 151 minutes

This release contains 9 of Clementi's mature sonatas: C major, Op. 34:1; G minor, Op. 34:2; C major, Op. 37:1; G major, Op. 37:2; B minor, Op. 40:1; G major, Op. 40:2; D minor, Op. 40:3; A major, Op. 50:1; G minor, Op. 50:3 (*Didone abbandonata*). They are played clearly and delicately by a young Chinese pianist.

I compared his rendition of Op. 34:1 to a recording by Emil Gilels from a 1960 Moscow recital (Profil), which is much inferior in sound but has a lot more verve and drama. Tracks 2 and 3 are swapped on the Da Vinci disc, so that the slow movement occurs last—an embarrassing mistake.

Then, in preparation for another com-

parison, I listened to Op. 40:1 played brilliantly by Pietro De Maria, who has recorded all 3 Op. 40 sonatas (M/J 2000). Soon after I started playing Chen's performance several loud noise bursts occurred. I could not see any flaws on the disc surface, but I decided I had heard enough. Chen's interpretations are not very interesting. Seek out instead Howard Shelley's recordings on Hyperion (S/O 2010, M/J 2011).

REPP

CLYNE: *Abstractions; Color Field; Within Her Arms; Restless Oceans*
Baltimore Symphony/ Marin Alsop
Naxos 574620—53 minutes

Anna Clyne (b 1980) is an imaginative composer who writes in an accessible tonal style with a strong sense of drama and an instantly recognizable approach to orchestral color and harmony. Her work is often informed by visual components in her creative process; one of her best works, 'Night Ferry', was developed according to her own painted, visual representation of the work. This album contains two works that explicitly respond to works of visual art.

Abstractions (2016) is a set of 5 orchestral pieces responding to various paintings, often displaying the sort of ear-catching sonoristic and kinetic effects she excels at—such as quietly shimmering, reed organ-like color in I 'Marble Moon' or frenetic clusters of string textures echoing in close succession in II 'Auguries'. As a whole it doesn't measure up to her best works, though—melodies and motives that in her extended single-movement works might unspool and develop into dramatic expressions across time here seem banal in their isolation, leaving us with fascinating color that doesn't go anywhere.

Color Field (2020), inspired by Rothko's "Orange, Red, Yellow" painting, fares a bit better with its slightly larger canvases. I imagines Yellow as the transparent haze of sunlight, employing string harmonics in the texture to great effect. II (Red) is wild, aggressive, and percussive—though sometimes, again, seems uncharacteristically banal. III, Orange, combines aspects of the previous movements, treating them as contrasting sections.

'Restless Oceans' (2018) is a short overture that seems inspired by *Rite of Spring*. It would be forgettable, if not for the calmer B

section that calls for vocalises from the musicians. It is a testament to her skill as an orchestrator that this transcends gimmickry, becoming a vital and exciting addition to the orchestra's tone color in that moment.

She's more in her element in *Within Her Arms* (2009), an extended elegy for 15 string instruments. Here, a simple figure—a slow turn about an axis, as if to mirror an embrace—is given space to breathe and blossom organically into beautiful bursts of lyricism. Her string writing is superb—this is a work all string orchestras should know.

These pieces don't quite reach the heights of her best works, though I enjoyed them quite a bit. This is perhaps of most interest to admirers of the composer; otherwise, I would direct the curious listener to Avie's excellent survey of her essential orchestral works (2434, M/A 2021).

FARO

CORELLI: *3 Sonatas, op 5;*
HANDEL *4 Flute Sonatas*
Michaela Koudelkova, rec; Libor Masek, vc;
Monika Knoblochova, hpsi; Jan Krejca, g +
theorbo—Supraphon 4356—78 minutes

Corelli's selections are Sonatas 4, 6, and 12 from Opus 5 from two sources: the version from his pupil, Bavarian composer, violinist, choir director, and chapel master Johann Christoph Pez (1664-1716) published around 1707 in London while he was serving the Duke and Duchess of Wurttemberg, a figure praised later in a 1725 poem by Telemann, and from Swedish violinist-composer Johan Helmich Roman (1694-1758) while in London from 1716 to 21. 3 of Handel's come from Opus 1: 1b in E minor for flute, 5 in F for oboe, here in G, and 13 in D for violin, here in F. There's also the Sonata in D minor, 367a in his works catalog. Each movement has its own track, ending with the Variations on the Follies from Portugal (though known most commonly as from Spain).

There is excellent balance among the 4 instruments. As recorded they make a pleasantly plush impression. Based currently at the Academy of Music in Katowice, Poland, Koudelkova evidently plays flute and recorder in early music. She gets quite a workout in some of the faster pieces, always coming through with grace. The rhythmic and harmonic support from the ensemble

add enough interest to make this album a contender for the Best of the Year.

A big, beautiful booklet presents text in Czech, English, and German, with a description of the 5 recorders and when we hear them: 6th flute in D, voice flute in D, 2 trebles in F, and descant in C.

GORMAN

CZERNY: *Piano Sonatas 3+9; Prelude & Fugue in D*
Kaori Saeki—Da Vinci 1055—72 minutes

This is the first installment of what promises to become a complete recording of Carl Czerny's 11 piano sonatas. His prowess as a serious composer for the piano is still not widely recognized, in part owing to a paucity of recordings of his sonatas. And of course his reputation as a composer of mere exercises has done him much harm. It is true that he has also composed a good deal of virtuosic fluff, but the sonatas are substantial. We have reviewed only two recordings, and that was more than 25 years ago. The redoubtable Harold C Schonberg, reviewing Sonatas 1-4 (M/A 1997), wrote "They are professionally put together, large in scale, serious, strong, pianistic, ambitious." Alexander Morin, reviewing Sonatas 1 and 3 (M/A 2000), concurs with that assessment, as do I. Da Vinci must be applauded for planning to bring out the complete sonatas at last.

This was the first time I heard any of them, and I am greatly impressed. Sonata 9 in B minor, Op. 145, comes first. It is subtitled 'Grand Fantasy in Sonata Form' and has 6 movements. It is serious and dramatic, and requires considerable virtuosity. Czerny's high compositional skill is evident in his work with motifs, contrasting sections, and so on; but the music is never dry—rather forceful and passionate most of the time. II, a scherzo, has a mellower trio; and III, the only movement in a major key, is expressive but gets turbulent in the middle. IV, essentially another scherzo, is brief and also has a more relaxed trio. V is a rondo, not fast but serious, even severe sometimes. There are some lyrical passages, and it ends quietly. VI is a fast fugue, with a theme related to II. At the end we hear the initial motif of I played very loudly, followed by a few quiet chords. An original ending!

Sonata 3 in F minor, Op. 57, shares key and opus number with Beethoven's *Appas-*

sonata, which could hardly be a coincidence. Chiara Bertoglio, in her liner notes, thinks so, too, but believes the real inspiration was the master's first piano sonata, also in F minor. I doubt that, as that sonata is tame compared to the storm unleashed by Czerny. His sonata could properly be regarded as his own *Appassionata*, not as sublime and memorable as Beethoven's, of course, but similar in character. The first movement has many dotted rhythms and is quite serious. The slow II is actually marked 'serioso'. It becomes quite grand and passionate sometimes, and there are virtuosic figurations later on. III, a scherzo, is agitated and occasionally ferocious. Even the quieter trio retains a serious character. IV is twice as long as each of the preceding movements and (according to Bertoglio) in sonata form. I was more struck by its alternation of turbulent and quieter sections, and the virtuosity it requires. The final chords recall Beethoven's *Appassionata*.

Included in the program here are the Prelude and Fugue in D major from Czerny's 24 Preludes and Fugues, Op. 856, called 'The Pianist in classical Style' and dedicated to Liszt. Like the sonatas, this important work needs to be much better known. I was fortunate to get a recording of it to review (N/D 2021) and was so impressed that I practiced and played all of them (for myself at home) in the following years. Although they were not easy to read (I counted 22 accidentals in one single bar) and play, I never got tired of them, and my admiration for the composer increased steadily. The Prelude and Fugue here are a beautiful example, especially the former, which is slow, quiet, and pensive, though momentarily grand. The fugue is serious and at a moderate tempo, with an unexpectedly quiet ending.

The youngish Japanese pianist plays quite excellently. She makes strong accents, but that suits the strong music. She studied law in Japan before turning to music and taking lessons at the Prayner Conservatory in Vienna. (That institution, which I have never heard of, evidently already existed when I grew up in the city, but it shut down in 2020.) She is currently based in Vienna and seems to be an avid Czerny promoter. Much power to her! I look forward to the next release of sonatas.

REPP

DEBUSSY: *Dances; Symphony; En Blanc et Noir; Marche Ecossaise; Petite Suite; La Mer*
Genova & Dimitrov, p
Oehms 1741—75 minutes

Volume 1 of this series (S/O 2025) is the most perfect species of duo pianism I've encountered. This Volume 2 falls just short of perfection—no thanks to a short-lived distracting rumble in III and IV of *Petite Suite*. Sound and execution are otherwise pristine.

As in Volume 1, our pianists alternate early and mature Debussy piece by piece for maximum contrast. The earliest, *Symphony in B minor*, is a rare chance to hear Debussy confront sonata form: in 2 words, he is stolid and sturdy. The symphony ends with generic grandiosity and bland harmonies uncharacteristic of the composer. Debussy's then-benefactor Nadesha von Meck was apparently delighted with this ultraconservative piece reminiscent of Reinecke or Bruch at their weakest. Debussy's 4-hands arrangement of *La Mer*, shorn of its orchestral resplendence, is disarmingly sweet and simple at its core of melody, harmony, rhythm—it's almost like Schubert. Only its intermittent and distracting tremolos remind us of its symphonic origins. Volume 3 can't come soon enough.

WRIGHT

DEBUSSY: *Iberia*; see RAVEL

DUKE: *Violin Concerto*; see BENNETT

DVORAK: *Quartet 12*

with **DOHNANYI:** *Quartet 2*;

PROKOFIEFF: *Quartet 1*

Stuyvesant Quartet

Bridge 9607—78 minutes

with *String Quintet*; 8 *Humoresques*

Mandelring Quartet

Audite 97828—80 minutes

I have attended chamber music concerts all over this country, with a variety of quartets. Never have I heard the instruments from 2 feet in front of them! Nor do I want to. But that's what we often get with recordings: close miking in a tight space. I have a friend who has chamber music concerts in his house, and that's a close sound, though in a pretty big room. I think chamber music was written for big rooms or small auditoriums

and was generally not expected to be heard close-up or in vast halls.

Both of these recordings seem too close-up. But I was surprised that the Stuyvesant recording is from 1946: it is very bright and "present". (One might wish for more bass.) The playing is more romantic than we get nowadays—as you would expect. The Lento in the Dvorak quartet has a lot of romantic feeling. I have 6 or 8 recordings of this quartet, and the Stuyvesant is the most romantic—though Czech recordings come close and have more Czech flavor. (Naxos has a great 1995 recording of this by the Vlach Quartet—553371.) The Stuyvesant was the first all-American quartet, and their style is American.

The Mandelring is perhaps more "German" than romantic, but they do put the music across, and I enjoyed listening to it. The main difference is the slow movement, which is 6 minutes here versus 8 minutes with the Vlach and the Stuyvesant. It still works, but I'd rather dwell in it longer.

The Mandelring is also brisker, less romantic, in the String Quintet. This is Opus 97—he wrote 3 of them (Opuses 1, 77, and 97)—but this is everyone's favorite. I have a fine 1971 recording of it with the Vienna Octet (London CD 425537). I like it slower, but I admit the Mandelrings are exciting and have plenty of drive.

They also include the 8 Humoresques of Opus 101. These were piano pieces, and the arrangement for string quartet is not Dvorak's. The famous one that everyone knows in the piano original (and for violin) is No. 7. It sounds too tame played by a quartet. But by this point the whole set is failing to hold the attention.

Returning to the Stuyvesant recording, everything on it sounds constricted in frequency range, highs and lows. And you can hear an audience in some movements—which may explain the close miking (Library of Congress concerts). The Prokofieff is skittish music, hard to like. The Dvorak is the best piece in sound and spirit.

VRON

DVORAK: *Violin Concerto*;

Serenade for Strings

Antje Weithaas; Camerata Bern

Avi 4867795—61 minutes

If you like a big string sound, this is not for you. Camerata Bern is about 2 dozen strings

(for the Serenade), to which are added a few winds (for the concerto). It's never more than 30 players—a chamber orchestra. The violinist usually sits in the concertmaster's chair, but apparently she does not when she acts as soloist in this concerto.

This is a beautiful recording made in a church in Bern, Switzerland—a city I have always loved. The acoustics are great, and the orchestra does not sound weak in the concerto, but on the contrary seems to flood the space with energetic sound.

The violin is not one of the classic Cremona ones, but a 2001 instrument. It sounds fine in this concerto. The slow movement is a little faster here than in any other recording of it in my library. That just adds to the “perkiness” of this performance; it doesn't stretch out luxuriantly, as some do (and as Stokowski does in the serenade). In the concerto I will stay with my 4 favorites: Suk (J/F 1996), Mracek (July/Aug 2017), Luts (Sept/Oct 2024), and Vengerov (July/Aug 2001).

I like to hear in all this music a big, majestic string section; so this is not for me. But the music is all here, beautifully played.

VROON

ELGAR & ADES: *Violin Concertos*

Christian Tetzlaff; BBC Philharmonic/ John Storgards

Ondine 1480—62 minutes

Storgards launches headlong into the Elgar without hesitation or the bloated tentativeness that has killed so many recordings of this work. This concerto does seem to be very difficult for modern conductors to bring across—perhaps because it's a fervent, highly emotional, high-romantic work that does not respond well to “cerebral” interpretations. Tetzlaff is of the same mind as the conductor, playing the solo part as an intensely felt, emotionally impulsive (dare I use the “P Word”—passionate?) romantic concerto.

I'll admit I am not particularly thrilled with many, maybe most recordings of Elgar's concerto, though I have heard several outstanding concert performances. I will say that this new Ondine recording matches, if not somewhat exceeds, the account on Chandos by Tasmin Little with the Scottish National Orchestra under Andrew Davis (Mar/Apr 2011). That is a fine traversal with excellent “house sound”—if you like Chan-

dos's engineering, you'll like that recording. The present performance exceeds the intensity of that earlier effort AND offers also fine sonics. The BBC Philharmonic plays brilliantly for their Chief Conductor. The familiarity between conductor and players must contribute to the cohesiveness and propulsive energy of the outer movements. Don't worry, that central slow movement is a serene oasis of lyricism.

Instead of the customary album notes about the music, we get a transcript of an interview of Mr Tetzlaff. One salient point that I drew from it is that he thinks Elgar's concerto was ill-served by a tendency to play it in a monumental, slow, bloated fashion in the 1950s and 60s. I don't know if that was ever quite the case, but he certainly DOES NOT let the grass grow under his feet here. Some listeners may actually find his approach rather rushed and even hectic. I do not. But if you are happy with the slower, more monumental approach to this work, I recommend approaching this recording with caution. Tetzlaff's insights into Elgar's music are enlightening, especially since he has come to the work fairly recently—only in the last 6 years before he made this recording.

In his interview, Tetzlaff sees a throughline from the Elgar to Thomas Ades's concerto, written in 2005, pointing out that as an English composer, Ades must be very familiar with his predecessor. I'm not sure I see that. Ades's concerto is a compact 19-minute work (so only a couple of minutes longer than the third movement of the Elgar as recorded here) of wide-ranging emotional content and what seems like quite a workout for the soloist. As a whole, it is an approachable work, though I find the long middle movement (at 10 minutes, more than half the work's total running time) particularly intractable. I respect it more than love it.

For me, the Elgar is the reason for acquiring this. But the Ades is a fascinating disc mate, certainly far different from Elgar's late tone poem *Polonia*, which is the disc mate for the Little/Davis recording of the Elgar. If that's preferable to you, it might tip the balance in favor of that album. But I don't want to be without Tetzlaff's strong take on the Elgar.

HANSEN

ELGAR: *Intro & Allegro*; see HOLST
ELLINGTON: *The River*; see Collections

FINNEY: *Symphony 4; 3 Pieces; Landscapes Remembered*
Boston Modern Orchestra Project/ Gil Rose
BMOP 1105—51 minutes

Ross Lee Finney (1906-97) studied with Berg and Boulanger, enjoying a long career as a composer and professor at the University of Michigan, teaching the likes of George Crumb and Roger Reynolds. He inherited from Berg a lyrical and expressive perspective on serialism, far from the austerity of Babbitt. The music reveals him to be a curious, intelligent, and free-thinking composer, open to the trends of his day but not limited by them. It is often but not exclusively dissonant, reveling in detail rendered with the utmost clarity.

His *3 Pieces* (1962) for strings, winds, and tape sees him explore the combination of orchestra and electronic sound. The tape is not merely incidental—Finney fully integrates it with the orchestra. Its organic-sounding bubbles, flits, and swoops are matched, echoed, and transformed by the orchestra; at some points they are blended so well I cannot tell what is instrument and what is tape. Though he doesn't open up the tape's expressive possibilities to the degree of the era's avant-garde, it is more readily accessible and listenable.

Landscape Remembered (1971) comes from a decade later, when he was deepening his interest in conveying aspects of memory in his music; in this case, relating to his childhood in the Midwest. Snatches of folk tunes come in and out of an atmospheric bath of microtones and tone rows. These methods don't make his music needlessly opaque—rather, they amplify the nebulous feeling of remembering and how close yet far away a memory can truly feel.

His jocular *Symphony No. 4* (1973) has the barest hints of an early classical symphony; it is cast in the traditional 3 movements—each with an Italian tempo marking—and it opens with a rapid upward run, a likely homage to the Mannheim rocket that becomes a recurring motive across the piece. The comparisons stop there—the orchestra is large in size and his language is dissonant, though not unpleasantly so. The music is bursting with upbeat energy and joyfully messes about from here to there.

Though its rigorous craft is clear, the overall effect is playful entertainment, reinforced by its final note, a consonant major triad.

Finney's music should be better known—it strikes a balance between the intellectualism of midcentury American academia and the desire for openly communicative, emotionally meaningful music that came to the fore in the 1980s. BMOP and Gil Rose are great advocates. Extensive liner notes.

FARO

FINNISSY: *Organ Symphonies 1-4; 7 Hymn Tune Preludes; Ere the set of sun; Xunthaerensis; Blackburn*

Forrest Eimold
Metier 77208 [2CD] 135 minutes

English composer Michael Finnissy has been a significant figure in the world of contemporary music, having written numerous songs, instrumental, choral, and chamber music, and 5 epic cycles for piano, including the 4-volume *Klavierübung*. These are elaborate, virtuosic, technically complex, avant-garde soundscapes, requiring notes of long philosophical musings about their meaning; "Abstract journeys, risking becoming part of what seem like traditions". I couldn't make sense of any of it.

What is most impressive is Eimold, who plays these technically demanding pieces with apparent ease on the 1969/2002 4-manual, 68-rank JW Walker organ in Blackburn Cathedral, Blackburn, England, and the 2012 3-manual, 43-stop Fisk in Harvard's Memorial Chapel. For the intrepid avant-garde fan.

DEL CAMP

GAL: *Trio for Violin, Viola & Piano; Serenade for Violin, Viola & Cello; Divertimento for Flute, Viola & Harp; Impromptu for Viola & Piano; Trio for Violin, Viola & Cello*
Hanna Pakkala, va; Reijo Tunkkari, v; Lauri Pulakka, vc; Niamh McKenna, fl; Paivi Severeide, hp; Irina Zahharenkova, p
Toccata 761—87 minutes

When I saw this disc of chamber music I looked at the booklet cover and said to myself, "I know this man!" Looking at the ARG index, I saw that I had reviewed the first disc in this series of works for viola by this composer (Jan/Feb 2020). Hans Gal (1890-1987) was an Austrian Jew who immi-

grated to Britain after the Anschluss in 1938 and eventually secured a position teaching music at the University of Edinburgh. Except for the Serenade for Violin, Viola, and Cello written in 1932, all of these compositions date from Gal's British years.

Rereading my review of the earlier disc, I see that I liked it. I described the music as "autumnal" and "reflective". I could use those words to describe the music here too, though I am not as kindly disposed to it as I was to the previous one.

Only the Trio for Violin, Viola, and Piano (1950) has passion. Like some of Gal's music, it has a late Brahmsian character. Like Brahms, Gal is an excellent contrapuntist. The rest of the compositions test my patience, though. Unlike Brahms, Gal has no fire in the belly. After nearly 3 decades reviewing CDs for ARG, I've decided that I can assign music or performances to 3 categories: First, it's so good that I wish it wouldn't end; Second, it's good enough that I don't feel fidgety while I listen to it; and Third, I can't wait for it to end. Except for the Trio, which didn't make me feel fidgety, I couldn't wait for the other compositions to end. It's sad that these excellent performers have wasted their talents on material that is at best mediocre. I hope that I can hear them again playing music that is worthy of them.

MAGIL

GIORDANI: *5 Flute Concertos, op 19*

Cremona Baroque Orchestra/ Giovanni Battista Columbro, fl

Urania 14125—78 minutes

Neapolitan keyboard player, concert producer, music teacher, and composer Tommaso Giordani lived from around 1730 to 1806, mostly in England and Ireland. His first work published was 6 Quintets for string quartet and harpsichord in 1771, by which time he had already written for orchestra, oratorio, and the stage. This set originally of 6 concertos, now missing number 5, dates from 1765 to 75 and was printed in London around 1780, placing it close to works of Abel and JC Bach. At long last, here is their first recording, with cadenzas.

This recording uses period instruments tuned around 420. There are 3 first violinists, 3 second violinists, and 2 cellists, making this ensemble a small orchestra. Scoring did not typically include violas even this

late. Open the case and you see the players arrayed in a shaded plaza. They actually sound like an orchestra, distinct from the one-per-part approach so common. Columbro uses a light, rapid throat vibrato that I dislike. Some trills also stop at the end, waiting for the next beat instead of carrying through to the finish. As long as you can tolerate these detractions, the playing is otherwise acceptable from the soloist and ensemble.

GORMAN

GIRTAIN: *Violin Sonatas 1+2;*

3 Scenes from Paradise Lost; 4 Postres

Emmanuele Baldini; Lucas Thomazinho, p

Da Vinci 1060—72 minutes

Edgar F Girtain IV (1988) is a contemporary American composer. The two sonatas were written for Italian violinist Emmanuele Baldini in 2019 and 2021. They are remarkable works that take us back to an earlier era. We are not told the keys of the sonatas, but they are clearly tonal. They sound like they could have been written in the first third of the 20th Century. They sound more Central European than Franco-Russian, but they do not recall any avant-garde school. I hear chromaticism but no bitonality, atonality, etc. Both sonatas are in 4 movements with traditional Italian tempo and expression indications.

The other works are program music. The *3 Scenes From Paradise Lost* for solo violin (2024) are titled 'Pandemonium Stirs', 'Temptation in the Garden', and 'Expulsion from Paradise'. These are more expressionistic than the sonatas. The *4 Postres* (Desserts) (2020) are 'Torta de Tres Leches', 'Waffle con Helado', 'Creme Brulee', and 'Apple Pie a la Mode'. These two works are frivolous and a step down from the sonatas, which are of middling quality.

Baldini's violin was made by Luiz Amorim in Cremona in 2021.

MAGIL

GLUCK: *Arias*

Ann Hallenberg, mz; The Mozartists/ Ian Page
Signum 921—70 minutes

Ian Page leads The Mozartists in this survey of Gluck arias, all from his Italian-language operas, sung by the delectable mezzo-soprano Ann Hallenberg. This mix of familiar selections and rarities is an important

contribution to the discography of a composer whom Page calls “one of the most neglected and undervalued of the great composers”. (The scarcity of Gluck recordings presented for review in this publication bears out this claim.)

2 arias appear on record for the first time. The fiery ‘Io non pretendo, o stelle’ is from the 1744 *Ipermestra*, the only of Gluck’s first 10 operas to survive in its entirety. It is characterized by the kind of vocal display that the composer himself rebelled against with his Reform operas, beginning with *Orfeo* (1762, Vienna). Not that the lines are strictly distinguished. The graceful lilt of ‘L’augellin da’ lacci sciolto’ from the 1747 *Nozze d’Ercole e d’Ebe* (the other premiere recording presented here) has a restrained elegance that might be at home in the later Gluck canon. The thrilling vocal fireworks in arias from the 1763 *Trionfo di Clelia* show the composer returning to the older style to satisfy the tastes of a particular public (in this case, a commission for the inauguration of Bologna’s Teatro Comunale).

But for a lack of bloom in the lower register, Hallenberg is a model of classical singing. The legato is perfect, the diction clear and effortless, the florid singing seamlessly incorporated into the melodic lines, and she executes trills with precision at varied speeds. She embellishes with a sure sense of style, and there is even something about her alluring and individual timbre that evokes what we imagine to be the sound of the acclaimed castratos for whom about half of these selections were composed. Her interpretations of the well-known arias from *Orfeo* (‘Che puro ciel’) and *Paride ed Elena* (‘O del mio dolce ardor’) are shining examples of the “noble simplicity” Gluck sought in his Reform operas. The mood of the *Orfeo* aria is set by a supple performance of the ‘Dance of the Blessed Spirits’ that precedes it.

ALTMAN

GLUCK: *Orphée et Eurydice*

Reinoud Van Mechelen (Orpheus), Ana Vieira Leite (Eurydice), Julie Roset (Amor); Les Arts Florissants/ Paul Agnew

Harmonia Mundi 8905401 [2CD] 128 minutes

Paul Agnew’s recording of Gluck’s *Orphée* is more than a great performance; it’s a bold stance against an insidious trend that has

plagued the opera world for some time now. Over the past year alone, I’ve attended potentially satisfying performances of *Marriage of Figaro*, *Barber of Seville*, and *Rigoletto* that were compromised by conductors who set the metronome to “fast” for practically every number. Do they think the younger generation, accustomed to the computer-generated rhythms of pop music, will find classical music more accessible if it’s presented as an endless succession of rushed tempos? Or do they simply assume “fast equals exciting”?

What makes classical music and opera a world apart from less refined expressions of music (there, I said it) is the wealth of instrumental colors and the variety of dynamics and tempo. Agnew and Les Arts Florissants, aided by a first-rate cast, restore these values to Gluck’s French-language revision of *Orfeo* for Paris in 1774. Aside from a wealth of felicitous touches in articulation, or a pause here or there to let the music breathe, the key attraction is the way Agnew underscores the opera’s contrasts. After the stirring Overture, the mourning chorus for Euridice (‘Ah! Dans ce bois’) has the solemnity and majesty of a funeral procession. Amor’s words of hope to Orpheus (‘Si les doux accords’) are spritely; but the warning that, in the realm of the dead, he must not look at or speak to his beloved (‘Soumis au silence’) is sung at a slow, deliberate pace, suggesting the slightest misstep would spell doom. Or listen how the deceptive calm of the harps as Orpheus approaches the Furies is contrasted to their thunderous threats (‘Quel est audacieux’).

Some of the tempos are unusually slow (especially by today’s standards), but they’re never arbitrary or idiosyncratic. Has the ‘Dance of the Blessed Spirits’ ever been so beautifully played? And, played at a slower tempo, Orpheus’s entry into the land of the Blessed Spirits, ‘Quelle nouveau ciel’, becomes what it should be: the transcendent climax of the first half of the opera (the Act II finale). In addressing tempo, mood, and contrast, Agnew fulfills Gluck’s goal of reforming opera so that all the elements support the meaning (or subtext) of the drama.

Reinoud Van Mechelen is appealing in the title role and manages the high tessitura (composed for *haute-contre* tenor) with more grace than most. Buoyed by Agnew’s atmosphere of artistic freedom, he rises to a

high D-flat in the cadenza to the exciting 'Espoir renaît dans mon âme'. Van Mechelen's interpretation of the opera's most famous aria, 'J'ai perdu mon Eurydice', is especially vivid and moving under Agnew's flexible baton. Julie Roset sparkles as Amor, and Ana Vieira Leite infuses Eurydice's music with sympathetic warmth. The duets and trios are exquisite, and the chorus and orchestra of Les Arts Florissant are impeccable. In the French *Orpheus*, it's the orchestra that gets the "last word", as it were, and the opera is capped by about 20 minutes of sumptuous ballet music.

ALTMAN

GODFREY: *Piano Quintet; Guitar Quintet; Cello Quintet*

Ursula Oppens, p; Eliot Fisk, g; Cassatt Quartet
New Focus 467—60 minutes

3 quintets by Daniel Strong Godfrey, born in 1949. They are all listenable, even pleasant. It's "new music" from 2006, 2013, and 2023. The sound of these combinations of instruments is naturally attractive, if the composer doesn't make them do outrageous things—and he doesn't. They make sounds that are soothing or interesting, but not wild or experimental—that is, unlike many contemporary composers, he does not stretch the instruments beyond their normal, healthy range.

So I didn't mind having to listen to this to review it. But I'm afraid there is nothing to make me go back to it. The greatest music draws you back again and again. But how often does something like that get written? Maybe not at all in our own time. New music has to compete with centuries and geniuses. It is not surprising that it doesn't seem better or even as good as the best from hundreds of years. It is rarely as pleasant as this.

VROON

GOUNOD: *Piano Pieces*

Warren Lee
Naxos 574534—77 minutes

This starts with his ever-popular 'Meditation on Bach's 1st Prelude' (*Ave Maria*) and ends with the familiar theme to "Alfred Hitchcock Presents" ('Funeral March for a Marionette'). Between are 70 minutes of Gounod's pleasant and idiomatic piano pieces. They often sound like easy to inter-

mediate Schumann or Chopin, except the longest set here: the 27-minute *Preludes & Fugues for Preparatory Study of JS Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier*. The rigorous polyphony demands strong finger and hand independence. This neo-Baroque work explores a pseudo-Bachian style whose harmonies occasionally betray its 19th-Century origins. Mr Lee is a most eloquent and spirited advocate for this rare and diverting repertory. The detailed and comprehensive notes are exemplary.

WRIGHT

GRIEG: *Violin Sonatas*

Natalia van der Mersch; Natalia Kovalzon, p
Ars 38687—68 minutes

This CD has made me angry. Based on what I am able to hear, these are outstanding performances of all of these sonatas by great musicians. What do I mean by "based on what I am able to hear"? The microphone placement and/or selection is terrible. The sound is distant and congested. I've heard electric recordings from the 1920s with clearer sound. This is like being presented with a gourmet meal that has been ruined by way too much salt. I can't remember listening to a CD with sound this bad. Listening very carefully, I think that I can hear Natalia van der Mersch produce gradations of tone color and nuances of great refinement that are wedded to a fiery temperament. She is exactly the type of musician I love to listen to. She has an excellent pedigree, having studied with Zakhar Bron and Igor Oistrakh. I'm glad to hear that the Oistrakh strain lives through this woman.

I am quite certain that these performances are far superior to nearly all the others available on CD, but the poor recorded sound has an effect like placing a great painting behind a barely transparent veil. Once again, I can only recommend the beautifully recorded disc of these sonatas by Augustin Dumay and Maria Joao Pires on DG. DG gave Dumay and Pires far better sound than Ars has given the present duo with technology more than 30 years older. What went wrong?

I feel terrible for Mersch and Natalia Kovalzon. No blame can attach to them for this disc's defects. I hope that either Ars will see, or better hear, the error of its ways, or that this duo will find a better label to record for. I have rarely heard an artist that was

new to me that I wanted so badly to hear again. Mersch is a far superior artist to most of the famous violinists before the public today.

Mersch's violin was made by Joseph Gagliano of Naples in 1780, and her bow was made by Charles Peccatte of Paris around 1890.

MAGIL

GUNNING: *Symphony 10*; see MAHLER

GYROWETZ: *Symphonie Concertante*;
Piano Concerto in F; *Symphony in A*
London Mozart Players/ Howard Griffiths
CPO 555364—61 minutes

When Adalbert Gyrowetz was born (in Ceske Budejovice in 1763), Mozart was a child prodigy. The year he died (1850) saw the premiere of Wagner's *Lohengrin*. His German obituary called him "the last of the popular masters of the old Viennese music school...the last of the better-known musical fellows of Haydn and Mozart, an artist who in his time was no less generally celebrated than the best musicians of the day". He went to Vienna after a time in Prague and became well known there in the 1780s. He also spent a lot of time in Italy—Venice and Naples—and some time in London and Paris. Although he died in Prague, he spent a number of his later years writing opera in Vienna for the Court Opera.

All these works appeared around 1797, so they are thoroughly classical and unrelated to opera. The *Symphony in A* first appeared in Paris, but it is thought that it was written near the beginning of his career. It sounds like early Haydn. It's only 13 minutes.

The *Symphonie Concertante* might have been composed when he was in London, where Haydn's influence was strong. It is for 2 violins, viola, and orchestra and sounds to me as if Haydn could have written it. Gil French, reviewing Gyrowetz trios (May/June 2012) described him as more muscular than Haydn or Mozart. I think it is hard to be more muscular than Haydn, but Gyrowetz packs a punch. We also reviewed quartets by him (Nov/Dec 2013) on CPO. David Moore was quite positive.

I expected more from the piano concerto, since Chopin made his concerto debut playing a Gyrowetz concerto. It reminds me of fairly early Mozart—maybe No. 9. It flows

nicely but never wins your heart. Mozart had something this guy did not: inspiration. Craft is no substitute for inspiration. (Have you read this from me before?)

The chamber orchestra (around 30) plays this well, with spirit. The sound is excellent.

VRONN

HANDEL: *Flute Sonatas*; see CORELLI

HAYDN: *The Seasons*

Lina Johnson, s; Tilman Lichdi, t; Matthias Winckler, bar; La Capella Nacional de Catalunya; Le Concert des Nations/ Jordi Savall
AliaVox 9964 [2 SACD] 129 minutes

From yesteryear, of course, we still have Bohm in German and Beecham in English, both of whom gave us memorable accounts of Haydn's *other* oratorio. More recently, though, the brisk tempos and rustic sounds favored by period specialists have been brought to bear on this musical celebration of nature and the cycle of change it creates through the year. Frankly, I think this has added to our appreciation of the work which, though brimming with Haydn's genius, is saddled with a drippy libretto and tends to run long in some of its arias. JE Gardiner (Choral Overview, N/D 2000), Rene Jacobs (J/F 2005) Nikolaus Harnoncourt (S/O 2009) and Paul McCreesh (S/O 2017) are some of the conductors who have administered period makeovers to *The Seasons* and won our respect in the process. McCreesh's account is especially interesting because he gives us the work with an edited, less gooey English libretto, a gloriously full-bodied choir, and bright, attractive soloists, including soprano Carolyn Sampson. Call me a heretic, but I think he makes Beecham's lot sound matronly by comparison.

All of which leads us to Maestro Savall, who can be added to the list of period practitioners who've done well by the work. Chorally, orchestrally, and sonically, in fact, this *Seasons* (in German) is absolutely splendid. The Catalonian choir sounds rich, full, and thrilled to be cavorting in spring, cowering at summer storms, dipping into the wine casks of autumn, and spinning the wheel of thread (and life) as winter's cold sets in. They are wonderful, especially in Haydn's sparkling counterpoint that is

clear, strong, and chock-full of harmonic character. I've never heard it sound better. Le Concert des Nations dovetails beautifully with the singing, making the most of Haydn's extravagantly colorful instrumental writing. The winds in particular play with élan and elegance and are caught in resplendent sound by the engineers. Even the hunting horns of autumn manage to sound a bit glossy as their braying summons villagers and hounds to chase down any stag unlucky enough to be in the neighborhood.

It's the soloists, though, who don't quite measure up to the lofty standards set around them. Though dexterous and attractive, their voices are uniformly light and rather small, which keeps the story-telling from being as vivid as it might be. Simon, the baritone farmer, sounds pretty jaunty most of the way, but Hanne the soprano and Lukas the tenor go overboard with their crooning and swooning. Hanne sings sweetly about the soft, balmy winds of spring, but grows wispy in her duet with Lukas the tenor as love blooms in the autumn air. And when Lukas describes the chilly mists of winter, you might find yourself edging closer to your speakers just to be sure he hasn't vanished into the fog. On the period front, there is more robust story-telling to be found elsewhere, especially from Gardiner (with Bonney, Rolfe Johnson, and Schmidt) and Harnoncourt, whose idiosyncrasies of tempo and dynamics are balanced by a terrific team of soloists (Kuhmeier, Gura, and Gerhaher). Rene Jacobs's soloists (Petersen, Gura again, and Henschel) are also very personable, though Savall's Catalonian choir makes a more majestic contribution than Jacobs's RIAS ensemble, which is smaller and incorporated more fully into the hustle and bustle of the period style. (And I've always found Jacobs more exuberant than Gardiner.) In the end nobody's perfect, so if you care about the work there is so much *right* about Maestro Savall's choir, orchestra, conducting, and sound that you'll want to add him to your collection. Deluxe packaging is included, by the way, in a chubby volume complete with one full booklet of commentary and another with the libretto translated into a dizzying array of languages, including (fortunately) German and English. On the front is a handsome portrait of Haydn set against a golden

background, which seems about right, given the celestial music.

GREENFIELD

HAYDN: *Trios 17, 18, 20, 34, 36*

Stefan Tarara, v; Eun-Sun Hong, vc; Josu de Solaun, p

Naxos 573623—74 minutes

The common observation, or I guess we could say criticism, of Haydn's trios notes that the weight of the musical substance lies almost entirely with the piano; violin and cello are subsidiary and the cello often doubles the piano and becomes little more than the "bass part". In this case all is, I suppose, forgiven because the pianism of Spanish-American Josu de Solaun is scintillating and engaging, a delight in and of itself. The other players, the German Stefan Tarara and Korean Eun-Sun Hong, match Solaun very well.

The 5 trios here come from different periods. Trios 17, 18 and 20 are late, coming from the 1790s, while the higher numbered ones (in Hoboken's catalog) are around 1760 (36) or before 1759 (34). The 30-year gap shows. The later works are fine pieces, while I dare say we would politely ignore the early ones if they had come from a lesser composer. With these performers, all first-place winners in the 2014 Enesco Competition in Bucharest, the music is energetic and exciting, crisp and straightforward. Enjoyable as this is, I found myself wanting something warmer and soothing, but in fact there are only 2 slow movements on the whole disc (and they are only *andante*).

A fine recording, then, but not one I would prefer to the classic Beaux Arts Haydn recordings.

ALTHOUSE

HAYDN, M: *Requiem*;

St Hieronymous Mass

Julia Doyle, Kate Symonds-Joy, James Robinson, Malachy Frame; Gonville & Caius College Choir; Academy of Ancient Music/ Matthew Martin

Linn 771—70 minutes

1771 was truly an *annus horribilis* for Michael Haydn. That January, he and his wife lost a daughter who died before reaching her first birthday. 11 months later, the composer's beloved patron, Prince-Archbishop Sigismund Graf Schrattenberg also

passed away. It was during that Advent season that Haydn crafted this *Requiem pro defuncto Archiepiscopo Sigismundo* in loving homage to both of them. The work flowed quickly and was premiered at the churchman's funeral in January, 1772. A strikingly fine work it is, too, full of vivid depictions of the liturgy, classy counterpoint, and rich orchestration with trumpets and trombones rising to brassy prominence. If you'd fancy a quick reminder of why Michael Haydn's music was greatly admired by the likes of Mozart and Michael's superstar brother Franz Joseph, this Requiem would supply it.

Speaking of Mozart, annotator Jeremy Summerley (himself an able choral conductor) describes Haydn's Requiem as a "model" for K 626, the Liturgy for the Dead that would emanate from Mozart's deathbed 20 years later. Surely he has a point. Pick an interlude—Haydn's wiry, intense "Requiem aeternam"; his "Quam olim Abrahae" fugue with the trombones doubling the singers; the dotted rhythms at "Rex gloriae"; the final reprise of opening statements bringing the work full circle—and you'll hear Michael's creative touches reaching across the decades to inspire Mozart and Sussmayr.

I enjoyed the performance immensely. True, the tenor solos are a mite wispy, but overall the account brings full faith and credit to the estimable score. (Hate antiques? In Jan/Feb 2005, Carl Bauman admired an account on modern instruments led by Christian Zacharias which still seems to be available but might be difficult to track down.)

This lot also does very well with the *Mass of St Jerome*, one of the 47 traversals of the liturgy Haydn composed in his busy years as a church musician. It turns out to be a double-reed extravaganza, with a pair of oboists chirping out of the orchestral texture to impart melodic direction and lift to the text. They are joined by 2 more orchestral oboes, 2 bassoons, 3 trombones, and continuo accompanying the choir and soloists. It all sounds delightful; another reminder that Michael Haydn, a star in his own day, might deserve to shine a bit more brightly in ours.

GREENFIELD

HEATON: *2 Morning Songs; With Empty Hands; O Fortune; The Chief Glory; Piano Sonata; Pilgrim Reflections; 3 Pieces for Piano; Little Suite for Flute & Piano; Welcome for Me; 3 West Indian Melodies*
Murray McLachlan, Ross McLachlan, p; James Gilchrist, t; Alex Jakeman, fl

Divine Art 21138—80 minutes

Englishman John Wilfred Heaton (1918-2000) gained some respect as a composer of band music. Much of it was for the Salvation Army: he was both a member and musician of that worthy organization. The release is a sampling of his songs and keyboard work. The 2 Morning Songs, 'Dove's Answer' and 'Hay Harvest' as well as 'With Empty Hands' date from his late teens. The music is pleasant English balladeering of the time. The texts are decent, though—a personal defect—the endless repetitions of 'love' in 'The Chief Glory', a Calderon translation, are for me too reminiscent of the loopy 1960s.

The Piano Sonata comes from the 1950s, though it only premiered this year. I has a clangy, reverberant opening. Though tonal, the percussive writing recalls the avant-garde work of composers like Antheil. Formally, it's coherent. The scherzo has a splintered beginning with bitonal harmonies. A chordal theme over an insistent bass, develops by accumulation to a logical peak. The slow movement has a relatively simple hymn-like theme, though its harmonies tend to wander as if the composer were improvising. The movement seems to end several times. The rondo finale was originally an orchestral work. The music demands and here it gets firm rhythm and clean fingerwork. The composer has fun with the tropes of a classical finale.

Pilgrim's Reflections, a rhapsody for piano, is an adaptation from music Heaton wrote for his sister Hilda's staging of Bunyan's masterpiece. One occasionally hears echoes of that fine familiar hymn 'He Who Would Valiant Be'. Absent the printed music, I don't know if it's the score or the interpretation, but its many pauses make the work lose continuity.

The Suite for Flute and Piano (1955) is good *gebrauchsmusik* with puckish melodic traits and cute harmonic surprises. The 3 West Indian Melodies are lively piano

arrangements. I'd be curious to hear some of Heaton's music for band and orchestra.

Performances are skilled. Tenor James Gilchrist sings with a clear tone and good diction, though a vibrato in his high range can be distracting. Most of these are first recordings.

O'CONNOR

HEGGIE: *Intelligence*

Janai Brugger (Mary Jane), Jamie Barton (Elizabeth Van Lew), J'Nai Bridges (Lucinda), Caitlin Lynch (Callie Van Lew), Michael Mayes (Travis Briggs), Nicholas Newton (Henry), Joshua Blue (Wilson); Houston Grand Opera, Urban Bush Women/ Kwame Ryan

HGO 1 [2SACD] 136 minutes

A recording from a 2023 performance of one of composer Jake Heggie and librettist Gene Scheer's most theatrical operas. The drama is about a lot of things: the Civil War, slavery, spies, and family relationships. The music fits the drama, and Scheer's libretto makes the characters come alive. Based on mostly historical characters, the story is about the prominent Van Lew family and how their daughter, Elizabeth Van Lew, poses as a Southern supporter, but is actually a Northern spy living in Richmond, Virginia. Elizabeth uses her slave, Mary Jane, whom she has educated, to infiltrate Jefferson Davis's home to steal Confederate secrets. As a black slave, Mary Jane will not be noticed as a spy. Part of the plot revolves around who Mary Jane is and what her relationship is to Elizabeth. Another mystery is Lucinda, a spirit figure only Mary Jane can see. In and around these characters are other characters: Elizabeth's sister, Callie; Travis, a confederate soldier trying to uncover the spy ring; and Mary Jane's husband Wilson.

The drama is believable and often tense, with Scheer's libretto emphasizing the inter-relationships of the characters. Heggie's music is often brilliant in underlining the various mysteries, characters, and plot points. Act I develops slowly, allowing us to understand the characters and motivations. Act II is much quicker, with a lot of action as the mysteries are revealed. I'm trying to avoid any "spoiler alerts" by giving away too much of the plot and resolution of the mysteries. Let me just point out that I found the drama palpable and exciting, the music

quite beautiful and appropriate, and the libretto exemplary.

The performances by everyone are convincing and beautifully sung and acted. What's interesting is how all the characters work so effectively. Jamie Barton as Elizabeth is excellent with a commanding presence, superb acting, and luxurious tone. Janai Brugger is outstanding as Mary Jane, having to shift dramatic gears through the story while still singing beautifully. J'Nai Bridges is an affecting Lucinda, the spirit who wafts through several scenes. Michael Mayes as Travis is a villain of the worst kind, but adds dramatic punch to his scenes as the Confederate soldier. Heggie adds dance sequences for the Urban Bush Women dance troupe that picture some of Mary Jane's past.

Intelligence deserves to be heard and performed by other major opera companies. There is a lot to be learned from the drama, and the music is beautiful. I found this one of the most satisfying "new" operas I've heard in a long time. Outstanding sound. English booklet with libretto, composer biographies, and track lists. Although you may not need it, the libretto is printed in very small and hard-to-read type.

FISCH

HOLST: *The Planets*;

ELGAR: *Introduction & Allegro*;

Salut d'Amour

Tessa Uys, Ben Schoeman, p

Somm 709—63 minutes

Holst first wrote *The Planets* for 2 pianos and only later orchestrated it. Because the orchestration is a popular tour-de-force, one rarely hears the original. Taken on its own terms, we can enjoy proto-Minimalism in several movements and a bit of gamelan in 'Saturn'. The absence of female chorus in 'Neptune' leaves an even chillier, alienated impression. The orchestra is missed most in 'Mars' and 'Jupiter'. The writing is not especially pianistic, as if Holst always meant to orchestrate it.

Uys & Schoeman play from the original score published around 1950. Piano duet Zofo (Sono Luminus 92178, N/D 2014) incorporates many brilliant pianistic flourishes derived from Holst's orchestration that are exciting, plus Zofo is given spectacular and monumental 7.1 surround sound. Their celestial-themed programme is more

satisfying. I prefer the heartfelt and languorous Uys & Schoeman over the superficial brilliance of Zofo. I'm glad to have them both—for different reasons.

Otto Singer arranged Elgar's *Introduction & Allegro* for duet. It's quite faithful and effective. Uys & Schoeman dig into the central fugue with precise ensemble and fleet tempo. The virtuosity missing from Holst's piece is more than made up for here. Elgar's evergreen 'Salut d'Amour' closes the album with warmest nostalgia.

WRIGHT

HOWELLS: *Sine Nomine*

Iain Farrington, p; Ikon/ David Hill
Hyperion 68476—66 minutes

Herbert Howells is best known and deeply revered for his close association with sacred choral music of the Anglican tradition. This album presents a less familiar collection of his choral settings of secular texts, beginning with 'King David' (1919), written for solo voice and piano. It's a fine song with an excellent text by Walter de la Mare. It is presented here as arranged by pianist Iain Farrington in 1977 for SATB chorus and piano, which I find less effective than the original. Try a recording by one singer with simpler piano accompaniment.

At the suggestion of Edward Elgar, Howells composed *Sine Nomine, A Fantasia* for the 1922 3 Choirs Festival. The nearly wordless 12-minute work for tenor and soprano soloists, SATB chorus, and orchestra has also been arranged by Iain Farrington for tenor and soprano soloists, piano, solo violin, and SSAATTBB chorus. That performance here sounds a lot busier than the original and not as pastoral.

The rest of the program is short choral pieces—8 are a cappella, 4 are with piano accompaniment. I found the a cappella pieces the most engaging of the album, particularly 'The Shadows', 'The Scribe', and especially 'Inheritance', which is a good example of what has been called Howells's "mystical meandering".

Ikon is a professional UK choral ensemble founded by David Hill about 20 years ago. Singers come together for specific projects and with attention to the sound each project requires. Their performance here is excellent. Solo parts and choral balance are impeccable. Hill has a distinguished background as Master of Music at Winchester

and Westminster Cathedrals and Director of Music at St John's College in Cambridge. More recently he has held important positions as director of choral and orchestral organizations in the UK and USA. In this program he elicits exceptional results from the singers. It is worth hearing this release, even if only for the excellence of the singing. It is also worth hearing the mixture of the approaches Howells uses. 'Inheritance' is the piece of this program I favored most and will return to again..

Notes and texts are in English.

R MOORE

HOWELLS: *Elegy*; see WALTON

HUMMEL: *Piano Quintet*; see SCHUBERT

IBERT: *Escapes*; see RAVEL

ISO: *Zemide*; see RAMEAU

IVES: *Trio*; **BRAHMS:** *Trio 2*;

BEETHOVEN: *Allegretto*; **MAMLOK:** *Time in Flux*; **BERTELSMIEIER:** *Familiar Attire*
Amelia Trio

Genuin 25935—65 minutes

Charles Ives composed the piano trio in 1911, and it sounds characteristically wild, almost as if the players are not playing anything that has been notated. The music switches rapidly between styles and tunes, so that it is quite tiresome to attempt to follow. This is perhaps most evident in II, a movement titled 'this movement is a joke'. There is a certain curiosity to it, similar to the morbid interest that a party trick or a street performer inspires, of the baser sort, far from the way our society should promote seeking attention. This piece is a daily newspaper, to be read once and immediately discarded.

Ursula Mamlok (1923-2016) fled Nazi Germany to America to escape Jewish persecution. She wrote this 5-movement piece in 1981. It sounds a lot like Webern, with sudden shifts in timbre and atonal gestures. Programming philosophy sometimes emphasizes balance, but it often feels like good pieces are used as carrots to get listeners to tolerate bad pieces. After a couple good pieces, programmers build up the good will to program something objectionable, if not dreadful. In the modern model, good pieces are beneficial only as leverage. A piece like Mamlok's would not be sought after by audiences without severe psychological conditioning.

The Brahms lacks depth. They are missing the requisite musical maturity for Brahms. Technically the playing is fine, but spiritually it is emaciated. It could attract bored concert goers on a Tuesday night, but lacks transcendence. Often they do not understand the music's gestures or the grand designs of structure and phrasing. Pacing takes a long time to understand, the last part of artistry to develop: pacing of phrases, pacing of movements, pacing of entire works. They may get there.

KELLENBERGER

JANACEK: *Jenufa*

Laila Andersson-Palme (Jenufa), Kerstin Meyer (Kostelnicka), Jonny Blanc (Steva), Kolbjorn Hoiseth (Laca); Royal Swedish Opera/Josef Cech

Sterling 1879 [2CD] 119 minutes

Sterling continues to issue performances of Laila Andersson-Palme, for which I am very grateful. She never had a studio career, and these recordings offer a chance to discover one of Sweden's greatest singing actresses. ARG has already reviewed performances of *Tosca* (J/F 2020), *Elektra*, *Salome* (M/A 2021), *Die Walkure*, *Siegfried*, and *Gotterdammerung* (M/J 2018) and they're all worthwhile.

Janacek's heroine is a bit different from the more assertive ladies in the other operas. Andersson-Palme captures her anxious, loving personality well with her lyrical singing. Her voice doesn't sound quite settled in the first act, her vibrato looser than on other occasions. But by the time she gets to Jenufa's heartbreaking prayer in the second act she is filling the music with bur-nished tone that belies our heroine's feverish state of mind. The finale of the third act brings the opera to its hopeful conclusion with Andersson-Palme easily soaring above the orchestra.

The well-known Kerstin Meyer is heard here as the Kostelnicka. She reveals the woman's humanity with her rich, steady tone that encompasses the high tessitura without compromise. Jonny Blanc sings attractively as Jenufa's immature Steva, his lyric tenor providing an effective contrast to Kolbjorn Hoiseth's darker, less evenly sung Laca (I wonder if he was indisposed the night this was recorded—his top notes are a little hit-or-miss). Josef Cech knows this score very well and leads his cast in a mov-

ing performance. The sound is good broadcast stereo for the time (1976).

This is sung in Swedish. Sterling conveniently offers a booklet with the Swedish and an English translation as well as another booklet containing a detailed interview with Andersson-Palme about the opera, her interpretation of the title role, and her colleagues.

I hope Sterling continues to issue recordings like this from the Swedish Radio archives.

REYNOLDS

JAZ: *Reflexe 1766*; see MOZART

JENKINS, J: *Fantasias*

Fretwork; Silas Wollston, org
Signum 938—78 minutes

At the beginning of the professional lifetime of John Jenkins, English instrumental music was primarily influenced by Renaissance traditions of polyphonic composition, found in his own fantasias, 'In nomines', and 'pavins' for a consort of viols. By the reign of Charles I (1625-49), elements of the new musical styles from Italy were being integrated into English consort music, both in compositional technique and in the introduction of the violin family, found especially in the works of court composers, such as John Coprario and William Lawes. Though Jenkins had an honorary court appointment after the Restoration, most of his career was as a musician to the noble families, especially the Royalists who left London during the English Civil War—but he was well aware of these new musical trends.

Like Lawes and others, Jenkins began composing in the 1640s "fantasia suites", a modern genre term for the English consort music which consists of a contrapuntal 'Fantasia' followed by two binary-form dances, which are generally an 'Almain' and 'Corant' in his works. The musical style of Jenkins's fantasia suites on this recording also reflects the influence of Italian instrumental virtuosity, but expressed through the renaissance ornamentation technique called "division", where longer note values were divided into melodic flourishes of smaller note values, hence the title of this release, "Division, John Jenkins: The Virtuoso Consort". While occasionally used in the treble viola da gamba parts, Jenkins

used this technique to great effect in works with two bass viola da gambas.

Most of the earlier recordings of his consort music were of the earlier works, often written with the limited abilities of his noble amateurs in mind (I would recommend the recordings by Phantasm: Jan/Feb & Nov/Dec 2007). Mr Gatens characterized the recording by Fretwork of the earlier 4-part fantasias (July/Aug 2018) as “understated but remarkably sensitive”, an assessment that also applies to this new release. For comparison, 2 of the later fantasia suites were included on the earlier collection of his music by the Parley of Instruments (Mar/Apr 1993). The renaissance style violins used by the Parley of Instruments were a likely alternative in the earlier 17th Century, though the treble viols of Fretwork demonstrate equal dexterity and tone. The slightly slower tempos used by Fretwork allow the musicians to more subtly phrase and shade the music than on the earlier recording. I would strongly recommend this new release as a model interpretation of these works and a useful example of how a composer around 50 years old could learn new tricks.

BREWER

JUON: *Trio; Suite*; see LOPATNIKOFF

KABELAC: *Symphony 2; Overtures 1+2*

Vienna Radio Symphony/ Jakub Hrusa
Capriccio 5546—55 minutes

This is my second ARG review of music by Czech composer Miloslav Kabelac (1908-79). The first one (M/A 2023) included a short biography of a good modern composer whose music is approachable and compelling. ARG critic Mark Lehman described it as “almost always agitated and either tragic or obsessively seeking religious redemption....(with) pervasive darkness and fixation on turmoil and pain. It is moving and majestic, but also constricting. Too often the sound and emotional tenor of the music carry a heavy baggage of psychological damage that makes it seem too predictable and too similar from work to work...and full of brass and percussion interjections of strife, anger, heroism, etc” (J/F 2017). To that I will add an observation by my friend and ARG subscriber Lawrence Millman, who believes that the defiance in Kabelac’s

later music expressed bitterness toward the Soviet occupiers of his country.

Symphony No. 2 is full of ideas clashing with dark harmonies, persistent march figures, and a mechanical madness. It begins with a conversation between persistent trumpet notes. A marchlike section follows and gives way to a ruminative clarinet over low strings and then sardonic violins. Things calm down to a whisper suggesting the licking of wounds, sad memories of combat, a quiet, determined regathering, and a semi-triumphant final chord. II’s intensity suggests a soldier walking slowly through a cemetery filled with graves of his comrades. After a brief outburst, a saxophone and French horn muse until a lonely figure of resignation from a single flute leads to the end. III begins with quiet string *pizzicato* and a persistent tenor drum. Soon the tempo speeds up, and a quick set of figures dart through the orchestra only to darken when persistent horn chords compete with darting winds. Eerie string lines then combine with birdlike wind figures that move on to clashing but not terribly dissonant passages. The brass call out followed by heavy orchestral chords and a punchy march in the strings followed by a series of alarms that lead to triumph.

Both overtures are dark, menacing, persistent, and militant. Some short passages suggest machine gun fire, though I am not sure if that is the intent. No. 1 begins with a quick gallop that gives way to a dark chromatic slow passage that returns to some of the opening material before darkening in a querying manner. A light sardonic march steps forward, turns militaristic, and gives way to an aggressive gallop. Roaming strings play a persistent march that is picked up by trumpets whose fanfares set off a charge to the finish.

No. 2 is more ominous with its menacing trumpets, persistent timpani, and quietly bustling and buzzing strings. This work has a slightly funereal aspect to it, but mostly it is slow and threatening to a menacing enemy before turning quiet as if to regather itself. The image of massing troops and fanfares creates a dark, complex texture that builds almost maniacally.

Czech conductor Jakub Hrusa—Music Director of London’s Royal Opera, Chief Conductor of the Bamberg Symphony—does an excellent job of interpreting this odd, sometimes weird music; and the Vien-

na Radio Symphony plays it very well. The recording is excellent, and Milos Haase's well-written booklet notes are informative.

HECHT

KARCHIN: *Tribute to the Angels; Trio; Incantations & Dances; 2 Sacred Songs*
Jennifer Zetlan, Marisa Karchin, s; Steven Beck, p; Talea Ensemble; Horszowski Trio; Da Capo Chamber Players/ James Baker
Bridge 9612—70 minutes

American composer and NYU professor Louis Karchin's (b 1951) music is challenging yet accessible, abstract and diffuse yet colorful. It embodies a romantic mode of expression and the structural rigor of serialism, yet often remains light and airy. This album of vocal and chamber pieces gives a fine survey of his recent work.

Tribute to the Angels (2020) was written for soprano and an octet of winds, strings, percussion, and piano. It sets 8 poems from part 2 of the vast *Trilogy* by American-British poet H.D. (Hilda Doolittle). Karchin writes that he was drawn to the reconciliation and co-existence suggested by the poem's recollection of ancient religious and secular tropes, as well as the influences of both Jewish and Christian theology. His stimulating, resonant music chimes, shifts, and blossoms and gives a solid foundation to the soprano's declamations on rejuvenation, destruction, and metamorphosis, culminating in the momentous naming of angels and a warm vision of heaven.

The Piano Trio (2019) bears hallmarks of traditional romantic chamber music in its language and structure, most notably (if not quite audibly) with an allusion to the opening of Schumann's piano quintet. In fact, the entire work has an air of Schumann's light, flowery, fragmentary style seen thru a more abstract, post-serialist lens. Light, glittering textures pervade the work, especially in the fragmentary I. Long, ruminating lines dominate the slow II, and III sums up the work with more energy and rising harmonic lines.

Incantations and Dances (2023) is a lighter, more accessible work for chamber sextet, consisting of several dances (including a minuet, a pavane, and even a hoe-down) with incantatory "calls to the dance". The '2 Sacred Songs' (2018) for soprano and piano beseech God—the first an anguished

'Denial', the second a wildly varied and tempestuous 'Storm'.

Talea Ensemble and Da Capo Chamber Players give excellent performances, as do the sopranos Jennifer Zetlan and Marisa Karchin and pianist Steven Beck. I was left wanting by the Horszowski Trio's performance of the piano trio; though fine technically, its ensemble was not as tight as it could be and shaping of lines were sometimes inadequate to the point that it obscured the composer's intent, especially in the ending. A crisper recorded sound would also have helped. Liner notes by the composer and full texts included.

FARO

KIEL: *Piano Pieces*

Elizabeth Haughan
Naxos 574703—72 minutes

This fourth release in the prolific Naxos label's "Romantic Piano" series brings us piano pieces by Friedrich Kiel (1821-85). He was born not in Kiel but, the booklet tells us, in an obscure place named Laasphe Puderbach. (I had to look this up to make sure it really exists. Puderbach is a village found north of—and considered part of—Bad Laasphe in North Rhine-Westphalia, about halfway between Siegen and Marburg.) Although partly self-taught, he quickly mastered the piano and the violin as well as composition and soon moved to Berlin, where he became a famous composition teacher, counting among his pupils Stanford, Sjögren, and Paderewski. He composed chamber music, oratorios, and a fair amount of music for the piano, of which there are 3 examples here.

The *Piano Suite*, Op. 28, consists of 4 movements of decreasing length. The first is in sonata form, rather lyrical and with many figurations. The second is called 'Impromptu' and marked presto appassionato, though it is not particularly passionate. It has a quiet section in the middle. The third, a scherzo, is playful; and the suite ends with a very brief and unpretentious 'Notturmo'. Its placement at the end is puzzling and results in a rather top-heavy suite.

The 6 Fugues, Op. 2, are pleasant but not very exciting. As an early work, they perhaps served as composition exercises. There are some romantic touches, and the first one is in the unusual key of C-sharp major. All are at a moderate tempo.

I found the *10 Piano Pieces*, Op. 18, the most enjoyable of the lot. They are undemanding character pieces of the kind that amateurs would play at home, and Kiel's lyrical temperament seems to have been best suited for that genre. They include a lovely 'Duet', an engaging 'Scherzo' with trio, and a broadly lyrical 'Ballade'.

Everything is played very nicely by the young Scottish pianist. The booklet does not mention that she has also recorded Kiel's 6 Impromptus, Op. 79, which seem to be available only online or as a download. Good sound.

REPP

KLUSSMANN: *Piano Quintet 1; Quartet 1*

Kuss Quartet; Peter Nagy, p
EDA 55—65 minutes

Ernst Gernot Klussmann (1901-75) is a new name to me. He studied composition under Felix Woyrsch and conducting with Siegmund von Hausegger. Before WW II he was active in Cologne as a teacher. He joined the National Socialist Party in 1933 and near the end of the war was drafted to serve as a Luftwaffe ground support staffer. After the war, his party affiliation cost him his job. Eventually somewhat rehabilitated, he taught at the Hamburg College of Music till his retirement in 1966. His compositions, many unpublished, include 10 symphonies. He also prepared piano scores for some of Richard Strauss's later operas. The works here date from the mid to late 1920s. Under the Third Reich, both would have been condemned as 'Entartete' (decadent). Their musical language, if distantly derived from Brahms, is highly chromatic and dissonant.

The Quintet has an impetuous, peremptory opening gesture, followed by a legato melody of some charm; it's often waywardly tonal. The string writing has Brahmsian grit with sound construction. The slow movement opens with densely voiced harmonies; an elegiac theme emerges from all the multi-stoppages. The second subject is more serene, building to a convincing climax. Dissonant harmonies form a bridge to an episode of scherzo-like manner. The extended decrescendo of the ending adds a note of repose. The rising opening line of the scherzo threatens to rise out of tonal control. The main body reflects Bruckner's rustic influence. The final movement also has a dramatic opening; listeners will readi-

ly grasp its development. A fugal section has a highly chromatic subject and countersubject leading to some bitter clashes. Though nominally in E minor the work ends on C. It is interesting that Klussmann's mentor—Von Hausegger, whose taste was usually conservative—praised his Quintet.

The Quartet has touches of Mahler. Klussmann admired Mahler's music, even using his opinions as part of the defense during his Denazification hearings. I is rigorously intense, some of its lines tortuously clashing. It ends with a chorale-like passage accompanied with extreme high harmonics. The scherzo is in roughly an ABA plan. It's like a delicate spider dance, punctuated by clustral multi-stops. III is a march parody in 7/4 time, the theme meandering under a steady pulse. Later, some ingeniously voiced tone clusters add a bit of tang.

IV, Fantasia, has disjunct chromatic lines that gradually organize themselves over a pizzicato accompaniment to a faintly Mahlerian vein.

Its drifting chromatics sound like a serious version of the episode from Mozart's Musical Joke where the soloist modulates himself into chaos. In V, the lines eventually wend to a chromatic density flirting with atonality itself. After a toccata-like fugato with a perpetual motion extension, like the Quintet, the music ends on, if not in, C. As with the music of Schelb I wrote up in the last issue, the taste for constantly discordant music, if it ever existed that much, has begun to fade.

O'CONNOR

KORNGOLD: *Piano Pieces*

Martin Jones
Nimbus 7743—72 minutes

Korngold is not exactly my cup of tea. I know quite a few of his works and don't love any of them. I do like some (such as the Violin Concerto, but only the first 2 movements) but hate others (such as the quartets). Moreover, I am not fond of samplers like this release. It is titled "The Best of Martin Jones" and contains excerpts from a 4CD Korngold recording he made in 2003 (Nimbus, not reviewed). This is probably in honor of the indefatigable British pianist, who is now well into his 80s. And despite my misgivings, my response to it is quite positive, thanks to a good selection of pieces and excellent playing.

Korngold, as is well known, was one of the greatest composing prodigies ever, and this is demonstrated again here. The earliest piece here is the Sonata 1 in D minor (I only), which he wrote at the age of 11. One would be hard pressed to call it juvenile, though it is somewhat grandiose. It is harmonically advanced, brilliantly written for the instrument, and already sounds *echt* Korngold. From the next year are 3 of 6 *Don Quixote* character pieces, which are highly inventive and evocative of their titles. From the composer's ripe age of 13 come the Sonata 2, Op. 2 (I only) and 3 of 7 *Märchenbilder*, Op. 3. And these are indeed mature compositions, especially the sonata. Even more impressive are 2 of the 4 *Small Cheerful Waltzes*, which despite their brevity and unpretentiousness show the hand of a master, 14 years old. The first waltz is slow and wistful, the second one sweet and charming. Neither is really cheerful (perhaps the other 2 are). The English translation of the title in the booklet omits that word, though probably not intentionally.

I am less taken with the remainder of the program, which comes from later years. 4 *Little Caricatures for Children*, Op. 19, lasting less than 3 minutes altogether, are feeble allusions to Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartok, and Hindemith. Children would have to be even more precocious than Korngold to recognize them as caricatures, but then (as the liner notes suggest) he may have put the "children" in the title just to annoy his contemporaries. (And in fact Schott declined to publish them for that reason; they surfaced only in 1995.) The longest work here is a *Grand Fantasy* by Ferdinand Rebay (1880-1953), on themes from the opera *Die Tote Stadt*—a tedious and incoherent potpourri—and Korngold's own *Zwischenspiel Intermezzo* for his later opera, *Das Wunder der Heliane*, which he composed for piano as an afterthought, is not much more engaging.

Martin Jones plays everything beautifully. The only recording I had for comparison was one of Sonata 2 by the Austrian pianist Maximilian Kromer (J/F 2023), whose interpretation (of I) I find still riveting. It was one of my critic's choices for 2023.

REPP

KORNGOLD: *Sinfonietta*;
KRENEK: *Potpourri*;
SCHREKER: *Die Gezeichneten Overture*
 Loire Orchestra/ Sascha Goetzel
 BIS 2722 [SACD] 71 minutes

By now it would be a matter of needless repetition to elaborate on what a "boy genius" composer Erich Wolfgang Korngold was and how Hitler's machine forced him to flee Germany to the United States, where he landed in Hollywood and wrote film scores that set the precedence for film scores until Hollywood discovered loud rock music. It is almost as repetitious to point out that Korngold wrote several fine classical works as well. He completed his *Sinfonietta* when he was 15 years old, but it sounds like the work of an older, experienced composer. "Little Symphony" is a fitting title when comparing it to his Symphony in F, but it sounds like a mature piece, and it has been considered as such in ARG. Arved Ashby: "What orchestration! What glorious near-melodies!" (S/O 1995); Donald Vroon: "among his best compositions" (J/F 1996). Neither gets an argument from me, and this new recording adds to the legend. I is a little understated, though in some ways it sounds quite dramatic. Its dark sound fits the piece well though the interpretation is more controlled and less intimate and flashy than usual. II is sweeping and Viennese in style, occasionally recalling Richard Strauss, particularly his *Salome*. III is a little more reserved than usual and sounds a bit tired by the end, but those are minor problems. IV holds together tightly and, like III, turns sad at the end.

Choosing a recording of Korngold's *Sinfonietta* is difficult because there are 4 good ones: the Goetzel under review; Matthias Bamert (BBC Symphony with Korngold's dramatic *Sursum Corda*); Andrew Litton (Dallas Symphony with the Violin Concerto), and John Storgards (Helsinki Philharmonic with music for the film *Much Ado about Nothing*). All are good performances with good sound so choice comes down mainly to couplings. I would choose the Bamert. The dramatic *Sursum Corda* is a terrific orchestral work, and the only other recording of it that I know of is led by Werner Andreas Albert from a set of Korngold orchestral works on CPO. As I recall, the Bamert is better played. There are several good recordings of the Violin Concerto (a

work I do not know well), and I have never been fond of the music to *Much Ado about Nothing*).

Franz Schreker's overture to his opera *Die Gezeichneten* is a colorful, urbane, and haunting piece of late German romanticism that should induce many listeners to give the opera a try. The opening is unusually slow, dreamy, on the light side, and not as dramatic as it could be at first. Soon it picks up energy and weight, with strong bass. The quiet section is light in weight and translucent; at one point the music almost comes to a halt. It may also be a bit too limpid, but it keeps moving. In a way the music sounds like it was written in the 19th Century not the 20th. The BIS recording of this overture (and other Schreker orchestral works from operas) with the Royal Swedish Orchestra conducted by Lawrence Renes is a bit larger in scale, a little more urgent, and not quite as refined. The recording with Vassily Sinaisky leading the BBC Philharmonic (part of a series of Schreker discs) is faster and larger in scale. One concern is that this new recording is listed on the CD case and booklet as a "shortened version". None of the other recordings I know of it refers to a "shortened version". In the opera the overture takes up the first 9-plus minutes and is followed by another instrumental passage of about 45 seconds. Perhaps leaving out that 45-second passage accounts for the "shortening".

Ernst Krenek's *Potpourri* (1927) is a less attractive work that comes from what booklet annotator Stephane Friderich calls the composer's "romantic period" (1926-31) before he became a modernist. About *Potpourri* Krenek wrote that, "I dispensed with a large-scale formal principle from the outset...[it] is somewhat related to the revue, implying that it does not belong to the 'upstairs' of intellectual statements...It is a colorful...kind of masquerade...[with] all kinds of props typical of the potpourri performed by hotel and promenade bands: thundering trombones with tremolos by the strings, a sentimental trumpet solo...light concert passages...and a deliberately somewhat stagy, sweeping' instrumentation, all developed from a thoroughly light-weight substance." Friderich adds that, "In colorful and merry colours, *Potpourri* is opened by a short, parodistically pompous march, and echoes of...Debussy and...Satie [plus] exotic elements. A ragtime-like episode is

followed by orchestral outbursts, passing over into a brief passage reminiscent of Schubert. Finally, the joyful mood prevails with increasing pace, reminding us of the dawning of a new age, as was thematized the same year in [Krenek's] opera *Jonny Spielt Auf* (Jonny plays on) and symbolized...by elements of jazz and the dance music of the 1920s." The result should please listeners who enjoy this kind of music. If you do not and buy this disc anyway, you should enjoy the Korngold and Schreker.

HECHT

KURTAG: *Jatekok*; see SCARLATTI

LALO: *Namouna Suite*; see Collections

LANGGAARD: *Symphony 2; Goethe & Heine Lieder; Sensommer; Fra Hojsangen; Piano Sonata 1; Flammekamrene; Afgrundsmusik; Medens Sundets Brise Summer; Toccata; Hostprelude; Som Lynet er Kristi Genkomst; Ode Gader; Forbigang (Paaske for Herren); Organ Sonata* Noel Lee, p; Jorgen Berg & Jorgen Ernst Hansen, org; Kirsten Hermansen & Bonna Søndberg, s; Odense Symphony, Sonderjyllands Symphony, Aalborg Symphony/ Alf Sjoen
Danacord 976 [2CD] 2:31

Last year, I got a chance to enjoy a beautiful collection of songs by Rued Langgaard (1893-1952) that were clearly molded in the romantic lieder tradition of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Richard Strauss, and Wolf. Now Danacord brings us a whole lot more Langgaard in other genres in this generously filled set titled "The Early Recordings 1963-1974 Piano, Organ & Vocal Music" with a note that we get "2 CDs for the Price of 1"—and they are not kidding. We're not talking about the kind of "Two for One" deal that involves 85 or 90 minutes of music: these are 2 CDs packed to the gills with reissues.

Disc 1 contains piano and organ music, while Disc 2 includes Langgaard's substantial Symphony No. 2 and 2 substantial vocal-orchestral works, *Sensommer* and *Fra Hojsangen*, plus a set of lieder with texts by Goethe and Heine for solo mezzo-soprano accompanied by solo piano.

None of the recordings are new, but the recorded sound is very fine, clean, clear analog.

I was prepared to hear music that is lik-

able but generic. Instead, I really, seriously enjoyed listening to the program on the first disc. All of the solo piano pieces are played by Noel Lee, recorded in 1970. There is a little analog strain to the sound in the loudest passages, but overall it is perfectly listenable.

Piano Sonata No. 1 (1925-28) clearly follows the traditional romantic 4-movement structure, with a scherzo II and the slow III called 'Romance'. It is a pleasantly pianistic piece, conservative in idiom for the ram-bunctious 1920s—but then Langgaard does not seem to have been a trail-blazing *enfant terrible*. And that is perfectly fine! A composer of unabashedly romantic music need not have lived in the height of the romantic era. *Flammekamrene* (The Chambers of Flames) is subtitled "A Fantasy after Dante's *Divine Comedy*", and indeed it is quite fiery in its middle section. It is followed by a 2-movement work called *Music of the Abyss*, a sonata that starts with a long, ruminative slow movement punctuated by rather wild outbursts. This movement is followed by one titled 'Frenetico', which more than lives up to its name.

I have to admit that romantic era organ music is not my forte, but I found the balance of the works on Disc 1, for that instrument, very enjoyable, starting with the big, ambitious, Bachian Toccata grandly played by Jorgen Berg. The rest of the organ pieces are in the capable hands (and feet!) of Jorgen Ernst Hansen, including the grand 'As Lightning Is Christ's Second Coming' and the short but potent 2-movement sonata. I have to say that none of these pieces would feel out-of-place, or unwelcome, in a modern Lutheran church service in 2025. They show off the expressive power of the instrument but are not needlessly showy.

Except for the Toccata, which was recorded in 1963, the Hansen performances were taken down in 1970. There is a little strain to the sound when the King of Instruments is cranking full blast, but overall the sound is quite good.

After the stimulating and enjoyable first disc, I was looking forward to hearing one of Langgaard's 16 (!) symphonies, and the No. 2, subtitled *Awakening of Spring* and written in 1912-14 (revised 1926-33), was not disappointing! The album notes say this is the 2-movement version—but the track listing (4 tracks) corresponds to a standard 4-movement structure (slow movement at III

again). The vocal part for solo soprano comes in the fourth "movement", which caps off the entire work with a rousing climax. Certainly a work worth hearing again. The recording by the Odense Symphony under Karol Stryja with soprano Kirsten Hermansen was made in August of 1974 for Denmark Radio.

The lieder with texts by Goethe and Heine, beautifully sung by Bonna Sondberg with Eyvind Moller on the piano (recorded 1968), may actually duplicate some of the songs on last year's CD, which I can't find at the moment to check. They do offer a nice collection of vocal music on a more intimate scale than the last movement of the symphony, further showing Langgaard's versatility and the breadth of his inspiration.

We are back to voice-plus-orchestra in *Sensommer* (Late Summer), an extended 7-minute meditation on that short-lived season in Scandinavia. Ms Sondberg is back, this time accompanied by the Sonderjyllands Symphony under Alf Sjoen, also recorded in 1968. It's an atmospheric, somewhat moody work, punctuated by bold horn fanfares.

The whole program ends with a substantial, nearly 15-minute setting of a text drawn from the Bible's Song of Solomon for soprano (Ms Sondberg), tenor (Kurt Westi), chorus, and orchestra—this time the Aalborg Symphony and its chorus conducted, again, by Mr Sjoen. Written late in the composer's life (1949), it's a very grand, dramatic duet between Solomon and Shulamite with interjections from the Daughters of Jerusalem—a great capstone to a very enjoyable program by a composer that very few of us in North America are familiar with.

This album is great way to make Langgaard's acquaintance, perhaps a little more immediately accessible than the lieder disc from last year.

With totally unfamiliar music like this (to us non-Danes), good album notes are a much-needed lifeline, which Bendt Viinholt Nielsen supplied—informative to get the listener oriented but not too long. No texts for the vocal music; I still need to do some Internet research to see if I can find them, preferably with English translations (but if not, there's Google Translate).

Despite the enjoyable lieder disc last year, a 2-disc set of music by Rued Langgaard did not rank high on my "must-do" list for 2025. I'm glad it showed up in my

review pile. If you're interested in late-romantic music beyond the Mahler, Schoenberg, Elgar, and Sibelius we all know, I highly recommend this set.

HANSEN

LASSUS: *Magnificats based on Polyphonic Models (Motets)*
Magnificat/ Philip Cave
Linn 760 [2CD] 102 minutes

This is the second installment of Philip Cave's ambitious project to record all of Orlando de Lassus's Magnificat settings based on polyphonic models. The Franco-Flemish composer wrote over 100 Magnificats, of which 35 are based on pre-existing music. The first album (July/Aug 2024) was mostly madrigals, while the third promises to explore chansons. This gives us the 8 that are based on motets (that is to say, a piece of sacred polyphony), and encourages the listener to explore the transformations by pairing the model and Magnificat back-to-back. The erudite (yet approachable) liner notes by John Milsom further this goal; in addition to the traditional introductory essay, the texts and translations of each motet-Magnificat couple are preceded by a brief description describing their shared music and offering textual interpretations. At its heart, this project is a beautifully performed invitation for all of us—listeners, scholars, performers—to listen more attentively to the alchemy (as the subtitle of the album describes it) that is wrought by Lassus.

The ensemble's performance is thoroughly compelling. There are numerous breathtaking moments: in a protracted cadence in 'Recordare Jesu pie', the voices savor juicy dissonances before releasing the harmonic tension in a perfectly tuned and timed cadence. The opening of Josquin's 'Praeter rerum seriem' is also glorious; it builds slowly, emerging from the profound depths of the bass and ascending against a steady drone in the tenor. Cave has also integrated instruments (cornet, sackbut, dulcian, and organ) in various combinations, noting that these performances "are not intended as liturgical reconstructions". For the most part, this works well. In moments of doubling, the brass lends additional intensity to the voice, and they achieve a rich blend. 'Deus in adiutorium meum', is performed entirely instrumental-

ly, a choice that points out the dance-like off-beat rhythms. Elsewhere, however, these performance choices are less appealing. Attacks at the beginning of phrases do not always line up perfectly between voice and instrument—a small but disruptive occurrence. In 'Omnis homo primum' the lone voice is overpowered by its instrumental counterparts. Texts and translations.

WILKENING

LAWES, W: *Psalms & Harp Consorts*

Ensemble Pres de Votre Oreille/ Robin Pharo
HM 905391—62 minutes

William Lawes (1602-45) was the son of a lay vicar at Salisbury Cathedral and probably sang as a boy chorister there. His musical talent was noted by the Earl of Hertford, who arranged for him an apprenticeship with John Coprario. William probably made the acquaintance of Alfonso Ferrabosco, who was a frequent visitor to the earl's estate in Amesbury, near Salisbury. William's elder brother Henry Lawes (1596-1662) was named a Gentleman of Charles I's Chapel Royal in 1626, and most likely introduced William to the court musical establishment. In 1635 William was given a court appointment in his own right as singer and lutenist. Robin Pharo, the director of Ensemble Pres de Votre Oreille, asserts in his notes to this recording that the greatest part of William's output dates from the 1630s, including his finest songs. He undoubtedly contributed songs to the court masques of that time. The outbreak of the English Civil War disrupted the musical activities of the court, which migrated erratically until settling in Oxford in 1642. Lawes enlisted in the royal military and was killed at the siege of Chester in September 1645.

In recent reviews of recordings of consort music by Lawes's younger contemporary Matthew Locke (1621-77) I noted that the English musical style of this period is a transition from the traditional polyphonic consort music familiar from composers like William Byrd and Orlando Gibbons to an idiom that inclines in the direction of the baroque technique of solo lines over a continuo bass (Linn 737; M/J 2024). The present recording demonstrates that the transition, both in vocal and instrumental consort music, began even earlier in the century. Pharo points to the complexity and technical audacity of Lawes's consort music,

including consorts of 5 or 6 parts. The music on this recording consists of fewer parts and one might argue that it comes closer to the baroque ideal.

None of William Lawes's music was published in his lifetime, but in 1648 Henry Lawes published a collection of psalm settings for 3 voices and instrumental accompaniment, essentially basso continuo. The collection also included psalm settings by Henry and other English composers of the time. This recording includes 7 of William's settings. In the purely instrumental harp consorts, the harp takes on a function that we might associate with the continuo realizations on keyboard instruments or theorbo. This program includes 6 of these pieces, 5 in dance idioms and one a "Fantasy". The program is filled out with 4 secular English consort songs from various manuscript collections. The ensemble's harpsichordist, Louis Barrucand, contributes his solo arrangement of one of the psalm settings. Pharo contributes a "diminution" of one of Lawes's songs.

The French Ensemble Pres de Votre Oreille had its start in 2017 with Robin Pharo's enthusiasm for music of the Renaissance and baroque periods. Most of the music on this recording would undoubtedly have been heard first in the king's private chambers. The performances here are therefore intimate in character and exquisitely polished. I gather from Pharo's notes that much of this music has never before been recorded.

GATENS

LECLAIR: *Violin Concertos*

London Handel Players/ Adrian Butterfield, v
Somm 711—63:37

The violin concertos by Jean-Marie Leclair are not as flamboyant as ones by his contemporary, Pietro Locatelli, but in every respect these works would still challenge the technique of any violinist. His reputation was as a modest man, and Nicolas Bricaire de la Dixmerie considered that his music "had its roots in an excess of good taste rather than a lack of boldness and liberty". Trained as a dancer, he also studied violin with a student of Arcangelo Corelli, Giovanni Battista Somis, and created in his music a balance of Italian virtuosity and French elegance. In addition to collections of solo and trio sonatas, he published 2 sets

of 6 violin concertos, Opus 7 in 1737 and Opus 10 in 1743, though the first set likely contained works he had been performing at the *Concerts Spirituel* in Paris since 1723.

On this new release Adrian Butterfield acts as leader and soloist in 4 of the Opus 7 concertos (1, 4, 5, and 6). He has the ability to play even the most difficult passages in Leclair's violin solo, which include double and triple stops (including lyrical passages in parallel thirds), dangerous string crossings, and ascents to the upper range of his instrument (though Locatelli required even higher pitches in his concertos). What is missing in his interpretation is a stronger sense of dynamic contrast, even when Leclair marked passages piano and forte. The accompaniment is supplied by the 8 musicians of the London Handel Players. The small size of this group is also a large factor in the subdued quality of this performance. What is evident on this recording is an effective balance which does not diminish Leclair's rich polyphony.

Only 3 earlier recordings of Leclair's concertos were sent for review, 2 of which I was not able to hear (Nov/Dec 1992 and May/June 1999). There was an earlier recording (not reviewed) by Gerard Jarry with the Paillard Orchestra of all 12 of Leclair's violin concertos (Erato in 1978), which lacks the rhythmic nuance and lyricism of the French style and omits some of Leclair's specific performance markings. The third reviewed recording, by Simon Standage (Sept/Oct 1994), was only the first of 3 containing all of Leclair's concertos (Chandos 0564, 1994, and 0589, 1995). The Standage recordings supply both a more subtle solo performance than either Jarry or Butterfield and the advantage of an accompanying ensemble of 14 musicians. There have been 3 further complete sets with all the concertos. Two, like Butterfield, use only chamber ensembles, with interpretations that also lack dynamic contrast. The performance by Igor Ruhadze (Brilliant 95290, 2020) is technically assured but ignores specific dynamic changes and adds a great deal of extra ornamentation. It would be a suitable budget option. The recording by Stéphanie-Marie Degand is only available digitally (NoMadMusic 122, 2025) and her technique sounds less comfortable and more harsh in some of the double and triple stops than the other violinists. The third complete recording is by Leila Schayegh

and was released as 3 separate CDs (Glossa: 924202, 2019; 924202, 2020; and 924206, 2022). She has occasional small problems negotiating the technical difficulties and keeping a steady tempo, though the ensemble of 10 players offers more dynamic contrast than the smaller groups. There are scholarly indications to not take literally Leclair's specific indication of "Organo" as the preferred continuo instrument, and the recordings by Jarry, Standage, Ruhadze, Degand, and Schayegh use only harpsichord. There was an organ available for Leclair's performances at the *Concerts Spirituel* since these events were scheduled during Lent and mostly included the performance of sacred music along with instrumental selections. I bring up this point because in Concerto 6, the middle movement, titled 'Aria: Grazioso non troppo adagio', includes a drone-like passage which is divided into two separate staves in the "Violoncello e Organo" part; and the organ staff, which consists of tied dotted half notes, loses its drone effect on a harpsichord.

There is one recording I would recommend of the 5 concertos specifically for violin from Opus 7 (the third concerto was written so that it could also be performed by a flute or oboe) by Luis-Otavio Santos (Ramee 1202, 2012), who has some trouble with keeping tempo, but uses both an ensemble of 12 musicians, which supply effective dynamic contrasts, and, when appropriate, also uses an organ. To be fair, there are passages in all these recordings where Leclair's solo part challenges even the most proficient performer. Leclair's younger contemporary, Michel Corrette, wrote "It is fruitless to remind players that one must not quit a difficult passage until it has been well understood; it is the only way to become a true virtuoso, like...the great Le Claire".

BREWER

LERNER and LOEWE: *My Fair Lady*

Jamie Parker (Higgins), Scarlett Strallen (Eliza), Malcolm Sinclair (Pickering), Alun Armstrong (Doolittle), Laurence Kilby (Fredy); Sinfonia of London/ John Wilson

Chandos 5358 [2 SACD] 130 minutes

My Fair Lady has been recorded many times, usually in excerpts from stage productions, studio casts, or the 1964 film. I'll discuss what I consider to be the 3 best

recordings, and then an overview of some of the other recordings. The Original Broadway Cast on Columbia (Masterworks Broadway) was first released in 1956, sold several million copies, and has never been out of the catalog. It is the definitive version with a perfect Julie Andrews and Rex Harrison in the lead roles and Franz Allers conducting the enlarged pit orchestra with spirit. This excellent monaural recording should be in everyone's collection.

The second recording to consider is the film soundtrack with Harrison and a less convincing Marnie Nixon hitting the high notes for an otherwise very good Audrey Hepburn. The Sony expanded version includes many additional selections, including the Embassy Waltz, lead-in music and dialog, Intermission Music, underscoring for several scenes, and Exit music, in very good stereo sound. Some tracks are taken from the film soundtrack with noises inherent to the various scenes—which some listeners may gripe about, but which add to the completeness of the recording. The orchestrations and Warner Brothers orchestra are substantially larger than the Broadway recording, which adds a lushness to the proceedings, but conductor Andre Previn doesn't let this diminish the overall effect.

The third recording for consideration is this latest Chandos version in superb SACD sound. It has the complete musical score and dialog scenes with underscoring, but does not include all the spoken dialog. It is an excellent studio recording with committed and convincing performances and lots of extra "goodies" thrown into the mix. It reminded me of an excellent stage production. Conductor John Wilson leads the forces with spirit and propulsion, which keeps the show moving and invests the music with color. The Sinfonia of London sounds like a pit orchestra you would hear in the theater. The original Robert Russell Bennett and Philip J Lang orchestrations are used.

The Chandos cast is generally excellent. Jamie Parker's portrayal of Higgins is spot-on, and his semi-musical singing matches Harrison's talk-singing. He is also excellent in the additional spoken scenes and is invested and convincing in his characterization. Scarlett Strallen is a fine Eliza, and her performance is lively and funny; her voice is a mix of Broadway and operetta. Alun Armstrong's Dolittle is boisterous, and his singing fits the character well. Laurence

Kilby is a light-voiced Freddy, but his singing is fine and his acting appropriate. The other cast members do some singing but are mostly in spoken scenes, and their acting matches the professionalism of the leads. The boxed set includes a 113-page booklet of conductor's notes, production background, and dialog and lyrics heard on this recording.

The icing on this cake is the additional selections of both lead-in scenes (some similar to the soundtrack recording) and scenes and music deleted before the show's premiere. I enjoyed every minute of these excised tracks, and for completists this is required listening. The well-known excision is 'Say a Prayer for Me Tonight', which was later used in Lerner and Loewe's *Gigi*. It was placed just before Eliza attends the Embassy Ball. The song's music is used several times in the other deleted excerpts, indicating that it had a prominent role before the Broadway opening.

Also included is a deleted 4-minute ballet sequence in Act I titled 'Dressing Eliza', involving household staff as they scurry about preparing her for the ball. The music includes several melodies including 'Say a Prayer For Me Tonight', 'On the Street Where You Live', 'I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face', and others—here used as underscoring. The scene starts slow but revs up to a frenzy. Higgins's 'Come to the Ball' is a comedy song that expresses his feelings toward the patrons and trappings of the Ball. There are also two alternate versions of songs. There's a longer version of 'On The Street Where You Live' (with a lovely verse) that eliminates the more common lead-in and adds an additional chorus. The other alternate is a longer version of the 'Embassy Ball Introduction' and a different though similar 'Embassy Waltz'. These were all deleted from a very long Act I. We also hear music for Curtain Calls, Exit Music, and deleted Utility Cues for scene changes or fillers.

Overall, I wouldn't be without all 3 recommended recordings as each has music and performances worthy of several hearings. There are many other recordings that some listeners may enjoy or prefer—but with uneven casts. If the leads are not well matched the results will be disappointing. From my perspective the problems seem to involve Elizas who try to use operetta voices without the required characterization or

comedy. Of the more complete recordings, this affects the Jay and Decca recordings with Jay having a nicely sung but uninvolved Eliza (Tinke Olafimihan) and Decca a seriously miscast Kiri Te Kanawa (M/J 2024). In the 1959 London cast recording Harrison and Andrews sound tired, the stereo sound somewhat muddy, and the conducting flaccid. There are also revival and foreign language recordings that have some merits, but most are no longer available.

FISCH

LE ROUX: Suites

Daniel-Ben Pienaar, p
Avie 2701 [2CD] 88 minutes

Gaspard Le Roux's book of suites is a 1705 publication. His wealthy customers were expected to play them on either one or two harpsichords. This recording by Daniel-Ben Pienaar is of his own piano arrangement. He describes his techniques of conflating the composer's ensemble versions of some pieces back into the harpsichord solo text. He takes other liberties of displacing phrases an octave lower or higher, as well. The octave-lower alterations sound like a gruff mess on piano. The bass lines sound OK lower, or played in octaves, but the right hand's parts get thick and noisy.

His fingers have their way with the fast perpetual motion chattering in the last several minutes of the G minor *Sarabande en 12 Couplets*, by far the longest piece in the program.

The Le Roux ornaments are played correctly enough as they would be rendered on a harpsichord, reading the notation with cautious literalism, but they still sound wrong and intrusive on piano because the timbre and action are so different. It is like the complaint I had about hearing Rameau's harpsichord pieces on an accordion (Valkeajoki, May/June 2024), where his ornaments are more disruptive than helpful. On a harpsichord the ornaments contribute accents, grace, and dynamic contrasts.

For Pienaar's "Long 17th Century" album (May/June 2020), I reported that he often plays too fast and glibly, as if unwilling to try fingering manners contemporary with the music. He zooms through long phrases as fast as possible, rather than investing smaller groups of notes with irregularities

resembling the enunciated syllables of speech. He is a little bit better here with Le Roux, partly because there are more ornaments to slow him down.

His Bach WTC (Mar/Apr 2014) is far too fast and rigid for me to enjoy. His Orlando Gibbons (Mar/Apr 2008) and William Byrd (Mar/Apr 2023) sets are available, as uncommon as it is to hear that music on piano at all. (Glenn Gould had a few excerpts from those composers.) William Gatens in 2023 characterized the Byrd album as “unconvincing” with the rapid passages “driven and desperate”. I concur that it has the same problems as the 17th Century album, especially in Byrd’s triple-meter pieces.

For Le Roux, there are good harpsichord recordings by Rousset (1993, no review) and by Belder assisted by Henstra (Mar/Apr 2017).

LEHMAN

L, S: *The Last Hive Mind; Miss Ying-Ning; Overture to The Siege; Out Came the Sun; Purple Mountains*

Shuying Li, narr; Boston Modern Orchestra Project/ Gil Rose—BMOP 1106—50 minutes

Shuying Li (b 1989) hails from China, but studied in the United States at The Hartt School and at the University of Michigan. She has taught at Gonzaga University and the Shanghai Conservatory and currently teaches at California State University Sacramento. Her music is eclectic, synthesizing a spectrum of styles and influences in a largely tonal mode. Pointillistic textures, Lutoslawskian aleatory passages, and aggressive, Stravinskian drive mingle with moments of lyrical beauty, lush romanticism, and elegant simplicity. Her top-down approach to composing gives her music a solid formal foundation and pacing, while allowing for moment-to-moment spontaneity.

The brash Overture to *The Siege* (2012) is an early student work and sounds it. A sense of exploring sounds and combinations of instruments pervades—for instance, it calls for a baritone saxophone as part of the ensemble to add unique color. Though it lacks the nuance of her later works, it is an accomplished composition and shows her excellent instincts as an orchestral composer.

Li wrote *Out Came the Sun* (2017) as a

response to postpartum depression. It moves from euphoric highs to desolate lows, eventually crawling back into the light led by a lullaby in the celeste. She writes with honest vulnerability and the craft to translate it into an abstract work. It is one of several fine works I have encountered across the past year or so—like some by Outi Tarkianen and Nova Pon—that examine and bring light to the joy and struggles of childbirth and postpartum depression; pieces like this would make for a fruitful area of study in musicology and gender studies.

‘The Last Hive Mind’ (2021) is an attractive curtain-raiser, inspired by a dystopian episode of the show *Black Mirror*. It is adventurous, tightly-crafted, and immediate in expression, contrasting a fragile, yet persistent lullaby with a thrilling yet threatening theme that hums with a rhythmic groove led by hi-hat cymbal. It is a solid curtain-raiser with plenty of imaginative color and energy.

Miss Ying-Ning (2021) is a piece for string orchestra and narrator (a role here filled by the composer). It is based on a Qing dynasty Chinese folk tale, following a mysterious woman and the man who falls in love with her. It is colorful and vivid, yet often delicate and intimate; the score responds more to the story’s psychological beats than to anything else—for instance, conjuring an instantly recognizable image of butterflies in the stomach to depict the man’s lovesickness, all done with a remarkable fluidity of expression.

This same quality can be heard to different ends in ‘Purple Mountains’ (2021), an orchestral piece derived from her opera *When the Purple Mountains Burn* about the Nanking Massacre. It moves from grief and sorrow to violent fury and brutality with a natural ease, as if these emotional beats elide with and grow from one to the next.

Shuying Yi is an excellent composer with a strong command of her craft—her evolution across these pieces show her to have a discerning ear for improvement and the next creative frontier ahead of her. I look forward to hearing more fruits of her compositional journey. Gil Rose and Boston Modern Orchestra Project give fine performances. Extensive notes and full text for *Miss Ying-Ning*.

FARO

LIATOSHINSKY: *Violin Sonata*;
see Collections

LIGETI: *Violin Concerto*;
Concert Romanesc;

KURTAG: *Aus der Ferne* 3+5
Isabella Faust, v; Jean-Frederic Neuberger, p;
Les Siecles/ Francois-Xavier Roth
Harmonia Mundi 905382—69 minutes

Ligeti continues to be a popular composer both in the concert hall and on CD—something highly unusual for an avant-garde artist. I've reviewed several Ligeti recordings for ARG, and happily they just keep coming. Ligeti was fortunate enough to be used in the soundtrack of Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey", making him a pop culture superstar, but that film exposure can't account for his continuing mystique.

As a survivor of both Nazi and Soviet oppression, Ligeti preferred to go his own way rather than submit to the dictates of serialism, post-serialism, or other musical ideologies. "I dislike the idea of being a member of a clique", he said. This program reflects his fierce individuality. It is an unusual package of early and mature works interspersed with hypnotic short pieces by Ligeti's Hungarian colleague, Gyorgi Kurtag.

The 1993 Violin Concerto is abstract and disorienting, but blossoms into something increasingly lyrical and sensuous. The Preludium is especially arresting; it sounds like an orchestra tuning up as a melodic line sings above the chaos, then takes off with virtuosic figurations, finally winding down with collapsing timpani. The passacaglia begins with a whisper, rising with sinister intensity; the finale is slashing and relentless. Isabella Faust, impressive as always, is strident or incredibly subtle, as called for in the ever-shifting moment.

The orchestra plays with hallucinatory color and fire. One hears everything, thanks to the lucid, transparent recording. Balances are impeccable, as in the scintillating third movement of the Piano Concerto, one of Ligeti's most challenging, creatively crazy works, one that threatens to go off the rails but somehow manages to stay on. I heard Pierre-Laurent Aimard play this one-of-a-kind concerto with the New York Philharmonic during its Ligeti festival and was knocked out of my chair. Jean-Frederic Neuberger is excellent here as well.

If you don't care for the avant-garde

Ligeti, this program offers the early *Concert Romanesc*, which is lively and tuneful; here the orchestra gets the spotlight to itself, especially the superb horns and woodwinds. The piece sounds a bit like early Bartok, especially in the haunting opening, the folkloric Allegro vivace, and the sizzling finale. Nothing wrong with that!

SULLIVAN

LINDBERG: *Clarinet Concerto*; see ADES

LLOYD: *Party Politics*; *But What Are These Chill Stones?*; *Con Brio*; *Violante, Doloroso*; *Lento from Symphony 7*; *In Memoriam*; *Ingemisco et Confutatis from the Requiem*; *Benedictus from A Symphonic Mass*; *Violin Sonata*; *Lily-leaf and Grasshopper*; *Lullaby*; *Allegro from Symphony 4*

Tamsin Little, v; Martin Roscoe, Kathryn Stott, p; BBC Philharmonic, BBC Concert Orchestra, Philharmonia, Albany Symphony, Black Dyke Mills Band, Bournemouth Symphony, Exon Singers, Brighton Festival Chorus/ Marilyn Hill Smith, George Lloyd, David Alan Miller, David King—Lyrita 445—79 minutes

"This great composer was blacklisted by the BBC for writing tunes" wrote Simon Heffer of George Lloyd—exaggerated, but largely true. He wrote across a wide range of genres including 12 symphonies, 3 operas, 7 concertos, and several superb large scale choral works. His *Vigil of Venus* is one of the great choral works of the last century. This release is a good cross-section of his work whose net effect is of a composer with a command of memorable melody, excellent scoring, and the ability to handle a variety of expressive callings. 'Party Politics' (1969) from his *Charade Suite* is a lively burlesque. One wishes modern party politics were as enjoyable. 'But What Are Those Chill Stones?' is from his 1934 opera *Iernin*. The vocal line has an aura of sorrow. 'Con Brio' from his 1977 Violin Concerto 2 blends virtuosity and content to satisfaction. The excerpt from his Cello Concerto (1997) exploits the soloist's higher range.

The Lento from his Symphony 7 (1948) is one of the greatest slow movement melodies of the 20th Century. It has a beautiful diatonic theme; if you heard only this from his output, you'd know he was a master. 'In Memoriam' (1948) is from his Royal Parks music for band. It's a dignified piece, sonorously voiced and harmonized. The

Benedictus from his Symphonic Mass of 1992 has a melodic strength and grandeur that'll whet your appetite for that whole splendid creation. Tamsin Little and Martin Roscoe deliver a spirited performance from the Violin Sonata, where the passion of the music itself expands to fill the aural space. 'Lily Leaf and Grasshopper' is a piano work mixing impressionism and humor.

The allegro from his 4th (*Arctic*) Symphony makes a rousing finale to the album. Lloyd served on the light cruiser 'Trinidad' escorting British Merchant Marine convoys to Murmansk in the USSR. When she was sunk, he nearly drowned. The traumatic experience broke him for several years. (As one whose favorite uncle was a merchant mariner he may have protected, I pay Lloyd a personal honor.) This symphony represented, so to speak, part of his artistic resurrection.

If you like full-blooded Brit music from Elgar through Bax and Walton, this album will be a revelation tempting you to expand your knowledge of a fine composer who, perversely, actually wrote music to be enjoyed.

O'CONNOR

LOPATNIKOFF: *Trio in A minor*;

JUON: *Trio 1; Suite in C*

Brahms Trio—Naxos 574689—72 minutes

The Brahms Trio is a Russian group that has made some fine recordings for Naxos. They have a warm, full sound and a romantic style. We reviewed their Rachmaninoff in Sept/Oct and then Aloiz and Winkler in Nov/Dec, both enthusiastically.

Here I have less enthusiasm. When David Moore reviewed some of Paul Juon's chamber pieces (July/Aug 1997) he described the music as warm but lacking personality. In the 14-minute suite that separates these two A-minor pieces, that is not a problem: we don't expect too much development in its 5 short movements. They are OK. But in Juon's 26-minute trio one expects more. I responded, I found out later, about the same as Stephen Wright did to his Trio 4 (Nov/Dec 2023): "a fully expert and handsome composition of little inspiration". He said he admires Juon's music more than he enjoys it. I don't think the problem is the way it is played.

Nikolai Lopatnikoff's 33-minute trio

from 1932 is similar. It is easy to listen to, but it has little character or individuality.

This whole program is pleasant background music, but there is nothing that moves you and makes you feel that romanticism was still thriving in 1932. (Actually the Juon Trio is from 1901, but the 3 pieces here sound very much alike.)

VROON

LUBECK: *Ich Ruff zu Dir*; see BRUHNS

MAHLER: *Symphony 3*;

GUNNING: *Symphony 10*

Stacey Rishoi, mz; women of the Boulder Concert Chorale; Boulder Children's Chorale Festival Choir; Colorado MahlerFest Orchestra/Kenneth Woods

Colorado MahlerFest 35 [2CD] 115 minutes

Symphony 4; 7 Selections from Des Knaben Wunderhorn

April Fredrick, s; Brennen Guillory, t; Colorado MahlerFest Orchestra/Kenneth Woods

Colorado MahlerFest 36+37 [2CD] 90 minutes

The annual Colorado MahlerFest, held in Boulder, began in 1988. It was dedicated obviously to the composer, but has included other composers attached to Mahler in some way. The first recording here comes from 2022, which was MahlerFest 35, and includes not only the Third Symphony, but also the premiere of Symphony 10 by British composer Christopher Gunning, who died in 2023. The Fourth Symphony is from MahlerFest 37 (2024), the *Knaben Wunderhorn* songs from a year earlier (MahlerFest 36, 2023).

The Mahler Third is a challenging piece, and the orchestra plays well. Kenneth Woods, the conductor and also the Artistic Director of the Festival, does a fine job overall, though I occasionally missed the richness and warmth that routinely come with orchestras in Berlin and Vienna. But this is good work, and I particularly admired the trumpet playing of Richard Adams in the lengthy posthorn solo in the third movement. The vocal parts are satisfactory, but the chorus needs to be more prominent, and mezzo Stacey Rishoi has too much vibrato and opulence to be ideal in her solo.

The Gunning symphony is in a style not far removed from Mahler. It is heavily triadic, though without the traditional grammar that relates one chord to another in a tonal scheme. It is, nonetheless, an attrac-

tive work, easily comprehended on first hearing. The whole project, then, is a testimony to the fine work done in the US, but outside the metropolitan centers.

I was even happier with the Fourth. The opening movement is a bit slow with the second theme very tender and, let's face it, sentimental. But it sounds right, as does the (again sentimental) close to the Adagietto. April Fredrick doesn't erase the memories of past sopranos in the final movement, but she does quite well, despite not sounding particularly childlike (as Mahler requested). She is likewise fine in her *Knaben Wunderhorn* songs, but tenor Brennen Guillory is below par. He characterizes well, but the voice is heavy and labored. At any rate we should note that we have only 7 songs on the disc—a mere 34 minutes—which is short shrift.

All that said, I must once again rant that there are no liner notes included with the discs. No history of the pieces, no description of MahlerFest, no bios, no texts, no guidance at all. Instead we are asked to photograph 3 QR codes in order to read the Festival booklets. I did so and found notes for Seasons 35 and 37, but not 36 (page not found, said my phone). It hardly mattered because the tiny print on my phone was basically impossible to read. Who wants to put up with that, just to find the texts of the vocal movements? The information is there, including, I think, good informative notes, but all of this belongs with the CDs.

I did my undergraduate thesis on Mahler, so I know him fairly well, but if I hadn't had my own scores, I would have been lost and frustrated. In short, despite the fine quality of the performances, I can't imagine anyone (except for relatives of the performers!) wanting to get these recordings. And even if you can tolerate reading minuscule print on your phone, you still are left with good recordings, but not better than several competitors in the Third like Bernstein's second recording (1985 on DG) or Levine's with Marilyn Horne. In the Fourth the choice is wide. I liked Elly Ameling half a century ago with a staid Haitink, and I also was impressed with the recent Bychkov recording (N/D 2022). For *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* I'm still partial to Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau, an all-time great recording.

ALTHOUSE

MATTHEWS, D: *Anna; Flute Concerto; Symphony 11*

Emma Halnan, fl; Ulster Orchestra/ Jac van Steen—Somm 710—76 minutes

David Matthews's (b 1943) music eschews modernism, with a tonal style that is unmistakably British, colored with shades of Berg and Nielsen and a contrapuntal sense that sometimes recalls the austerity of Reger.

Anna: Symphonic Diptych is based on his opera of the same name and compresses the narrative and music into a two-movement work. The story follows a brother (Peter) and sister (Anna) who live in a repressive nation and who have lost their father to the regime. Following a revolution, Anna falls in love with Miro, who has returned home after escaping to America. When she asks how he escaped, Miro admits he was allowed to leave after serving as an informant for the regime, which led to the death of her father. Peter is incensed and threatens Miro with a gun, then turns it on himself. Anna intervenes and in the ensuing struggle, she is killed. Miro and Peter, in their sorrow, make amends.

The orchestral reduction is primarily concerned with Anna's themes; the two movements, roughly corresponding to each act of the opera, are titled 'Anna in Love' and 'Anna's Lament' and follow her youthful love as it becomes more solemn and grave. Though the writing is enjoyable from moment to moment, it is far too long and vague in places to sustain itself.

His single movement Symphony No. 11 is cast as free variations in the Sibelian mode, with 2 scherzos, a slow section, and a recurring chaconne. The theme is easy to follow, but sometimes comes off as stodgy. Though it appears in several different moods and guises, it appears unchanged too often and becomes tiresome.

I liked the Flute Concerto best. It makes use of the melodic and lyrical qualities of the flute and is strongly guided by harmonic relationships. I takes after the meandering keys of Nielsen's concerto, eventually settling in E-flat. The flute often wanders out of the orchestra's key area, resisting resolution at the close of the movement. II is a more harmonically stable slow movement, with a spritely central dance evoking panpipes. III opens in G, only for the flute to assert itself in the home key of E-flat. It continues in the

key across several lively dance episodes to finish the piece.

These orchestral pieces don't quite have the magic of, say, his quartets; those don't sound quite as square as these and have a certain fluidity of expression and manner that I miss here. It doesn't help that these performances are mostly adequate at best. Ulster has certainly sounded better. The brass often has shaky intonation—most egregiously in the trumpet solo that opens the symphony, where the first appearance of the theme is woefully off-pitch. Recorded sound could be better. Perhaps these pieces would come off better in different circumstances.

FARO

MESSIAEN: *20 Regards;*
Little Sketches of Birds

Ciro Longobardi, p

Piano Classics 10246 [2CD] 133 minutes

Messiaen's *20 Views of the Infant Jesus* is what I call all-or-nothing music. It reaches for the sublime all the time, without compromise, and demands that the listener commit to listening with heart, soul, and unwavering concentration. This visionary work was first championed by his second wife, Yvonne Loriod, and later by Steven Osborn, Jean-Pierre Aimard, and others. My favorite was always the deeply emotional reading by Peter Serkin, which I grew up with. The piece is lengthy, but the recurring motifs, shapely patterns, religious intensity, sonorous birdsong, and magnificent writing for the piano make it easy to surrender to.

The opening immediately evokes Messiaen's mesmerizing mysticism, casting a spell that never dissipates, especially in slower pieces such as 9, 11, and 19. The more explosive, dissonant sections (6, 12, and 16, for example) jolt us out of our seats.

This is the opening work in *Ciro Longobardi's* final recording in his cycle of Messiaen's piano music. The slower pieces are seductive, the more brilliant ones ring out with joyful affirmation. Throughout, he has a plush, welcoming tone. In the finale, alternating between extreme high and low registers, he makes the piano sound like an orchestra. The climbing chords near the end, a hymn to divine love, is one of the most moving moments in 20th Century piano music, and he does it proud.

The *Little Sketches of Birds* is also a sen-

sitive, intense reading. Full of color and novel piano sonorities, these miniatures are a good way to approach Messiaen's late style if you find it dauntingly dissonant. They are short and appealing, attractive for people who find the sheer length of the better-known *Catalogue of the Birds* excessive. Messiaen gives us a precise account of the birds singing through the work: "Each bird has its own aesthetic; the melodic and rhythmic movements differ from one piece to another. The 3 pieces devoted to the familiar robin contain pearly arpeggios, descending, almost glissandos, followed by slow notes, and more refined drawings. The blackbird sings some sunny, a little victorious verses. The song thrush stands out through its incantatory repetitions. Finally, the Eurasian skylark, which ends, has a sizzling volubility, revolving around an acute dominant, punctuated from time to time by two slow and strong notes, all corresponding to the phases of the bird's flight."

The "pearly arpeggios" and "incantatory repetitions" are given full voice, as are the "almost glissandos". Osborne, Loriod, Aimard, and others offer celebrated readings, but this one is certainly competitive, especially if you want *Little Sketches* and *20 Regards* on the same album. Contributing to an excellent release is Grand Piano's recorded sound, which is exceptionally warm and resonant.

SULLIVAN

MIGNONE: *Fantasia Brasileira 1-4;*
Burlesca & Tocata

Fabio Martino, p; Sao Paulo Symphony/ Giancarlo Guerrero

Naxos 574594—58 minutes

The key to the 4 *Fantasia Brasileira* is what Francisco Mignone's friend and music critic, Mario de Andrade, observed: in this stylistically Brazilian music, "nationality is not distorted by a concern for the universal". There is a distinctive dance rhythm (rumba? conga?) that pervades all 5 of the works here—can't-sit-still rhythms on the one hand, Hollywood-romantic themes and orchestra on the other, interchanged freely. And believe me, it is *infectiously* played by Nicaragua-born, Costa Rican-raised Giancarlo Guerrero and the best, most flexible "south of the border" orchestra in the Americas.

The fantasias, each between 10 and 12

minutes, were written over a period of 7 years. Fantasia 1 (1929) opens with bang of a chord plus flourish, which sets the tone for each of these extravagant performances. Fantasia 2 (1931) has an exotic South American style. Its themes blend seamlessly with good old Hollywood romantic-style themes, and it concludes with a full-blooded finale.

Fantasia 3 opens with a pungent, ensemble-precise smashing chord that outdoes the opening of Fantasias 1 and 2. It's followed by a syncopated rhythm that defines the work start to finish. It's the most "classical" of the 4 with a dramatic development section that sometimes becomes percussively "jungle-wild". Piano and orchestra are equally rhythmic and full-force, becoming utterly infectious.

Fantasia 4 also has a character of its own. It opens with a romantic tease of South American dance rhythms before accelerating with piano and a piccolo that's pitched so high it's practically fragile. Add softer percussion a la Aaron Copland's *El Salon Mexico* and an almost Gershwinesque fully romantic orchestra with wild South American rhythms imposed on it, and you wind up with a mix of Hollywood, Gershwin, and Alberto Ginastera. Again, "infectious".

If I had heard *Burlesca e Toccata* (14 minutes, 1958) by itself, I'm rather sure I wouldn't have "gotten it". But, when following the 4 fantasias, it is the perfect conclusion for this album. The `Burlesca' uses modernistic styles that tease—yet, when all is said and done, it really is tonally centered. Near the opening is an instrumental tease with a succession of brief solos by each principal woodwind in its highest, most delicate register—sort of whispered atonalities that remain tonally based, much of it sotto voce and dreamlike, with pedal-point arpeggios holding on to tonality. It's a really neat hodge-podge that, after 9 minutes, slips seamlessly into the Toccata. Here the piano's pulse evolves into a sort of theme with variations. It's a wild, stimulating, fresh, infectious conclusion to superbly played and recorded music.

FRENCH

MIGO: *Quartet 2*; see SCHUBERT

MORKOV: *Salon Music from Mid-19th Century St Petersburg*

Elizaveta Miller, p; Oleg Timofeyev, g
Hanssler 25028—68 minutes

Vladimir Ivanovich Morkov (1801-64) was a significant figure in Russian guitar music of the period known as "the Great Vogue for the Guitar", (Nov/Dec 2024), where interest in the guitar blossomed in Europe. Much is known about its history in other European countries, but thanks to scholarship by Matanya Opee and others, including the artists on this recording, we are learning about the unique contributions to the guitar repertoire from this part of the world.

Born in Moscow, guitarist Oleg Timofeyev has produced several scholarly works on the subject of Russian guitar music, and partnering here with historical pianist Elizaveta Miller, also from Moscow, we are treated to music that takes us back to Russian parlors as we hear sounds on period instruments, Russian 7- and 13-string guitars as well as a grand piano made in Vienna ca. 1815 that has no less than 7 pedals and a variety of effects including percussion and one similar to a harpsichord's buff stop. These instruments are well described in the liner notes.

Researching Morkov's music for this recording challenged the performers because only the piano part was discovered and the guitar part had to be reconstructed from duets that Morkov had written for other instruments.

Many of the pieces on this program are collections of folk songs and variations on them. The duo's excellent ensemble playing clearly shows Morkov's style, which ranges from sentimental to boisterous. The program maintains interest by inserting a few solo pieces that enable us to hear the period instruments. Miller's strong performance of Morkov's colorful *Variations on "How Did I Upset You?"* is brilliant.

With informative liner notes, we learn a great deal about this music and get a lovely sense of chamber music from a country that is often overlooked in the study of music from this period. Other than some distracting intonation problems, mainly in the piano, the performance is solid and worth hearing.

MCCUTCHEON

MOUSSORGSKY: *Pictures at an Exhibition;*

STEVENSON: *Don Quixote*
Kontaxakis-Ivanovich Guitar Duo
Da Vinci 1041—58 minutes

The guitar's range is limited to about 4 octaves, and this presents a significant challenge when transcribing. Their photo shows them holding 2 standard, 6-string guitars, but some movements, such as 'Bydlo', have a definitely bass-enhanced scordatura.

The Duo has done its homework—harmonies are clearly preserved, as in 'Il Vecchio Castillo' with its throbbing bass pulsations.

Midway through the 'Promenade I', well-recorded crystalline harmonics are played with pristine clarity, making excellent use of the guitar's extended high range. Immaculate ensemble playing brings 'Gnomus' to life, and the delicate arrangement and unified performance of 'Tuileries' is spot on. The 'Ballet of the Chicks in their Eggshells' offers a welcome contrast to the heavy 'Bydlo' movement and makes effective use of antiphonal writing. The musical contrast between the busy 'Market in Limoges' and the succeeding, very dark 'Catacombs' is musically stunning. The concluding movement sounds like 4 guitars with its thick, high-energy textures. All in all, this is an excellent arrangement. One comes away with a sense that they have been treated to this exhibition by first-rate musicians.

The other major work on this recording, this one expressly composed for guitar duo, is Scottish composer Ronald Stevenson's (1928-2015) *Don Quixote and Sancho Panza*, written in 1983. Its 17 movements are grouped into 3 large sections, each written for virtuosic performers using a variety of guitar techniques. One hears moments of contemporary writing that are not too far "out-there" mingled with beautifully touching moments where the duo plays as one.

Recording quality is excellent, as are the liner notes.

MCCUTCHEON

ERROR

In a book review in the last issue, Stokowski's death got listed as 2007. He died in 1977; it was Rostropovich who died in 2007. These were the two major subjects in the book, but somehow we connected the date to the wrong one.

MOZART: *Arias & Songs*

Andre Schuen, bar; Nikola Hillebrand, s; Avi Avital, mandolin; Daniel Heide, p; Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg/ Roberto Gonzalez-Monjas—DG 4867186—66 minutes

The title of this album is simply Andre Schuen—Mozart. The baritone designed the program as a synopsis of his "personal journey with Mozart's music". The album celebrates Schuen's deep and enduring relationship with the music of Mozart and Salzburg, where Schuen's career began. His selections are ordered smartly in a way that reflects his career of singing Mozart: excerpts from *Marriage of Figaro*, *Magic Flute*, and *Don Giovanni*, the concert aria 'Mentre ti Lascio', 3 works for voice and piano, and another with mandolin accompaniment. Everything flows well from one piece to the next.

The program begins with 3 excerpts from *Figaro*. Figaro was Schuen's first major operatic role, and the album begins with his aria 'Non piu Andrai' as he chastises Cherubino for being an "amorous butterfly". The recitative, 'Tutto e Disposto', offers a smooth and helpful transition from that to Figaro's aria 'Aprite un po' Quegl' Occhi' as he launches into a rant about the fickleness of love. That leads into 'Abendempfindung' with Schuen's longstanding partner Daniel Heide as pianist. It sounds like it was written to go there and serves as a commentary on the challenges of love. As Heide points out, it has to be sung "very soulfully", which Schuen achieves sublimely with tender shaping of the text.

That great song flows elegantly into the concert aria 'Mentre ti Lascio, O Figlia' where a father bids a sad farewell to his daughter. Next comes a short cantata intended for Masonic use, 'Die ihr des Unermesslichen Weltalls Schöpfer Ehr'. It has no direct connection to *Magic Flute*, but its Masonic theme serves as a fitting transition to the duet with soprano Nikola Hillebrand, 'Bei Männern Welche Liebe Fühlen', and Papageno's aria 'Der Vogelfänger bin Ich Ja'. Schuen sounds wonderful in whatever he sings, but Papageno is not a role that fits him as well.

Schuen sings Leporello's aria from *Don Giovanni*, 'Madamina, il Catalogo e Questo', and has great fun coloring his voice suggestively at the end. There is a similar boastful

quality in ‘Rivolgete a Lui Lo Sguardo’, which follows—a wonderful opera buffo concert aria originally planned for Guglielmo in *Così Fan Tutte* but replaced by ‘Non Siate Ritrosi’. This portion of the program concludes with another piano song, ‘Das Traumbild’, a much more tender recollection of love.

The program returns to *Figaro*, this time as Schuen sings Almaviva, a role he took on later in his career. Hillebrand joins him for an Act III scene where Schuen actually gets to portray both Figaro and Almaviva. He effectively conveys the Count’s seething anger in ‘Vedro Mentre io Sospiro’.

The final portion of the program begins with the song ‘Komm, Liebe Zither’ with mandolinist Avi Avital, which leads seamlessly into excerpts from *Don Giovanni* as Avital also plays in the canzonetta ‘Deh, Vieni alla Finestra’. Hillebrand again joins him in the duet ‘La ci Darem la Mano’. The album ends with the Don’s libidinous Champagne Aria ‘Fin ch’han dal Vino’, though I miss the Don’s boastful laugh heard in so many portrayals.

The entire album is a treasure. Schuen’s beautiful legato singing is superb. Whether singing in a subdued voice or at full voice he brings something discerning and illuminating to each piece. Bright-voiced soprano Nikola Hillebrand joins him in duets from each of the 3 operas. She is a rising star in the opera world, especially in roles like Sophie (Rosenkavalier), Zdenka (Arabella), or Pamina and Susanna here. She would also make a great Zerbinetta. It is a pleasure to hear her.

One of the delights of this album is the celebration of talented musicians joining Schuen who have known each other since their student days at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. Roberto Gonzalez-Monjas, Schuen’s friend since then, is the chief conductor of the orchestra. Avital was another school friend. Schuen and Daniel Heide have often been captivating recital partners.

The recording quality here is first-rate. You can listen to this fine album simply to appreciate Schuen’s magnificent voice, but you’d be missing a lot. The connections and transitions between pieces are really quite remarkable. I spent a good deal of time with this disc, and with each hearing I found something new to appreciate. It helps if

you’re reasonably familiar with the works in this program.

Notes by Schuen are about the key place of Mozart and Salzburg in his life.

Texts and translations.

R MOORE

MOZART: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik;*
Divertimentos 1-3
I Solisti Aquilani

Dynamic 8052—55 minutes

I am used to a bigger sound—these are 17 musicians (strings). But they are lively and brilliant—and they are not held back by rigid rules about performance. They never sound “period”; they sound involved, completely committed to the music. I prefer them to almost any recording of these I have heard.

But I still want a richer string sound—and Mozart wanted more strings most of the time. Well, I suppose this is also rather aggressive, and I prefer Mozart a bit more relaxed. For example, I like the way Herbert Blomstedt conducts these (Nov/Dec 1991—maybe not available these days).

VR00N

MOZART: *Idomeneo*

Andrew Staples (Idomeneo), Magdalena Kozena (Idamante), Sabine Devieilhe (Ilia), Elsa Dreisig (Elettra), Linard Vrieling (Arbace); Bavarian Radio/ Simon Rattle

BR 900215 [3CD] 179 minutes

Sir Simon Rattle has recorded precious little of Mozart’s music, so it is a treat to encounter this sterling performance of *Idomeneo*, an opera that was close to the composer’s heart. There’s hardly a page of the score that isn’t illuminated by Rattle’s imaginative touch. Dramatic transitions are beautifully judged, the interplay of voices and instruments—a hallmark of Mozart’s writing—is given its due, and the Bavarian Radio Orchestra plays with finesse. Only occasionally do I find some of the slower numbers a bit rushed, following the contemporary trend.

In the scenes dominated by Magdalena Kozena (Idamante) and Sabine Devieilhe (Ilia), the singing approaches the heavenly. Elsa Dreisig offers yet more sculpted vocal perfection as Elettra, a role usually assigned to a soprano with more vocal weight. She may not attain the sublime heights of the

Act II 'Idol mio' (one of the spots where a slower tempo seems in order) nor the depths of desperation in the Act III 'D'Oreste, d'AJace', but I could listen to her (and the other 2 women) for hours at a time, captivated by their tonal beauty and style. (The performance is chock-full of delightful embellishments.)

It feels like bad manners to lament the lack of individuality in their lovely voices. But, just as Mozart reveled in juxtaposing differing instrumental sounds, there is something lost in the musical blend without more contrast. In a previous generation, The Met's first performance of the opera starred Frederica von Stade as Idamante, Ileana Cotrubas as Ilia, and Hildegard Behrens as Elettra. It would be difficult to mistake any one of them for the other.

In the title role, Andrew Staples is impressive in the extensive ornamentation, both the passages Mozart composed and the ornaments added here. But there's a reediness to the tone that undermines Idomeneo's regal character. One recalls, for example, the rugged authority that Werner Hollweg exudes on the recording conducted by Harmoncourt. Linard Vrieling is a strong Arbace who may one day develop into a commanding Idomeneo.

ALTMAN

MOZART: *Organ Pieces*

David Goode

Signum 899—74 minutes

It is well known that Mozart thought highly of the organ, making the famous "King of Instruments" remark. He evidently enjoyed seeking out and playing organs in towns he visited, and was known for his improvisatory skills at the instrument. The question is whether this or that piece was conceived for the organ, as the only ones known to have been written with the organ in mind (albeit a mechanical one) were the 3 late masterpieces, K 594, 616, and 608. Along with these Goode has put together a program of pieces he considered best suited to the organ, including the Handelian overture from the Suite in C K 399, 8 fugues from various periods, and selections from the *Londoner Skizzenbuch*, a collection of short keyboard pieces jotted down during his extensive European tour between 1763 and 1766. The question the modern performer has to decide is how to render them with two

hands and feet, and whether to seek to make them "authentic" in sound and style or, to play them as real organ pieces, using all the color and power of a modern organ. Goode takes the middle of the road, playing and registering them in a somewhat Baroque manner, a style Mozart rediscovered around 1782 under the influence of Baron von Swieten, who encouraged his exposure to Baroque music and specifically the contrapuntal music of Bach and Handel.

It works very well; he plays with clarity, spontaneity, and musical intelligence on the 1976 3-manual, 46-rank Metzler, in Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge, England. Excellent notes on the music by the performer. You have to go to the college website for the specification.

DELCAMP

MOZART: *Overtures: Ascanio in Alba; Mitridate, King of Ponto; Sposo Deluso; Piano Concertos 1, 2, 3; Thamos King of Egypt Entr'Actes*

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, p; Manchester Camera-ta/ Gabor Takacs-Nagy

Chandos 20331—65 minutes

Most of these works are from Mozart's teenage years. "What good can come from Nazareth?" I asked. Plenty! This album is spectacular! First, as an introductory note says, "The vivid and theatrical performance style [is] inspired by a daring approach from the Hungarian musicologist Laszlo Somfai." Second, the acoustics in Stoller Hall, part of Chetham's School of Music in Manchester, capture *all* of the performers' theatricality. (For comparison, see "Schumann Concertos" in this issue for another recording with the same conductor and orchestra in the same hall but for a different label with different producers.)

There's no need to cover overtures and concertos one by one. None of them are profound. They're workman's stuff, but that doesn't bother these performers. Their articulation immediately keeps one upright. Tempos are brisk but not rushed. Takacs-Nagy gives the contrasts between *pp* and *ff* not just precision but ictus and pungency. Phrases often swell and taper off. For example, the lifts given to phrases in *Mitridate* had me toe-tapping. *Il Sposo Deluso* (The Deluded Bridegroom) opens with confused fury before a melting love tune. Manchester

Camerata delivers “character” to each overture.

The concertos are numbered 5, 6, and 7 on the album, but they really are 1, 2, and 3 from K 107, and are arrangements of keyboard sonatas from JC Bach’s Opus 5. Jean-Efflam Bavouzet plays a 9-foot Yamaha concert grand. At first, it sounded like a fortepiano, but I soon got used to the quality of music-making with his superb articulation, eloquent lyricism, and the joy of his flourishes. In No. 1 it is the way he makes the simple music come alive! Concerto 2 concludes with a theme and a neat set of variations in which, while Bavouzet makes the melody breathe in and out, Takacs-Nagy makes the orchestra practically “speak” the accompaniment like a piece of rhetoric. Rare stuff!

Speaking of “vivid and theatrical performance style”, that describes perfectly Takacs-Nagy’s way with the 5 entractes from *Thamos, King of Egypt*, K 345, written when Mozart was in his early 20s. This is pungent playing with ripe timpani strikes, sforzando attacks at the start of both fortissimo and pianissimo phrases, plus barking accents and sweet andantes with throbbing crescendos and decrescendos. The third entracte is practically a musical recitative. The finale (IV) is a sweeping vivace, with a one-minute *stormy blast* add-on.

In brief, incomparable performances, incomparably recorded. By the time it was over, I was hopping.

FRENCH

MOZART: *Piano Concertos 18+22*

Alon Goldstein, p; Fine Arts Quartet; Avery Cardoza, db

Naxos 574693—63 minutes

The practice of transcribing or arranging music for a different medium has a long history. Bach arranged Vivaldi concertos for organ; Liszt arranged Beethoven symphonies and operatic arias for the piano; and in our day Bach has been arranged for synthesizer. Mozart endorsed such practices in his concertos and made arrangements of Concertos 11-14 for string quartet in place of the orchestra. Such adaptations made the music more accessible, particularly for amateurs. Then in the 19th Century composer-conductor Ignaz Lachner (1807-1895) arranged 19 piano concertos of Mozart (and one violin concerto), reducing

the orchestral scoring to string quintet (quartet plus bass). This task was obviously more difficult in later concertos where Mozart began to include more material for winds. These two concertos have fairly good-sized complements of winds. Concerto 18 uses flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, and 2 horns, while 22 is even larger: flute, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, and timpani. That said, the arrangements do not sound bad at all. I’ll confess to a few moments when I missed the wind color, but on the whole these are quite satisfying. The piano part is all Mozart, but the performers admit to editing Lachner’s arrangement in a few instances.

The performances are quite fine and thoroughly enjoyable. Goldstein strikes me as a somewhat impulsive player, leaning forward instead of backward, so the music is constantly engaging and exciting. He plays Mozart’s cadenzas in No. 18 and his own in 22. The Fine Arts Quartet with bassist Avery Cardoza make an excellent match for Goldstein. I wouldn’t think this would be a first choice in these pieces since the originals, perhaps with Perahia, are readily available. I would hope, though, that this recording might inspire informal performances of Mozart concertos. Imagine a talented young pianist, in high school or college, getting the opportunity to play his Mozart concerto in public because the “orchestra” required only 5 strings!

ALTHOUSE

MOZART: *Symphonies 35+36;* *Violin Concerto 3*

Aylen Pritchin, v; Il Pomo d’Oro/ Maxim Emelyanychev

Aparte 349—80 minutes

The group is from Padua, Italy, where this was recorded.

This conductor wants to be expressive and hates the clipped style that has become so common in Mozart. So his tempos are often rather slow. Many movements are the slowest on records. (Final movements are often wild, by way of contrast.) But since he also strictly avoids vibrato, what we get is a great deal of excruciating scraping from the strings. Chalk on a blackboard. It’s all poker-faced, serious, heavy, but never warm or beautiful. All repeats are taken, including some that no one else has ever taken on

records. That helps to make many movements seem endless.

This is a chamber orchestra of about 30 musicians. 12 are winds. You can't miss the timpani in the symphonies: it really pounds away. There's not much blend. The sound is strong but in strands.

The violin concerto follows the same rules, but I spotted a few places where the soloist slips into vibrato on held notes—good for him! But the overall performance is even less attractive than the symphonies—and less expressive (partly because of the simpler instrumentation).

I have to add that much of the expression the conductor achieves is by extreme louds and softs and fasts and slows—contrasts. It all feels rather volatile and lacking in serenity. Mozart as Beethoven?

VROON

MOZART: *Violin Concertos 3+5;*

JAZ: *Reflexe 1766*

Agata-Maria Raatz; Chamber Orchestra Mannheim

Solo Musica 487—60 minutes

My pitch pipe confirmed that the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim is tuned to 440, but it doesn't do a very good job of it. Their sound lacks sparkle. Balances are muddy when the full group of 14 is playing. Rhythms are not crisp. And Agata-Maria Raatz lacks tone color, even in Concerto 3's first-movement cadenza. Some notes are "swallowed" (unprojected); others are wobbly. In II the tempo is so plodding and non-musical that I sat there counting 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4. III opens with the violins' melody line buried under the rest of the orchestra. An edit at 00:49 reminded me of my building suspicion that there are other edits—probably why the music lacks a consistent rhythm and forward flow. Also, III's Andante section needs more of a light, buoyant, airy style.

Concerto 5 (*Turkish*) begins with a vigorous pace, only to lose its poetry as Raatz is undercut by an orchestra that becomes faint and functionless. Keep in mind that she is functioning as both soloist and director in the concertos! The ending of her first movement cadenza is reminiscent of Tchaikovsky's in his Violin Concerto. II is more monotonous 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4 again with little tone color. III is probably the biggest failure: Raatz plays her solo without lilt; her

academic approach lacks any Turkish style at all.

When Raatz explores new works and sounds, she uses the pseudonym Clara Jaz. So it is with *Reflexe 1766*, an 8-minute work imagining the 10-year-old Mozart's 1766 journey with family members from near Geneva to the town of Schleithem on the border with Germany, about 200 miles northeast. Imagined horses' clops as they pull the coach serve as the background to what sounds like a perilous journey as they faced storms, crossed rushing streams, etc. It even reminds me of Michael Daugherty's *Night Owl* for orchestra, portraying the end of the use of Norfolk & Western steam engines through North Carolina, West Virginia, and Maryland. At last, Raatz discovers the joys of tone colors! And Swiss-Polish conductor Marcin Fleszar really helps. A pity he wasn't used in the Mozart.

The album's cover is so cluttered that it's difficult to recognize all the information buried in all the boxes, logos, and fine print. It also says that the orchestra is the Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester, whereas Raatz's chatty liner notes explain why it's also called the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim.

FRENCH

MOZART: Jubilee Edition

Violin Concertos 4+5; Piano Concertos 12, 14, 19, 20, 23; Symphonies 29, 26, 32, 35, 41; Serenades: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, Haffner, Gran Partita; Divertimento 11; Quartet 17; Piano Quintet; Violin Sonata; Glass Harmonica Pieces; Piano Sonatas 10+11; Pieces for solo and 4-hands piano; Lieder, Canons, and other solo and ensemble vocal music; Coronation Mass; Exsultate, Jubilate; Requiem; Overtures; Opera arias.

Willi Fugmann, bn; Heinrich Geuser, cl; Gustav Scheck, fl; Heinz Scholz, Fritz Neumeyer, Lilly Berger, fp; Bruno Hoffman, glass harmonica; Kurt Blank, hn; Arthur Jensen, Hermann Tottcher, Helmut Winschermann, ob; Monique Haas, Clara Haskil, Mieczyslaw Horszowski, Helmut Roloff, Carl Seeman, p; Wolfgang Schneiderhan, Denes Zsigmondy, v; Emil Seiler, va; August Wenzinger, vc
Margot Guillaume, Annelies Kupper, Irmgard Seefried, Maria Stader, Rita Streich, Elfriede Trotschel, s; Lotte Wolf-Matthaus, Gertrude Pitzinger, Sieglinde Wagner, a; Ernst Haefliger, Richard Holm, Helmut Krebs, Martin Vantin, t

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, bar; Kim Borg, Hans Gunter Nocker, Josef Greindl, b Loewenguth Quartet; Bamberg Symphony/ Fritz Lehmann, Ferdinand Leitner; Bavarian Radio/ Eugen Jochum, Fritz Lehmann, Ferdinand Leitner, Leopold Ludwig; Berlin Philharmonic/ Ferenc Fricsay, Fritz Lehmann, Ferdinand Leitner, Igor Markevitch, Hans Rosbaud; Lucerne Festival/ Rudolf Baumgartner; Munich Philharmonic/ Fritz Lehmann; RIAS Symphony/ Ferenc Fricsay, Fritz Lehmann, Artur Rother, Herbert Sandberg; Salzburg Camerata/ Bernhard Paumgartner; Stuttgart State Orchestra/ Ferdinand Leitner; Vienna Symphony/ Eugen Jochum, Ferdinand Leitner; Norddeutscher Singkreis/ Gottfried Wolters

DG 484 3134 [14CD] 16:09

In 1956 DG issued a 6 LP set of Mozart works by contemporary performers. In this complete reissue, they have added other contemporary recordings to offer “a gallery of Mozart as he was seen and heard, two centuries after his birth”, according to the booklet.

It all begins with violinist Wolfgang Schneiderhan playing the 4th concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic under Hans Rosbaud (using the violinist’s own very interesting cadenzas) and Mozart’s 5th concerto with the Vienna Symphony under Ferdinand Leitner, using the Joachim cadenzas. The violinist is recorded very forward, and the orchestra is reduced in size, with limited bass. Schneiderhan is elegant.

Next, there are 5 piano concertos, each with a different pianist, conductor, and orchestra. Mieczyslaw Horszowski performs the Concerto 14 with Lucerne Festival Strings under Rudolf Baumgartner, in stereo, to open the set. This is usually regarded as the first of Mozart’s mature piano concertos, and Horszowski certainly performs in a powerful way, sometimes seeming too much for the chamber orchestra. He lightens up for the Andante Cantabile II and especially the Rondo III, which has a jaunty skipping melody.

Clara Haskil (Berlin Philharmonic under Ferenc Fricsay) performs Concerto 19, using Mozart’s cadenzas. We have two recordings of Ms Haskil playing this concerto in our index, but they are different performances with different partners. The common denominator in all 3 is superlative playing.

Mr Mulbury, in his review (May/June 2005) says “Her Mozart interpretation is so sublime, concentrated, and pure and her technique so polished that one wonders if Mozart himself would not have sounded nearly the same had he played on a modern piano.”

Next, Helmut Roloff performs Concerto 20 (RIAS Symphony under Fritz Lehmann), using Hummel’s cadenzas. Roloff (1912-2001) was a Nazi resistance fighter in World War II, but after the war had a career as a concert pianist and teacher and administrator at the Berlin Academy of Music. This concerto is in D minor, a key which Mozart used in serious works such as his Requiem and the opera *Don Giovanni*. Fritz Lehmann (1904-56) was also opposed to the Nazis in World War II, and lost his conducting position at Göttingen as a result. After the war he resumed his career; he died of a heart attack while conducting Bach’s St Matthew Passion on Good Friday in 1956 (another conductor finished the performance). These musicians bring out the drama in this most dramatic of concertos.

Finally, Monique Haas performs Mozart’s Concerto 23 (Berlin Philharmonic under Ferdinand Leitner), using Mozart’s cadenzas. Mr McKelvey said that this performance is “well-shaped and quite well played, though its straightforward honesty is not especially thrilling or revealing” (Mar/Apr 2006).

Heinz Scholz plays Mozart’s Concerto 12 (Salzburg Camerata under Bernhard Paumgartner) on Mozart’s own fortepiano, in an early instance of historically informed performance practice. This was originally issued on the Archiv label. This fortepiano has a delicate sound, and the orchestra is properly restrained so as not to overwhelm it. Scholz plays with feeling and spirit.

Next, there are 5 symphonies played by modern size orchestras. Bamberg Symphony under Fritz Lehmann perform 26 and 32; RIAS Symphony Berlin under Ferenc Fricsay perform 29, 35, and 41. These symphonies are not performed in styles that would fit today’s tastes, but anyone who appreciates the recordings of Klemperer, Walter, Beecham, or Böhm will find much to enjoy here. There is a sense of space around the musicians in these recordings; there is a good acoustic. As fast as the finales can get (and sometimes the presto movements can be very fast) there is always

a good rhythmic sense. These are good early 1950s monaural sound.

After the symphonies there come 2 discs of serenades and divertimentos. First, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* performed by the Bavarian Radio Chamber Orchestra under Eugen Jochum, then the *Haffner Serenade* performed by the Bamberg Symphony under Leitner. This is followed by the Divertimento No. 11 with Salzburg Camerata under Paumgartner, and then we get the *Gran Partita*, Serenade No. 10 with members of the Berlin Philharmonic under Lehmann.

The violin soloist in the *Haffner Serenade* is Denes Zsigmondy, a Hungarian who was a member of the Bavarian Radio Symphony. From 1971, he was a professor at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is sweet toned, especially in his duet with the horns in the minuet.

The Divertimento No. 11, K 251 begins and ends with a march, typical of Mozart's major serenades. This graceful divertimento is nicknamed "Nannerl" for Mozart's sister and was composed for either her name day on July 26 or her birthday on July 30, in 1776. The performance of the *Gran Partita* from 1956 sounds great and is as fine as any I have heard.

The next disc has the *Hunt* Quartet (No. 17) played by the Loewenguth Quartet, the Quintet in E-flat for piano and winds, and the Violin Sonata in A, K 526.

The Loewenguth Quartet (1930-1983) was composed of primarily French musicians, and issued most of its recordings on French labels. In the 1950s it was known for performing Beethoven quartet cycles and recordings of the Beethoven and Mozart quartets. This recording, from October 1950, is the earliest recording in the box, but I was so drawn in by the playing I listened to it 3 times straight.

The Mozart quintet winds served as inspiration to Beethoven for his own quintet for the same forces. This is happy music, and it's no surprise Beethoven tried to imitate it. It is performed in a different acoustic from the quartet, but the ear adjusts quickly.

Carl Seemann and Wolfgang Schneiderhan together recorded the violin sonatas of Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and many others; here is Mozart's Sonata in A, K 526. This is great music as the piano and violin chase each other up one melody and down the other. Seemann plays very cleanly, with "no

virtuoso tricks", as one reviewer put it. Schneiderhan is well matched.

Seemann plays solo piano on the next disc: Sonata No. 10, followed by Rondo K 485, Minuet K 355, Fantasy K 396, and finishing with Sonata No. 11, *Alla Turca*. Here his clean, no-frills playing comes out clearly.

Next, there is a series of early period performance practice recordings. Bruno Hoffmann, glass harmonica player, performs Adagio in C and (with friends) Adagio and Rondo in C minor. Fritz Neumeyer performs Mozart's Piano Sonata No. 11 'Alla Turca' on a fortepiano; and with Lilly Berger, on that same fortepiano performs the following 4-hand piano works: Sonata in F, Andante with Variations K 501, Adagio and Allegro K 594.

The CD label calls the instrument a Glass Harp, but the notes call it a more familiar name: Glass Harmonica. There is a picture in the booklet. It certainly sounds enchanting and a bit spooky, and it doesn't surprise me that Donizetti wrote a glass harmonica part to accompany the mad scene in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (most modern productions use a flute). The friends who play with Mr Hoffmann in the Adagio and Rondo are: Gustav Scheck, flute; Helmut Winschermann, oboe; Emil Seiler, viola; and August Wenzinger, cello.

The fortepiano music performed by Fritz Neumeyer and Lilly Berger was originally released on DG Archive. The instrument they are using sounds very piano-like most of the time, but some of the low notes have a distinct twang to them. This comes out most clearly in the Turkish rondo. The booklet tells us that this is a "hammerflügel built in Vienna by Josef Fichtl... It has 3 stops operated by a knee lever, including a bassoon stop: creating a rattling tone, in order to bring forward exotic effects."

Fritz Neumeyer continues to accompany on the fortepiano on the next disc with 22 songs by Mozart, sung by Margot Guilleaume (12), Lotte Wolf-Matthaus (3), Helmut Krebs (7), and Hans Gunter Nocker (1). After the songs, there are 4 more pieces: a trio 'Liebes Mandel, wo ist's Bandel?'; an ensemble for all involved, 'Caro mio Druck und Schluck', and two more songs for tenor and mandolin.

The next musical morsel is 12 Canons. These are brief (1 to 2 minutes long) rounds sung to a variety of texts from 'Alleluia' and

'Ave Maria' to 'Lieber Freistadtler, lieber Gaulimauli'. The Norddeutscher Singkreis, a mixed choir, sing ably under their founder Gottfried Wolters.

3 high points of Mozart's religious works are included in the box: the *Coronation Mass* K 317, *Exsultate, Jubilate*, and the *Requiem*. The Mass is performed by Maria Stader, Sieglinde Wagner, Helmut Krebs, and Josef Greindl, with the Berlin Philharmonic under Igor Markevitch. Stader is in fresh voice for this recording, and her duet with Krebs in the Kyrie is something to be cherished.

Stader is also the soloist in *Exsultate, Jubilate*, performed with the RIAS Symphony under Fricsay. When appreciations of her life and art are given, these two recordings are usually cited as examples of her art.

The Requiem was recorded at St Stephen's Cathedral at a service in memory of Mozart. As a result, there are many sounds on this recording that one usually does not hear on a recording of the Requiem: bells and organ prelude and postlude, and some liturgical chants. The musicians involved are: Irmgard Siegfried, Gertrude Pitzinger, Richard Holm, and Kim Borg, with the Vienna Symphony under Eugen Jochum. The audience is silent, but one does hear the rustle of chairs etc.

The final 2 discs in the box are Overtures and Opera Gala. The Berlin Philharmonic under Fritz Lehmann give us the 8 opera overtures we usually hear from Mozart. Ferdinand Leitner surprises us with the overtures to the early opera *Il Re Pastore* and the ballet *Les Petits Riens*. The ballet music is recorded in early stereo, and is a bit of a sonic shock dropped in the middle of all the monaural recordings. The *Don Giovanni* overture has a very abrupt concert ending I haven't heard before.

The Opera Gala has scenes from Mozart operas that were the very best DG had available at the time. DG's recording teams were active in Berlin and other German musical centers, such as Munich and Stuttgart. The disc begins with 5 excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro*. There's the Act III March and Fandango; 'Dove sono' with Annelies Kupper; 'Tutto e disposto—Aprite un po' quel' occhi' with Josef Greindl; 'Voi che sapete' with Maria Stader; and 'Venite inginocchiatevi' with Elfride Trotschel. Each excerpt was recorded with a different orchestra and conductor.

The program continues with selections from *Idomeneo* 'Non temer, amato bene' with Irmgard Seefried, accompanied by her husband Wolfgang Schneiderhan on the violin and the Vienna Symphony under Ferdinand Leitner. From *The Abduction from the Seraglio* we hear 2 excerpts: 'Wenn der Freude Tranen fliessen' with Ernst Haefliger, and 'Ach Belmonte! Ach, mein Leben!' with Maria Stader, Ernst Haefliger, Martin Vantin, and the RIAS Symphony under Ferenc Fricsay. There are 2 selections from *Don Giovanni*: 'Dalla sua pace' with Walther Ludwig and the Stuttgart Orchestra under Ferdinand Leitner, and the Catalog Aria with Josef Greindl and Bavarian Radio under Fritz Lehmann. There's an excerpt from the rarely heard *Zaide*: 'Ruhe sanft, mein holdes leben' with Rita Streich and the RIAS Symphony under Artur Rother. From *Così fan tutte* we hear 'Una donna a quindici anni' with Rita Streich and the RIAS Symphony under Herbert Sandberg. The CD finishes up with 3 selections from Ferenc Fricsay's recording of *The Magic Flute*: 'Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja' with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau; the Act I finale; and 'Der Holle Rache' with Rita Streich.

This is an expansion of the original 1956 6 LP set, which originally came in a box with 3 2-LP packages: Ferenc Fricsay Conducts Mozart, Chamber Music Evening, and Opera Evening. DG has done a great job of expanding on the original set with some interesting performances of the same generation that were lingering in their vault.

The sound is decent 1950s mono, and the DG engineers made some of these recordings very bright, so you may wish to adjust your tone controls. The Berlin recordings (Both the Philharmonic and RIAS) were made in Jesus Christ Church, so there is some ambiance. The ensembles and singers are among the best in the world, and I even appreciated the few period instruments.

BALLEW-RENFRO

NIELSEN: *Symphony 5; Clarinet Concerto; Helios Overture*

Alessandro Carbonare, cl; Bergen Philharmonic/ Edward Gardner

Chandos 5314—71 minutes

The major work here is Carl Nielsen's Symphony No. 5. The first movement is in 2 parts, and the second adds 4 more. In the

opening a busy clarinet that will soon get much busier enters, and the snare drum joins in. Some of this music sounds like a conversation or a gathering that is stirring at first before fading into nothingness. The second part of I begins with the oboe signaling all clear. Calm prevails but not without intensity. After the strings begin the next major theme, a fugue emerges, the strings quietly play the main theme, and the trombones enter amid some confusion. Gardner maintains his tempo through all that, another eerie gathering begins, and he builds things slowly with good control as the orchestra almost swoons. The slow building continues, fades, a dreamy clarinet bids farewell to the French horn, and all fades to nothingness save for some soft drums.

II, an Allegro, breaks into a celebration followed by a confused passage led by the tuba. Wind solos follow—at first they sound improvised—then give way to alarm-type figures. A *presto* breaks out into another celebration followed by a confused passage led by the tuba, and chugging figures in the winds turn to scrambling. The timpani charges to the rescue, the clarinet scurries, and the orchestra garrumphs. All that sets off near chaos followed by runaway timpani. After things quiet down, the strings seek escape, leaving behind a brief sensation of emptiness, but it is not long before things liven up again, going from wild to nearly brash to chaotic until ending boldly with thundering timpani. This busy performance is a good one; but it, and the work itself, may be too quirky for some listeners.

Nielsen's Clarinet Concerto is one of the most difficult works in the solo clarinet repertoire. Oddly enough, or perhaps not so oddly, a clarinetist I know dislikes it, and I cannot argue. Well played as it is here by Alessandro Carbonare, principal clarinet with the St Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, it sounds more like an etude or technical study than a concerto. The work's eerie opening begins slow and sounds held back a little. A bit more forward motion seems called for, and it soon appears, at which point it moves along in a passage that suggests a conversation or a gathering followed by stirring before everything fades away. Carbonare and conductor Gardner handle all that well, but I believe the work's appeal will be limited mainly to clarinetists and admirers of the instrument.

On the score of his *Helios Overture* Nielsen wrote

Silence and darkness,

The sun rises with a joyous song of praise,

It wanders its golden way

and sinks quietly into the sea.

That summarizes a work that is serious, persistent, stark, and with a few oddities. The opening is subtle, quiet, mysterious, but more assertive once the drum starts. The prominent clarinet solo reinforces the notion that Nielsen had a persistent affection for that instrument. Things eventually calm down, led by the low strings and bassoons followed by an oboe solo and a somber string passage backed by a French horn. In time the music finds peace, and a celebration breaks out. After the orchestra gathers itself around one theme, the drum returns and sets off a great build-up leading to a soft ending led by the clarinet.

Sound and playing on all 3 works are excellent.

HECHT

PAPANDOPULO: *Croatian Mass*

Darija Augustan, Sonja Runje, Tomislav Muzek, Ljubomir Puskaric; Bavarian Radio Choir/ Ivan Repusic

BR 900532—50 minutes

Hrvatska Misa is a 50-minute a cappella setting of Catholic liturgy composed by Boris Papandopulo and sung in the composer's native Croatian. Papandopulo (1906-91) was the son of a Russian-Greek aristocrat and a Croatian opera singer. He grew up surrounded by musicians and people of the theater. The notes tell us his mother knew Stravinsky, who helped the fledgling composer get a musical education in Vienna. There he met with some success as a composer but was better known as a choral conductor. Returning to Croatia, he became one the region's pre-eminent musicians, directing the Zagreb Opera and becoming an important presence in houses across what was then Yugoslavia.

Composed in the summer of 1939, this mass was influenced by old church hymns from Croatia's Dalmatian region. The composer described the mood of the work as "deeply religious and serious", which it is. Truly, it is a fine piece that works its magic on the liturgy in some mighty affecting ways.

3 ringing declarations of “Gospode pomiluj” (Kyrie eleison) from the solo tenor make it clear that Croatians are not bashful about asking for mercy. The rest of the work is testimony to that same staunch presence before God. The construction of that 11-minute Kyrie reminds me of Russian choral concertos, with liturgical subdivisions setting a markedly individual tone even as they unite with the essential content of the prayer. ‘Slava’ (Gloria) begins as an ebullient song of praise, then becomes more intense as the soloists and choir interact to describe sins being taken away and Jesus taking his heavenly seat at God’s right hand. Papandopulo shows himself a man of the theater in the Gloria and in the Credo, where the expressive writing takes us from crucifixion, to burial, resurrection, and ascension.

These soloists were chosen perfectly for the music, which requires lyricism but also the heft to throb a bit as the South Slavic soul is bared. (The tenor and mezzo are especially effective in this, and I am moved by the baritone’s plea for mercy in Papandopulo’s deeply-felt *Agnus Dei*.) The Bavarians cement their reputation as a choir that can excel across the board—from Mozart to Elgar to Bruckner, and on to Lauridsen, Puccini, Caplet, Silvestrov, Lloyd Webber, and this eminent composer from Croatia. Like those others, Boris Papandopulo deserved the best and got it.

GREENFIELD

PARAC: *Judita; Dance of the Baroness*

Sofija Petrovic, s; Stjepan Franetovic, Matteo Ivan Rasic, t; Ivica Cikes, Matija Meic, bar; Sava Vemic, b; Croatian Radio Choir, Munich Radio Orchestra/ Ivan Repusic

BR 900357—70 minutes

A new, shortish opera that speaks an immediately accessible musical language is always to be hailed. The latest to come my way is *Judita*, by the prominent Croatian composer Frano Parac. The work, first staged in 2000 in the important Croatian city of Split, has been staged repeatedly in that country and, in late 2024, got a series of unstaged performances in Munich, thanks to the efforts of the Croatian-born music director of the Munich Radio Orchestra, Ivan Repusic.

Croatia has close to 4 million inhabitants. [Our Editor has been there 7 or 8

times.] For decades it was part of Yugoslavia. It became an independent nation-state when Yugoslavia (long held together by Marshal Tito) broke up in the years 1989-91. Croatia’s important cities include Zagreb, Split, and Dubrovnik. It is separated from Austria by Slovenia (which was also part of Yugoslavia).

It is not surprising for a country in southern and eastern Europe to have a rich tradition of music making, including Antonio Janigro’s famous I Solisti di Zagreb, the light-opera composer Franz von Suppé (born in Split—his father was an Austrian civil servant, at a time when Dalmatia was a Hapsburg crown land), the modernist composer Milko Kelemen (who studied with Messiaen), the renowned operatic soprano Zinka Milanov, and the world-renowned cellist and singer who goes by his family name, Hauser.

2 Croatian operas have long held the stage in Croatia and nearby countries (sometimes translated into the local language, e.g., into German for performances in Vienna): Ivan Zajc’s 1876 grand historical epic *Nikola Subic Zrinjski* and Jakov Gotovac’s 1935 comical village tale *Ero the Joker*. I was delight with excellent new recordings of both (March/April 2021, March/April 2020).

Well, now we have a much more recent Croatian opera to bring delight and variety to the operatic world. Parac’s *Judita* (2000) is neither historical nor comic but, rather, biblical, as is perhaps appropriate for a country whose population is some 80% Catholic, plus a small number of Serbian Orthodox.

Judita retells the basic story from the Book of Judith, to which the libretto-writing team (including the composer) has added some secondary characters to flesh out the action. Much of the wording comes from a famous 1501 poetic rendering by Marko Marulic, which is renowned as one of the earliest substantial works of Croatian literature.

This seems to be the work’s first commercial audio recording. A full video is available on YouTube (alas without subtitles), as are selected scenes and interviews. The videos derive from performances in Split, beginning with the work’s world premiere in 2000. A 2005 DVD on the Cantus label, seems hard to find.

The main characters of Parac’s opera are

Judith (soprano or mezzo-soprano) and Holofernes (baritone), Judith's maid Abra (soprano), the Judaeen high priest Eliakim (bass-baritone) and the prominent Judaeen elder Akior (tenor). The story tells of Judith's attempts to quell the despair of the Judaeans, whose city is besieged by Assyrian troops, under the leadership of Holofernes. In Act II (comprising scenes 5-7) we meet the obnoxious Assyrians, and Judith urges the Bethulians (Judeans) not to surrender. She then goes into action: seducing Holofernes, getting him drunk, cutting off his head, and returning home with the head in triumph.

Dozens of other musical works derive in some way from the Book of Judith, including by Thomas Tallis, Charpentier, Jaquet de la Guerre, Vivaldi, Mozart, Parry, and Honegger. The booklet-essay explains that, for Marulic and for generations of Croatian readers thereafter, the Judaeans were (and are) understood as symbolic of the Croatians. The nasty Assyrians thus stood (and stand) for the Ottoman Turkish army, which repeatedly tried to conquer Croatian lands, even making it to the gates of Split a century after Marulic (in 1699) where they were repelled.

The videos show the city of Bethulia nestled under a cross that is illuminated by a spotlight, thus emphasizing that the inhabitants are to be understood as proto-Christians. This is consistent with longstanding Christian hermeneutic traditions, and a parallel can be found in Handel's dramatic oratorios: the Israelites and Judaeans in them were clearly understood at the time as representing England's Protestant rulers (God's chosen ones); and the Egyptians, Philistines, and other of ancient Israel's foreign foes represented Catholicism, which is to say the Stuarts, France, Spain, and Rome.

Parac's opera is laid out in the traditional manner: the choral movements alternate with arias and duets. There are very effective numbers involving interchanges between solo and chorus, as in the opening scene: after a touching chorus where the inhabitants of Bethulia bewail the siege on their city, Akior (the captured vizier of the Assyrians) reveals to the Judaeans the evil deeds of Holofernes; and the high priest Eliakim and the respected Judaeen elder Ozija order the citizens to block the gates and to defend the city with "Weapons, arrows, and bows".

Judith gets 2 big arias—one in each of the 2 short acts—that are so effective that I can imagine one or the other getting included on aria albums (but you'd need a chorus as well). Particularly engaging is the aria that ends scene 4 (and Act I): "Make him desist from evil. Take away his sight! Let him be ensnared by my beauty and my eyes."

There is also a quite wonderful dance number for the brutish soldiers of Holofernes in Scene 6, though it is cut off dramatically, rendering it unsuitable as a concert piece.

Judita contains substantial passages for chorus, which surely make it apt for unstaged performance. (Some of these passages are reportedly based in part on Croatian sacred music.) In this sense, the work resembles Handel's dramatic oratorios (say, *Judas Maccabaeus* or *Jephtha*) or certain heavily choral operas that, though originally intended for performance with sets, costumes, and on-stage movement, work well in the concert hall. I'm thinking of *Samson and Delilah*: a work that also includes a central female temptress.

Franco Parac is new to our Index. I have read that he started out as a rock musician, went on to get training in Zagreb and then at Milan's Radio Italiana studio for electronic music. He eventually became professor at the same Zagreb conservatory where he had once studied and he headed, for a time, the electronic-music studio.

Despite Parac's involvement in electronic music, I find nothing high-modernist about *Judita*. Its style, well rooted in triadic harmony, is immediately accessible, reminding me sometimes of Carl Orff or, say, Gottfried von Einem (July/Aug 2018). The scenes are well shaped, often building to a satisfying climax. The vocal lines seem well crafted—singable without becoming predictable.

The booklet essay claims to find "minimalist" aspects in the work's use of frequent repetition of short phrases and motives, but this seems a forced comparison. There are passages of choral yearning, where the repeated phrases rise as a plea to God for deliverance. One particularly effective instance is when, in Scene 3, the starving Bethulians pray for release from the Assyrian siege.

The recording is compiled from unstaged performances in Munich's renowned Prinzregententheater in late 2024. I am par-

ticularly taken with the singing of Sofija Petrovic, as Judith: she can caress seductively or cry out like a heroic trumpet, always securely on pitch and without a wobble. Indeed, all the singers (most of whom are native Croatians) have solid yet flexible voices and put the text across convincingly. I look forward to hearing them in other repertoire as well, including more Croatian works!

The recording comes with high praise from the music critic Ingobert Waltenberger: "Repusic's full-blooded interpretation, though it took place in a `mere' concert performance, conveys a passionate stage atmosphere. Wunderbar!" The work is so concise that the CD can end with an additional short item by Parac: the lively and attractive 3-minute `Dance of the Baroness' from a 1980 ballet.

All of this made me want to hear more works by this composer, so esteemed in his native land and so little known abroad. I was able to find a few for chamber ensemble, for orchestra, and for chorus; and they confirm my impression that this is a composer who knows what he wants to do and puts it across winningly.

The fine booklet (in German and English) includes a detailed synopsis but, alas, no libretto. At my request, a Croatian colleague got a complete English translation from the composer and forwarded it to me. This turns out to be the booklet to the *Canthus* DVD. The translation is in somewhat antiquated English, to reflect Marulic's centuries-old Croatian.

But what are regular opera lovers to do who don't have friends in Croatia? Couldn't the libretto be put online, even belatedly? If this happens, I'll be happy to spread the word, so that more listeners can appreciate this fascinating and stirring newish opera—which clearly deserves to be performed in many lands. Perhaps a singing translation could be created in some more familiar language so an international cast of singers can convey the words meaningfully instead of trying to pronounce Croatian to a non-Croatian audience (who would have to be looking up at supertitles the whole time).

LOCKE

PARTCH: *The Wayward* (5 works)

Partch Ensemble—Bridge 9611—55 minutes

One startling strand in American music is

the maverick or loner: a composer who goes his or her own way, bucking conventions and creating something idiosyncratic and unique.

Every critic can come up with a list of these: Charles Ives, Henry Cowell, John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, George Crumb, Meredith Monk.

And definitely, most definitely, Harry Partch.

Bridge Records has just released Volume 4 in its series of Harry Partch recordings. Partch died in 1974 at the age of 73. But he left the musical world a collection of astounding musical instruments that he had invented and hand-crafted, sometimes from discarded materials (such as large Pyrex jars no longer needed by a lab at U Cal Berkeley), sometimes from specific kinds of native wood.

A loose collection of Partch disciples remains devoted to keeping his music alive. That's part of the paradox of the maverick composer: he or she often ends up not such a loner after all, because the music speaks to enough players and listeners that they want to get it performed and recorded.

The Wayward is the latest reminder of how vivid and communicative Partch's music can be. Our Index leads to no fewer than 13 previous Partch CDs, most often on smallish labels that specialize in new, recent, or experimental music, including Bridge (as here), Innova, New World, Tomato, and Wergo. Wergo had a previous recording called *The Wayward*, but this new one is called "first complete recording"; the one track from the Wergo that I listened to was dreary.

Some of the instruments used by the Partch Ensemble heard here had to be spruced up or built anew, but the results are as persuasive as the ones on the famous 1969 Columbia recording, "The World of Harry Partch".

Two major works come alive with unprecedented vividness: *Barstow: 8 Hitchhiker Inscriptions from a Highway Railing at Barstow, California* and *US Highball: A Musical Account of a Transcontinental Hobo Trip*. The Kronos Quartet's recording of "US Highball" on Nonesuch, in an arrangement by Ben Johnston, is, almost inevitably, far less engaging—I'm tempted to write "monochromatic"—and the narrator sounds quite unengaged. These limitations, I suspect, help explain Mark Lehman's

response to the work in his review here: “dull, stupid, silly, pretentious, and annoying” (Mar/Apr 2004).

The other 3 pieces on this disc are *San Francisco: A Setting of the Cries of Two Newsboys on a Foggy Night in the 20s*, *The Letter: A Depression-[Era] Message from a Hobo Friend*, and two versions of *Ulysses at the Edge [of the World]*, the second including some improvisation as suggested in one of the composer’s manuscripts.

The works evoke loneliness, sorrow, and missed connections, with many touches of puckish humor. The performances are secure and communicative, with the vocalists adhering more closely (though not slavishly) to Partch’s highly detailed notation than in some earlier recordings, including ones sung or—to use his own word—“intoned” by the composer.

If you’ve read about Partch but never explored his varied and unpredictable works, I recommend this new release, especially *Barstow* and *US Highball*. I also recommend the “World of Harry Partch” on Sony. Jack Sullivan (Sept/Oct 2022) strongly recommends John Schneider’s illustrated book *Harry Partch 1942*, whose title refers to the “breakthrough recital” that Partch gave with his instruments that year at the Eastman School of Music.

LOCKE

PASQUINI: *The Deeds of Moses in the Wilderness*

Maddalena De Biasi, Sofia Sala, Matteo Straffi, Santiago Garzon Arredondo; Ensemble Locatelli/ Thomas Chigioni

Da Vinci 1059—79 minutes

Bernardo Pasquini (1637-1710) was known primarily as a keyboard virtuoso and composer. Some consider him the most important Italian keyboard composer between Girolamo Frescobaldi and Domenico Scarlatti. He also had a knack for cultivating beneficial relations with dignitaries of both church and state, and he was closely associated with the culture and production of Italian oratorio in Rome. He was born in Tuscany, and at an early age went to live with his uncle, Giovanni Pasquini, in Ferrara, where he undertook serious musical studies. By 1650 he was in Rome, the city that would be his center of gravity for the rest of his career. He served as organist of the Chiesa Nuovo from 1657 to 1664. This was

the center of St Philip Neri’s activities and was essentially the birthplace of Italian oratorio. In 1664 he became organist of the important basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore and enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal Flavio Chigi. A few years later he was in the entourage of Prince Giovanni Battista Borghese, who supplied Pasquini a stable position for his musical activities. He and the prince visited many of the principal courts of Europe, and Pasquini cultivated his relationships with many prominent Roman families.

The work recorded here, *I Fatti di Mosè nel Deserto*, is one of a series of 8 oratorios by Pasquini and other composers to librettos by Giovanni Battista Gardini, secretary to Duke Francesco d’Este of Ferrara. It was first performed in 1687 in Modena. Program annotator Chiara Bertoglio points out that these oratorios have as much political as devotional significance, as they were possibly produced in response to a scandalous pamphlet of the time that maligned the Jewish patriarch.

In Part I of the oratorio, Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, arrives with his daughter Sephora in the Israelite camp. After a banquet in Jethro’s honor, Joshua is invited to recount the exploits of Moses. These include the transformation of the bitter waters of Mara into fresh water, the giving of manna, and bringing water from the rock. Part II is concerned with the battle of the Israelites against the Amalekites.

For most of us, the conception of baroque oratorio brings to mind the works of Handel. Pasquini’s work is decidedly low-key in comparison.

There are 4 solo singers: Moses (soprano), Joshua (mezzo soprano), a narrator (tenor), and Jethro (bass). The only choruses are at the conclusions of the two parts of the oratorio. It is conceivable that these might have been performed by a choir, but here they are sung by the 4 soloists. The instrumentation is confined to strings and continuo. Thomas Chigioni, conductor and harpsichordist for this performance, observes that the essential structure of the work is centered on the continuo. He takes great pains to match the character of the musical text to the timbres of the continuo realization. The harmony instruments in this performance are arclute, theorbo, chamber organ, and harpsichord. What overwhelmingly impressed me is Pasquini’s

capacity for lyrical invention. The piece is a continual stream of beautiful melody. Even the recitatives have more the character of arioso than secco recitative.

The soloists may not be well known in the English-speaking world, but they deliver an elegant and engaging performance, as do the instrumentalists. Ensemble Locatelli was founded in 2014 by Thomas Chigioni. They are based in Bergamo.

This is claimed as a first recording. It is of a concert performance given March 29, 2025, at the Donizetti Theater in Bergamo. The booklet does not include text and translation, but they are available at the label website. I had no difficulty downloading and printing the libretto as a PDF.

GATENS

PERGOLESI: *Romana Mass;*
Dixit Dominus

Hannah Morrison, s; David Allsopp, ct;
Stuttgart Chamber Choir & Baroque Orchestra/
Frieder Bernius

Hanssler 25045—53 minutes

If they gave an award for “Best Provider of Unknown Music We Are Lucky to Have Found”, Frieder Bernius would win it, hands down. Indeed, for excellent releases of Zelenka Masses, Nikolai Psalms, Kalliwo-da Symphonies, Homilius motets, and obscure works by lesser Bachs and their in-laws, he is still the champion. That trend continues here with a pair of delightful sacred works by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-36), the talented composer who trained, performed and composed in Naples and, alas, died from tuberculosis before reaching his 27th birthday. Crafted for soprano and alto soloists, choir and full orchestra, this Mass in F is a *Messa di Gloria* premiered in Naples in 1732. A version with a pair of ripieno choirs added was presented in Rome a couple of years later, and it’s that *Missa Romana* we’re presented with here. It is an ambitious work full of stylish counterpoint, colorful orchestral writing not only for strings but for woodwinds and brass, and taffy-pulling dissonances that will remind you of the beloved *Stabat Mater*, the composer’s Greatest Hit. Pergolesi was expert in his use of hypnotic arpeggios to support and resolve those tingly harmonies, so if you’re partial to interludes like the ‘Et in Terra Pax’ from Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, you’ll love this Mass and the also mellifluous set-

ting of Psalm 110. They are performed energetically but elegantly by the maestro and his versatile ensembles. (Recall that the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra is not a period band.) Both soloists are delightful in the *Romana* and in the *Dixit Dominus* which is zippier and a mite less churchy than the Mass. Hanssler’s sound is closer and richer than we sometimes hear on Bernius’s releases for Carus. The English notes are helpful, but it’s Latin and German only for the texts. A welcome release nevertheless.

GREENFIELD

Post: *The Well-Tempered Clavier*

Sam Post & Ralitzza Patcheva, p
Acis 53516 [2CD] 103 minutes

I can’t list this under Bach as an arrangement of Bach’s music. It is more an arrangement of the *sui generis* things that Glenn Gould did to Bach pianism in the 20th Century. Gould cultivated a touch where he detached almost all the notes, slammed accents loudly against other voices, and emphasized rhythmic drive ahead of other musical elements. When tempos changed, it was from Gould manhandling them. No French or Italian graceful mannerisms were permitted. It was “Glenn Gould’s Bach” more than “Bach’s music played by Gould”.

Sam Post, a self-proclaimed lifelong fan of Gould, has taken the score of Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* Book 1 and re-composed it as “well-tampered” piano pieces where he changed the rhythms in every bar of the music. He admits the Gould influences in his essay for the set. He explains what he is doing now with the rhythms, and why.

It is quite disorienting to listen to. This tampering is not simply a matter of swinging it into syncopation, or whatever, but he has inserted or deleted beats irregularly in every phrase. The meters change unpredictably, with notes repeated or deleted, sometimes elongated for disconnections of the contrapuntal parts. The performers are wholly confident with all these rhythmic alterations, and the harmony stays mostly the same way Bach wrote it, so everything holds together. When Post adds notes, they stay in the diatonic scales where they appear, preserving the tonality. The peppy pseudo-Gouldian articulative profiles are audible everywhere.

The music is never allowed to relax. What is he going to break in the next bar,

just as we might have got comfortable with a previous pattern for a few seconds? Will there be any connected or overlapped notes amid the prevailing staccato? Syncopation sounds like syncopation only as long as the underlying meter (in the bass) stays steady, like striding steps where the same foot is always the strong beat. Whenever some small part of a measure is deleted or extended, the syncopation disintegrates and the listener must find where the new downbeat is next expected to be.

This unsettling and off-balance venture goes on for 103 minutes. I advise hearing parts of it (on YouTube or on Post's own several websites) before deciding if you are up for this. With Post's additions and deletions, it reminds me of listening to a CD that is skipping with digital distortion and errors all the time, where the surface of the disc was damaged or dirty enough that the laser can't quite track it.

It sounds like what I imagine it might be like to have a neurological disorder where nerves are mis-firing all the time, and that somehow this replaces ordinary perception. (I am not suggesting any such disorder for Sam Post, but only reporting my discomfort trying to listen to this irritating "arrangement" of Bach's notes.)

In a perhaps better analogy, it is like thoroughly crumpling a page ripped from a glossy catalog, then opening it back out and trying to read the words and photos on the now three-dimensional surface. That smashed tampered page will never be flat again.

I wrote a somewhat similar experimental piece 30 years ago where I copied out a Bach fugue, but I altered about half the notes haphazardly by adding sharps or flats, and then I messed up the tempos along with non-simultaneous striking of the voices, to see how far the music could be stretched with such distortions. But I didn't make anyone listen to it more than once, and it was only 2 minutes long. Sam Post keeps us visiting such garish territory for more than an hour and a half. I had to run back to real Bach after each listening session.

Each pianist plays half the pieces, as indicated by a printed symbol crediting each track. They are so well matched that I could not pick out which of the 4 recording sessions and which pianist brought each piece to the assembled program. Ralitzia Patcheva's husband (cellist Vasily Popov)

produced the recording in a rented recital hall in Washington DC.

Patcheva's essay (printed before Post's own remarks) reads as if at least part of it might have been generated by an AI chatbot, cobbling together unrelated and misunderstood bits of pseudo-history about tuning. Such a background is irrelevant to this project, anyway, because they are using a modern grand piano in equal temperament. When she writes about Post and his music, her essay starts to make sense.

She and Post met years ago when they both had the same piano teacher, Irena Orlov. They launched this project together for the 300th anniversary of Bach's 1722 book, when he had prepared it for his new teaching job moving his family to Leipzig.

I have been enjoying Post's earlier album. "Post Bach", where he played some of Bach's preludes and fugues more straightforwardly and filled out his program with his own ragtime-inspired compositions. Both there and in the new set, it is obvious that Post grew up taking Gould's ways as the preferred manners for Bach's music. Some of his tempos were different from Gould's, but the aggressive articulation patterns and the overall brashness are instantly recognizable. But we can listen to Gould's own records if we want to hear that. The ragtime crossover is the part of Post's artistry that I like best.

LEHMAN

POULENC: *Metamorphoses; Banalities; Violin Sonata; 2 Poems; Engagement for Laughs 5; Oboe Sonata*

Hongyi Mo, v; John Estell, p
Azica 71382—48 minutes

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) is a fabulous composer, and this disc is a decent entry point for anybody unfamiliar with him. All-Poulenc violin discs are extremely rare, the playing here is not too bad, and the music is beautiful. Many of the pieces are transcriptions of Poulenc's songs by the artists themselves. Performers seem to transcribe and arrange more pieces than they did 5 or 10 years ago.

In terms of the playing, there are weaknesses. In the violin sonata, phrases get stuck, and the music sounds too literal. Lacking imagination, they rarely succeed in pulling listeners in. The oboe sonata is not played with enough tonal shades. The

Poems are beautiful, some of the finest playing on the recording. In the *Metamorphoses*, the violinist has an annoying habit of warming the vibrato up after notes begin. In *Banalities II*, the timing between leaps and intervals is not well understood. Leaps require a different time or rubato depending on how large the interval is and the context of the music. The shifts are often rushed, and the bow should fill in the gap, as if the violinist is singing through it. ‘The Ways of Love’, one of the *Banalities*, is great music, and violinists should take note for their own programming. Unfortunately the violinist does not seem to understand bel canto playing. Phrases need to continue singing through less important beats. There is no total playing time listed on the disc. Recordings should supply this common courtesy to customers.

KELLENBERGER

PPRICE: *Sonata I; Adoration; Caprice; Passacaglia & Fugue; Hour of Peace; Folksong Variations; Retrospection; Suite 1*

Tom Winpenny, org
Naxos 559956—68 minutes

Florence Price (1887-1953) is a composer who has recently emerged from relative obscurity. She worked for some years as a theater organist, so it is not surprising that organ music has a significant place in her output (M/J 2022).

Winpenny has produced another fine recording with a selection of her organ pieces including the large-scale, virtuosic *Sonata I*, modeled on Guilman’s first organ sonata; a fine *Passacaglia and Fugue* modeled on Bach’s; and a 4-movement *Suite 1* of varying moods. The *Variations on a Folksong* is a tour-de-force and her only organ piece based on a borrowed melody, in this case the spiritual ‘Peter, go ring dem bells’. The colorful and tuneful shorter pieces are effectively written for the organ, displaying her gift for miniatures.

Winpenny plays on a 4-manual, 119-stop 1939 EM Skinner in the Saalkirche in Ingelheim, Germany. It was moved to its present location in 2013 from the First Presbyterian Church of Passaic, New Jersey. It affords Winpenny a marvelous array of colors including chimes, celeste, and harp, which he employs most effectively. Excellent notes on the music with specification.

DEL CAMP

PROKOFIEFF: *Quartet 1*; see DVORAK

PURCELL: *Dido and Aeneas*

Joyce DiDonato (Dido), Michael Spyres (Aeneas), Fatma Said (Belinda), Beth Taylor (Sorceress), Laurence Kilsby (Sailor); Il Pomo d’Oro/ Maxim Emelyanychev

Erato 284884—52 minutes

Maxim Emelyanychev has elicited a marked difference of opinion in these pages. Mr Kellenberger found his piano performances in Brahms violin sonatas with Pritchkin “uneven and quirky” (M/A 2022). He has been the principal conductor of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra since 2019, but Mr Vroon found their recording of Schubert symphonies unbearable (M/A 2025). On the other hand, Emelyanychev is also the chief conductor of the period-instrument ensemble Il Pomo d’Oro, and his Handel recordings with that ensemble have been highly praised by Mr Barker (a “truly dramatic” *Serse*, M/A 2019), Mr Locke (a “highly dramatic and incisive” *Agrippina*, J/A 2020), and me (a *Theodora* where “every phrase is shaped with direction and purpose, the stirring numbers hair-raising, the rhapsodic numbers heavenly, the laments heartbreaking”, J/F 2024). Perhaps the theatrical instincts that make his operatic and oratorio performances so vivid register as quirky in instrumental repertoire.

Emelyanychev here presents Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* starring his familiar colleagues Joyce DiDonato and Michael Spyres in the title roles and the bewitching lyric soprano Fatma Said as Belinda. As one would expect, it’s a spirited and colorful performance, and DiDonato and Spyres are artists of the highest caliber. Yet there’s something lacking in terms of the opera’s emotional effect. I seem to be alone among critics on this point, so maybe it’s something about modern vocal technique that I’m particularly attuned to. To my ears, DiDonato’s glottal attacks put some distance between her and the material, in contrast to, say, Claire Watson, who sounds artless and sincere in the final scene with Aeneas. In that 1959 recording, Peter Pears has a soulfulness in his sound that is hard to define but unmistakable. Or listen to the simple beauty of Victoria De Los Angeles’s recording of ‘When I am laid in earth’, where the character’s suffering feels deeply personal. The finale of this opera should

leave the listener emotionally devastated; I didn't get that from this recording.

ALTMAN

PUTS: *Concerto for Orchestra; Silent Night Elegy; Virelai*

St Louis Symphony/ Stephane Deneve
Delos 3620—51 minutes

The music of Kevin Puts (b 1972) is in much demand with orchestras—he writes in an accessibly romantic, recognizably American tonal idiom. Sometimes his music is sentimental verging on trite, but his assured skill as an orchestral composer is undeniable.

Though it certainly calls attention to members of the orchestra, his *Concerto for Orchestra* (2023) is a breezy crowd-pleaser first, concertante display-piece second. It opens with a stirring hymn, resolutely in the inspirational “American” mode. Several of the following movements are miniatures: the energetic, drum-dominated ‘Caccia No. 1’ (II), the gentler ‘Music Box with Arietta’ (III), which sounds exactly like its title, and ‘Toccatà’ (IV), a windswept exchange between strings and winds, punctuated with a playful, bone-like rattling of mallet instruments. He loses me in the ‘Sicilienne’ (V); it is long and tiresome, beginning with an appearance of the hymn theme and continuing with several repetitions of a gentle, saccharine melody in various instruments of the orchestra, starting weakly with the piano. It is clearly positioned as the heart of the piece, but it is merely pretty, not beautiful. It is longer than all the previous movements combined; even at half its length it would overstay its welcome.

I perked back up with the final ‘Caccia No. 2’, an energetic and playful romp to the finish that finally seems to deliver (though not enough) the promise of a concerto for orchestra. It closes with a soaring appearance of the hymn theme in the brass.

Silent Night Elegy (2018) is quite a bit better and more substantial. It is an orchestral essay of sorts, drawing music from and following the narrative of his Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *Silent Night* (2012) about the 1914 Christmas Eve ceasefire of WWI. An introduction introduces the themes of the opera in the solo horn and cello, followed by a cacophonous layering of the martial songs of the 3 armies (French, German, and Scottish). This leads directly into a violent, terrifying battle sequence. The aftermath

brings a sense of shock, emptiness, and loneliness; and the soldiers extend the ceasefire to bury the dead. A bagpipe melody accompanies the funerary scenes, followed by the peaceful celebration of Christmas. This is interrupted by the bluster and anger of the generals of all 3 armies, who order the soldiers transferred to more dangerous areas of the front. The piece closes with a gentle, if slightly foreboding passage as the soldiers drift off to sleep, dreaming of home. It's a well-crafted work—I don't know the opera, but I easily followed the narrative. It's also the best, most assured and original music I've heard from Puts; it proves to me that he is a composer with imagination and depth of craft, who is capable of writing serious concert music that truly engages the listener. Perhaps he's at his best in his operas; I certainly hope that he brings more of this kind of writing to his concert works.

The album closes with a short curtain-raiser, ‘Virelai’ (2019) based on a tune by Machaut. The melody starts small in the flute, harp, and pizzicato strings, growing in volume and intensity until it is played by the entire orchestra—like a compressed *Bolero*.

This is an important release for followers of Puts, especially for the *Silent Night Elegy*. Despite my misgivings with the concerto, I enjoy its breezy thrills. Deneve and the St Louis Symphony give exceptional performances. Sound is excellent.

FARO

RACHMANINOFF: *Suites 1+2; Symphonic Dances*

Eric Zuber, Boris Slutsky, p
Azica 71384—77 minutes

This well-filled disc has all of Rachmaninoff's best music for piano duo. I adored and ingested Ashkenazy & Previn's 1970s recordings (Decca 444845) back in my 20s. Later I acquired the suites combined with Arensky's own Suites 1 and 2 in the Great Pianists series, performed by Bruk & Taimanov (Philips 456736, M/J 1999). The B&T sound varies from close to distant, and the performances are reliably atmospheric and lush. Arensky likely inspired Rachmaninoff's own suites, so it's good to hear them together. Alexeev & Demidenko (Hyperion 66654, N/D 1994) are fastest of all, their superhuman ensemble breathtaking. They play just Suite 2 and *Symphonic Dances*

along with Medtner's excellent *2 Pieces*, Opus 58. That disc is a real thrill ride.

Zuber & Slutsky hew closest to the ardor and patience of Bruk & Taimanov in the suites and to the soul and power of Ashkenazy & Previn in the *Dances*. You can hear the pianists listening to and reacting to each other. Their spontaneous and effortless flexibility never devolves into messy self-indulgence. I rarely hear this sort of give-and-take from piano duos, who mostly prize unanimity and ensemble, so this must be hard to do. Their thrilling finale of *Dances* is 45 seconds faster than even Alexeev & Demidenko. Combined with perfectly regulated and tuned pianos and resonant spacious sound, I think Zuber & Slutsky probably displace Ashkenazy & Previn as my new favorite in this repertory.

WRIGHT

RACHMANINOFF: *Symphonic Dances*;

BARBER: *Souvenirs*;

PIAZZOLLA: *Milonga del Angel*; *La Muerte del Angel*; *Soledad*

Larissa Dedova, Daria Scarano, p

Centaur 4159—72 minutes

At 36 minutes, this is the slowest *Symphonic Dances* for piano duo that I know. The orchestral arrangement is often this slow, so maybe Dedova & Scarano are emulating it. Their languors are not damaging to I and II. The third dance is marked *Allegro vivace*; at 14-1/2 minutes, there's nothing lively about it. It feels more like *Andante*. The ladies do savor a few pungent dissonances that pass quickly in other hands, like the other and preferred hands of Zuber & Slutsky (above) and Ashkenazy & Previn. I think it's a mistake to impose imaginary orchestral tempos on pianos that, of course, cannot sustain notes for very long: the thread is lost, the connections are severed.

Samuel Barber's nostalgic neo-dance-hall *Souvenirs* are taken at leisurely tempos as well—much to their benefit. This arrangement for 2 pianos is to my ears identical to Barber's 4-hands original. The fastest pieces—'Two-step' and 'Galop'—are given room to breathe and time enough to flaunt their considerable charms. The whole suite is a delight.

Astor Piazzolla's tangos here sound quite good reduced to pianos alone by Paolo Ziegler. I don't miss the colors of bandoneon, violin, cello, or electric guitar at all.

The reduction in forces lets the listener appreciate and admire Piazzolla's craft and skill in distilled form. This last 17 minutes is the most moving and compelling section: the recital keeps getting better as it goes.

WRIGHT

RAFF: *Piano Suites 1*

Hyelim Kim—Grand Piano 957—58 minutes

The prolific Swiss composer Joachim Raff (1822-82) was largely self-taught, became Liszt's assistant in Weimar, and later lived and taught in Wiesbaden. He became very famous thanks to his 11 symphonies and many other works, but was forgotten quickly after he died. That fact is easier to understand than the fame he enjoyed previously. Although his music is always pleasant to listen to, it never makes a deep impression.

He wrote 7 suites for piano solo, of which Nos. 1, 3, and 5 are in this first installment. Suites No.1 in A minor, Op. 69, and No. 3 in E minor, Op. 72, appeared in the same year (1857) and are quite similar. Each has 5 movements, beginning with a flowing prelude and ending with a lively staccato fugue, with an etude-like toccata (or 'Toccatina') the middle. The second piece of No. 1 is a not very mazurka-like 'Mazurka', playful and quirky, whereas No. 3's II is a not very minuet-like 'Minuetto', rather fast and with many notes. The fourth pieces, titled 'Aria' and 'Romanza', are lyrical, with some passion in the latter.

Suite No. 5 in G minor, Op. 162, is a later (1870) and more ambitious work in 4 movements, lasting longer than the two earlier suites together. It begins with a not very elegy-like 'Elegy in Sonata Form', romantic in character but flowing like Bach and rather too long. Then comes a banal folk song theme with variations that are not much more interesting, though they have lots of notes. This empty liveliness also characterizes the next two pieces, 'Ländler' and 'Fairy Tale', as it does some of Raff's chamber music that I am familiar with.

All this is quite nice to hear, but it is not memorable. The young Korean pianist, who studied in Germany, gives us clear and sufficiently expressive performances in excellent sound.

REPP

RAMEAU: *Pygmalion*; **ISO:** *Zemide*

Reinoud Van Mechelen (*Pygmalion*), Gwendoline Blondeel (*L'Amour*), Ema Nikolovska (*Cephise, Zemide*), Virginie Thomas (*The Statue*), Philippe Estephe (*Phasis*); Namur Chamber Choir; *A Nocte Temporis*/ Reinoud Van Mechelen

Versailles 174—78 minutes

It was an inspired idea to pair two operaballets from the French Baroque period for an evening's entertainment. Rameau's *Pygmalion* (1748) has been recorded a number of times, but this is the world premiere recording of Pierre Iso's *Zemide* (1745). Rameau's opera deals with the familiar story of *Pygmalion* falling in love with his own creation. Iso's libretto is more original, relating the story of the troubled relationship between *Zemide* and *Phasis* and how *Cupid (L'Amour)* helps them resolve their differences and come together.

French Baroque opera can be an acquired taste. There tends to be a lot of recitative, more like stylized speech, not always bursting with musical inspiration. As with Italian opera of the time the individual arias were tailored to the strengths of the singers who were involved, but the French arias are usually less virtuosic than what the Italians wrote and can get tiresome quickly. In both works presented here the composers use the chorus sparingly. It should be remembered that dancers supplied a lot of the visual stimulation in these works and the variety of rhythms and dance styles counted for a lot. On an audio-only recording we're only getting half the experience, as it were.

The performances here are well done—these are specialists in this type of music. Reinoud Van Mechelen has recorded a number of discs with music from this period (there is a program of Mozart tenor concert arias coming soon). His rather wispy voice suits this repertoire, though I wouldn't enjoy hearing him try to sing anything much later than Mozart. His *haute-contre* voice may be more appealing to others, yet I'll certainly admit he makes an effective case for the music he performs. Gwendoline Blondeel sings *L'Amour (Cupid)* in both works, her voice fresh and appealing. Ema Nikolovska sings the small role of *Cephise* in *Pygmalion* and then the title role in *Zemide*. Her singing is also attractive as is

Virginie Thomas's, heard briefly as the *Statue* brought to life by *Cupid*. Philippe Estephe sings *Phasis*, *Zemide's* love interest, in the *Iso* opera; it's a relief to hear a lower voice and darker timbre after all the higher voices. The Namur Chamber Choir offers just the right support, as does a *nocte temporis* (no capital letters). Mechelen leads both performances with love and spirit. The sound is appropriately intimate.

Versailles offers a beautiful booklet with detailed notes, full texts and translation, and a number of full color art reproductions.

REYNOLDS

RAVEL: *Le Tombeau de Couperin; Mother Goose; La Valse; Une Barque Sur l'Océan; Pavane for a Dead Princess; Rhapsodie Espagnole; Bolero; Daphnis & Chloe*
Radio France Chorus; French National Orchestra/ Cristian Macelaru

Naive 9018 [3CD] 3:02

The music world isn't exactly screaming for more recordings of Ravel's orchestral music, but these performances recorded in February and March 2025 at a festival celebrating 150th anniversary of Ravel's birth are very fine ones in their own right.

Le Tombeau has 2 extra movements, the *Fugue (II)* and *Toccata (VI)* from the original piano suite, orchestrated by David Molard Soriano in 2021. So the *Rigaudon* moves back to its original position, before the *Minuet*, rather than after, as it appears in the standard orchestral version. The *Toccata* caps off the suite as thrillingly as the *Rigaudon*. Mr Molard's orchestrations are so idiomatic that if you told me that hitherto lost orchestrations by Ravel himself recently had been discovered, I would believe it.

The orchestra would not dare play Ravel anything but superbly, which they do here, and conductor Macelaru really has a magnificent grasp of Ravel's idiom, light and unforced but not lightweight or frivolous. And he's not afraid to give the music plenty of free rein: for example, I love the little portamentos at the beginning of *La Valse*.

In Macelaru's hands, *Une Barque* is suitably serene and luminous, the *Pavane* played with pathos but not extreme tragedy, and *Alborada del Gracioso* and the *Rapsodie Espagnol* have plenty of verve, counterbalanced by the languid, atmospheric passages and the right Spanish flavor. This just really

is the way we expect these pieces to go—no new, startling insights, just very, very fine music-making and an understanding of Ravel's unique sound world.

There are SO many recordings of *Bolero*, we hardly need another—and we all have our favorites. This one is more than “serviceable”, and if you want a solid, well-balanced, straightforward performance of this thrice-familiar piece, Macelaru's will do nicely.

Likewise, *Daphnis et Chloe* already has “definitive” recordings from the Boston Symphony under Munch (RCA, brilliantly, pungently played, very good sound) and the Montreal Symphony under Dutoit (Decca, lush orchestra, fantastic sonics). Like the *Bolero*, Macelaru's take on this score (yes, we do get the complete ballet here, not the suites) is atmospheric and exciting, especially in the build-up to the very end. The crisp, atmospheric choral work in *Daphnis* is particularly luminous.

Naive is known for excellent sonics, and here they do not disappoint us. The orchestra comes across as luminous and lush but not at the expense of smearing the detail that is so important in Ravel's instrumentation. I like the solid weight to the bass that does not lapse into exaggerated or “punchy”; and the important woodwind parts are cleanly, crisply delineated—much of the credit there goes to the players and Macelaru, of course.

One caution: this set comes in the compact, lightweight cardboard folding slipcases that more and more record companies are using. As often, the cardboard sleeves are so tight that it's difficult to wrinkle the discs out of them without taking a pinchhold and leaving fingerprints on the surface. Have your micro-fiber cloth ready to remove those prints.

If you're perhaps not a Ravel fanatic but just want one-stop shopping for excellent recordings of his major orchestral works (minus the piano concertos), you have found it!

HANSEN

There are people who are not sensitive to noise; but they are just the very people who are not sensitive to argument or thought or poetry or art—to any kind of intellectual influence.... Noise is a torture to intellectual people.

—SCHOPENHAUER

RAVEL: *Rapsodie Espagnole;*
Alborada del Gracioso;

DEBUSSY: *Iberia;*

IBERT: *Escales*

Buffalo Philharmonic/ JoAnn Falletta
Naxos 574615—58 minutes

The title for this disc is “The French in Spain”. It could also be called “JoAnn Falletta and the Buffalo Philharmonic take 3 French composers to Spain”.

Maurice Ravel was born in Basque country very near Spain. His mother was Basque, and he visited Spain a few times. Claude Debussy was fascinated by Spain, though he spent only a day there for a bullfight. In any case, here we have music by 3 French composers written in a Spanish style and performed by an American conductor and orchestra.

At first I found the interpretations clinical, square, and not particularly French or Spanish in style, but repeated hearings produced a more positive reaction. I would not want them as my only recordings of these works; but they are spirited, colorful, and entertaining, and the sound is very good. French music specialist Caroline Potter's booklet notes dealing with the role Spain played in influencing French composers are quite interesting.

Ravel's *Alborada del Gracioso* is warm, full sounding, not overdone in the louder passages, and the quick rhythmic parts are nicely executed. It begins on the light side but takes on weight as it goes along and is especially deft in the delicate passages. The soft section creates an airy orchestral ambience with a solo bassoon representing a sad clown, and the ending is rousing. The heavier music is good, too.

Through all these performances the solo trumpet plays with subtle attacks that work well in these works. The first movement of *Rapsodie Espagnole* is stylish and especially effective in the mysterious opening and the soft sections. II is not too fast or heavy and leans a bit to Impressionism. III sounds light in weight with good rhythm. IV is light in weight and deft in execution.

Debussy's *Iberia* is the middle movement of his *Images for Orchestra*, but it is often treated as a separate piece. (The other 2 movements of *Images* are ‘Gigues’ and ‘Rondes de printemps’.) *Iberia* has its own 3 movements: ‘Along the streets and along

the paths', 'Scents of the night', and 'Morning of a festival day'. This performance of I is energetic and mostly on the fast side with a nice flow and a reflective slow section. The very different II is nocturnal, atmospheric, dark, and mysterious, and III enters without pause. Falletta handles the mood changes well, evokes clarity in the long delicate passage, and the festivities end with a nice whoop.

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962) was the most modern and least known of these composers. During the Great War, he served as a nurse and stretcher-bearer, but after a bout of paratyphoid, he reenlisted in the navy and by war's end was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre* and *Legion d'Honneur*. In 1919, he entered the *Prix de Rome* competition. On his first attempt he won first prize, part of which was a residency in Rome where in 1922 he wrote *Escapes* (a Catalan word that in French means stairs and in English, stopovers on a trip.) *Escapes* is a musical travelog inspired by his honeymoon trip with his wife, sculptor Rose-Marie Veber on the Mediterranean that began in Spain with a visit to Ibert's cousin, Manuel de Falla. Each movement reflects a city the couple encountered on that voyage. I depicts Rome to Palermo, II continues on to Tunis, and III goes to Valencia.

HECHT

RAVEL: *Violin Sonata 2;*

SAINT-SAENS: *The Swan; Violin Sonata 1*
David Park, v; Alex Marshall, p
Centaur 4144—47 minutes

Balance derails the entire disc. It is dreadfully difficult to listen to. It strongly skews in favor of the violin, and not only the volume; the timbre of the piano is fuzzier, so that it is hard to imagine the two together as if they are involved in the same performance. This is the fault of the engineering, most likely microphone style and placement. The style is mostly good in II of Ravel, but the pizzicato notes have too indefinite a sound. The quality of the violin sound in III is not good, nor is the style, nor is the phrasing. Ambient noises in the violin's sound appear in the Saint Saens—an unfortunate distraction. It is not good playing. In I, the character is too rough and agitated in places that should be serene. The nature of slurs and slurring is ignored. The violin continues to bury the piano when it is supposed to accompany,

and there is almost no color palette in the violin, no sensitive response to harmony or phrasing. The style is not right in III, both in the displacement of metric accents and of syncopations. The violin does not sing the melody when it has it. IV is played like an etude. It is boring music to begin with, but it is directionless playing that sound bad. What makes it worse is that one senses genuine conviction behind the playing. But without knowledge of or feeling for a piece's style, and without good sound, conviction is an annoyance that manifests as delusion.

KELLENBERGER

RENDANO: *Piano Concerto; Allegro in A minor*

Daniela Roma, p; Oldenburg Orchestra/ Vito Cristofaro, p

Dynamic 8081—57 minutes

The fame of Alfonso Rendano (1853-1931) seems to have rested mainly on his piano playing, but he also composed some 70 piano pieces, a piano quintet, and an opera, *Consuelo*. Much of his work is unpublished, and there is no thematic catalog. His style is suggestive of Liszt, who in fact invited Rendano to Weimar for 3 months in 1880 and became godfather to Rendano's third child. The two were close, and in fact this concerto's opening movement was at one point arranged for 2 pianos and performed by Rendano and Liszt. The music is sometimes bombastic (crashing chords with lots of rhythmic energy), sometimes overrun with passage work for virtuosic effect. It does tend to ramble without much in the way of distinctive thematic material. Both the concerto and the *Allegro in A minor* supply interesting looks at second-tier music from this period, but I doubt that we have any undiscovered gems here.

At any rate the performances are quite fine. Daniela Roma is very convincing with music that is often challenging, and conductor Vito Cristofaro holds things together well with the Oldenburg orchestra.

ALTHOUSE

RENIE: *Trio;*

ESMAIL: *Saans;*

NEGRON: *Ave del Paraiso*

Ember—Azica 71383—48 minutes

Google "Ember", and you'll come up with a California heavy metal band, a North Car-

olina beach band, and a country pop rock band from the Midwest, among others. The Ember group performing here is: Emily Levin, principal harp of the Dallas Symphony; Julia Choi, a violinist in the Met Orchestra since 2019; and cellist Christine Lamprea, winner of the 2018 Sphinx Medal of Excellence. The trio specializes in new works by living composers.

They play works by dead ones, too, like Henriette Renié (1875-1956). The liner notes say that her Trio (1901) was the first major work written for harp, violin, and cello (30 minutes, 4 movements)—and an excellent one it is with its echoes of Ernest Chausson and Cesar Franck. It works much like a piano trio with the harp and strings constantly reversing roles as solo duo and accompanist. In I their lyrical playing is enhanced by an almost rhetorical use of rubato. Renié's motifs rely on set phrases developed via constant modulations and shifts from major to minor. She has a cleverness that never wears out my interest over 10 minutes (pity I can't say the same about the album's other two works). II is called a scherzo, but here it is played with a lighter romantic buoyancy. III is a long-lined, good old-fashioned 7-minute Romance. In the circular introduction to the finale, the composer summarizes the earlier themes with imaginative tiny twists, and then wraps up the Trio with some French *frisson*. The playing, ensemble, balances, and engineering are superb.

The playing is just as superb in the album's other two works. The problem is that neither composer is nearly as clever. *Saans* by Reena Esmail (born in Chicago in 1983) is the slow movement of her Clarinet Concerto adapted for harp, violin, and cello for the wedding of close friends. This is its world premiere recording. It's a purely romantic work whose paucity of ideas makes it seem stuck in gear. Little flourishes fail to give it a sense of development. When I checked how much time had passed on this 9-minute work, I thought it would be near the end. Surprise! 5 minutes to go.

More of the same with *Ave del Paraiso* (Bird of Paradise—the colorful flower) by Angelica Negron (b 1981, Puerto Rico). Its 9 minutes verge more toward pop music, or even the public radio program "Music from the Hearts of Space" (contemplative ambient, new-age, electronic, classical, Celtic, experimental jello) with Negron's circular

repetition of modulations and motifs. Once again, at 5:45 minutes I thought it was ending. Egads! 3:15 to go! My spouse walked into the room. I asked, "How does this strike you?" The reply: "Depressing. Funeral music." (I wouldn't go that far.)

Nonetheless, both the Esmail and Negron are superbly played and recorded.

FRENCH

RIES: *Symphonies 6+7*

Tapiola Sinfonietta/ Janne Nisonen
Ondine 1476—64 minutes

Ferdinand Ries (1784-1838) was a friend and something of a protégé of Beethoven. In a relatively short life, he wrote about 300 works, including 3 operas, 8 symphonies, and 9 concertos. The symphonies here are from 1822 and 1835. Symphony 6 has a slow introduction, which, like the Schumann 2nd, furnishes material for the entire work. Its construction is compact and sound. Ries's use of hemiolic (2 against 3) rhythms gives the development some character. The scherzo contrasts the thicker scoring of its outer section with the many solo woodwind lines in the trio. The slow movement adds chromatic backup lines to its themes and leads *attacca* into the finale. That movement has the character of a lively rustic dance, with echoes of the scherzo of Beethoven's *Pastorale* Symphony. A composer could do a lot worse than call up memories of that masterpiece.

Symphony 7 has a dramatic opening whose subject so dominates the movement that at first it sounds monothematic. It's unrelentingly in the minor mode. The scherzo keeps a steady basic pulse but applies it to differing meters. The slow movement is fluent and gracious. IV has a slow introduction with a dotted-note theme dominating the following allegro. The conclusion anticipates Schumann's *Spring* Symphony by suddenly halting its forward motion near the end for a solo cadenza.

Ries's music, if not on Beethoven's level, is concisely built. His scoring is always transparent, and his work generally has enough pleasant surprises to avoid merely becoming Biedermeier Muzak.

The Tapiola Sinfonietta has about 50 players. Their performances here are spirited and sensitive. Janne Nisonen conducts with both attention and flexibility. (Do they have talent forests in Finland where they

grow stands of good conductors?) The slow movements are both marked "Larghetto con moto". Nisonen takes the latter direction seriously in the best way, adding forward motion as well as charm to the music. Notes, some by Nisonen himself, are excellent.

O'CONNOR

ROTA: *Piano Pieces 2*

Eleanor Hodgkinson
Grand Piano 828—73 minutes

Grand Piano continues its exploration of Nino Rota's solo piano music. This is a mixed bag of selections, all very interesting. Two of the longer pieces are the 'Variazioni e Fuga Nei Dodici Toni Sul Nome di Bach' and 'Suite del Casanova di Federico Fellini'. They are very different. The 'Variazioni' is an inventive blending of straightforward melodies that are often repeated then reversed, transposed, and rearranged so they all seem somewhat different. The variations include chorales, fugues, and running scales that sometimes sound like Bach with a modern twist. The *Casanova Suite* is delicate and picaresque, somewhat like a 18th Century music box, to accompany the narrative of Fellini's film.

The other 8 selections include waltzes, bagatelles, and 2 excellent pieces: one from the Moliere ballet *Le Moliere Imaginaire*, which is a lovely, melancholy waltz, and the other a piano version of 'The Legend of Glass Mountain' from the 1949 film. The film deals with a precarious mountain climb, and the music is dark and foreboding. Ms Hodgkinson's playing is expert and she knows what to emphasize in these scores. Excellent sound.

FISCH

RUDERS: *Symphonies 1-6*

Fleming Dreisig, org; Danish National Symphony/ Leif Segerstam, Michael Schoenwandt, Olari Elts; Odense Symphony/ Scott Yoo, Roberto Minczuk, Christopher Liechtenstein
Bridge 9606 [3CD] 166 minutes

The music of prominent Danish composer Poul Ruders (b. 1949) is unconventional and thoroughly original. Postmodern in approach and post-tonal in language, he composes without regard to trends or styles; each is fair game if it fulfills the conceptual, aesthetic, and thematic goals of a given

work. His colors are bold, textures complex, and musical temperament mercurial, often juxtaposing brutal moments with passages of serenity. His cycle of 6 symphonies demonstrates the wide range of his writing and styles; this release brings together all of them for the first time. We have reviewed these performances of 1, 3, and 5 (1: Chandos 9179, J/A 1994; 3: Bridge 9382, M/A 2013 and 9553, J/A 2021; 5: Bridge 9475, M/J 2017). For comparison's sake, I will still give a description of all 6 below.

The first symphony (1989) is a response to a Goethe quote: "Himmelhoch jauchzend—zum Tode betrübt" (to heaven rejoicing—cast down until death). It is an intense and somewhat pessimistic work. I opens with a dramatic, wild fanfare that slips into dark despair as it deforms a chorale from Bach's Christmas Oratorio. In the middle of the violence he places an early German carol, quiet and lonely, in the low piccolo and piano. In his words: "...the ancient concept of Yuletide as happy, a harbinger of peace for all mankind, collides with our knowledge of modern Christmas deprived of innocence." This concept is rendered effectively—bringing to mind Prokofiev 3 and especially the contemporary Corigliano 1.

II is a calm, serene (or possibly disconcertingly static) movement using only B-flat minor and D-flat major chords, like a tonal 'Atmospheres' in the mode of late Gorecki. The constancy is broken up by slight rhythmic changes and shifting shades of color. It roars back into gear with a whirlwind of a scherzo, effectively a prelude to the arresting finale, 'Death Mask'. Like II, it is characterized by one extended harmonic moment, this time a chilling cluster above a martial heartbeat. The cluster is slowly pared into a static visage, a scream frozen in time. He gives us a hopeful coda with a gentle return of the German carol—a candle in the darkness.

Symphony 2 (1996) is smaller and more inward, though no less intense and dissonant in language and affect. It is subtitled *Symphony and Transformation*, though the transformation is not so much organic evolution but distortion. He uses his method of "minimorphosis" to make minute augmentations and diminutions to create dense layers of polyphony from a melody out of phase with itself, as well as to change the trajectory of the piece itself.

His 2-movement Symphony 3 (2006, rev. 2009) is subtitled *Dreamcatcher*, though instead of capturing good dreams, here they are subsumed into darkness. A prickly opening yields to a warm, serene theme in the strings, which is gradually developed, fading into the unsettled language of its surroundings. It disappears completely into II, a savage, nasty scherzo—as he aptly puts it, beauty devoured by the beast.

Symphony No. 4 (2009) is comparatively approachable. It is an organ symphony, rather more so than the famous Saint-Saens in that the organ forms a soloistic obligato (though not concertante) role. Across its 4 movements, it is as if the organ and orchestra gradually awaken to themselves and their combined potential, first with a slow, hushed prelude, then an imposing processional, and finally a fleet, frenzied etude into a scintillating, monumental chaconne that absolutely blows the roof off. There's a degree of historiography at play here, with quotes and allusions—such as a striking chorale moment in the finale—that perhaps point to the organ's character across time. It's probably Ruders's most crowd-pleasing symphony.

For Symphony 5 (2013) he abandoned his initial subtitle *Ring of Fire* for overuse in the repertory, but it describes the work well. I is a high-energy rondo of sorts; a euphoric theme in the brass is met with a flurry of frenetic strings. II is a calm, if slightly ominous and foreboding center to the work. III completes the ring with relentless, brutal movement that seems to swallow everything in its path.

Symphony 6 (2021) is the shortest as well as the most restrained. It plods at a solemn, measured pace, widening and constricting as it moves forward, gathering more material into its density. This mass of sound gains subtle, interesting color from gongs and a quarter-tuned piano. When it finally fades away, it is airy yet heavy, like a bank of fog.

Performances and sound are superb. It is rare that living composers get to see a release of a full cycle of their symphonies and even rarer that they are as deserving and well performed as these. Ruders should be quite happy—and his admirers even happier.

FARO

RUEHR: *Quartets 9,10,11*

ES Quartet—Avie 2798—56:25

Elena Ruehr (born in 1963) is from Boston and has had a positive reception in ARG. Charles Parsons praised her opera *Toussaint before the Spirits* (M/J 2007). Philip Greenfield enjoyed her choral music (J/F 2013). Allen Gimbel liked her orchestral music (M/J 2015). Stephanie Ann Boyd extolled the “beauty, sensitivity, and decisiveness” of her first 6 quartets (M/J 2018, new).

Quartets 7 and 8 were reviewed by Nathan Faro in Sept/Oct 2022, and he found the music “refreshingly direct and straightforward”, never overwrought or governed by process. He even called it entertaining.

In other words, this is music in the grand tradition. It does not try to be shocking or “original”, but it does manage to sound beautiful. I listen to hundreds of new music recordings, and I consider this among the best.

She calls these her “northern” quartets. They are titled *Keweenaw*, *Long Pond*, and *Rekjavik*. They are about 20 minutes each. The last movement of 11 sounds much like *Appalachian Spring*—country music, even fiddle music, and folklike (but not Icelandic!).

This group of players makes a beautiful sound, which helps.

VRON

RUTTER: *In the Poet's Garden*

Melanie Marshall, mz; Roderick Williams, bar; Catrin Finch, hp; Matthew Jorysz, p; Cambridge Singers; Taplow Young Voices; Royal Philharmonic/ John Rutter

Collegium 141—73 minutes

John Rutter is much beloved as a conductor and composer of choral music. In his notes he writes, “Second only to music, words are my great love, and from my earliest years I have enjoyed seeking out poetry that seems to invite musical setting. This album brings together some of my recent choral music where the words supplied the first inspiration and the music followed.”

The album begins with his 2022 setting of James Weldon Johnson's ‘I'll Make Me a World’, an homage to the poet's familiar musical world of Broadway, blues, gospel, and jazz—Rutter incorporates those ele-

ments into this setting. At 18:25 it is the longest piece here.

The album includes: *London Town* (2019), a 7-part celebration of what makes London unique; *Dancing Tree* (2024), 7 settings of poems by Cornish poet Charles Causley for choir and harp; 'When Music Sounds' (2022) with text by Walter de la Mare; and 3 *Shakespeare Songs* (2017).

'Be Not Afeard' captures the eeriness of *The Tempest*. I would never have guessed this was by Rutter. It was my favorite piece of the album.

Almost everything here sounds like what we expect from Rutter. The performances are fine.

Notes by Rutter. Texts.

R MOORE

RUTTER: Clare College Celebration

Clare Benediction; Ave Maria; The Lord Bless You and Keep You; Ukrainian Prayer; Gaelic Blessing; Bard's Eye View; Nativity Carol; Christ is the Morning Star; Gift of Life

Choir of Clare College, Cambridge; Dmitri Ensemble/ Graham Ross

Harmonia Mundi 902764-67 minutes

It is fitting that the singers from Clare have become part of Sir John's 80th birthday celebration. Rutter, after all, studied at the college before he was named its first full-time music director in 1975. His sons attended Clare, the school has honored him many times over the years, and he has produced several recordings released by the choir, including this one. The collection has a few of Rutter's Greatest Hits like the 'Nativity Carol', 'Gaelic Blessing', and 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You', as well as newer offerings like the 3 clever and engaging Shakespeare settings: *Bard's Eye View*, the 2015 *Gift of Life* with a chamber ensemble replacing the full orchestra, and an a cappella version of the 'Ukrainian Prayer'. I admired everything except the decision to substitute a saccharine instrumental version of 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You' for the choral one. If you've spent any time in the choir room over the past half-century, you have sung the music of John Rutter, and this program offers a nice opportunity to celebrate his remarkable career.

Allow me one personal reflection. In March of 2020, I sang Rutter's *Mass for the Children*, including the portions for solo

baritone. It had been a while since I'd stood alone in front of a full orchestra and I was thrilled to have the opportunity. 5 days after that Saturday night concert, the pandemic shutdown went into effect and it would be a long, long time before any of us sang together again. Through that sad and lonely period, I was sustained by the memory of that concert. Happy Birthday, Sir John, and thank you.

GREENFIELD

SAINT-SAENS: *Violin Sonata*; see RAVEL

SANCHO: *Songs and Dances*

Sonya Headlam, s; Raritan Players/ Rebecca Cypess, p

Centaur 4156—56:40

Many modern discussions of Ignatius Sancho (died 1780) rely on details from a posthumous biography which modern scholars have shown to be inconsistent with the few statements he wrote about his own background. It is clear that he considered himself African and was forced into slavery, most likely either in a British colony or in England. At a young age he arrived in England and was eventually taken in by members of the Montagu family. He was supplied with a basic education and support, which eventually led to his freedom, the purchase of a small grocery business, and the right to vote. Through the Montagus he also developed a circle of supporters, including Lawrence Stern, David Garrick, and Thomas Gainsborough, who painted his portrait, an engraving of which is on the cover of this new release. The 2 volumes of Sancho's letters, printed after he died, document the breadth of his knowledge and his large circle of correspondents.

While working for the Montegus, Sancho's musical talent must have been evident and he probably got a suitable musical education. There are 5 musical publications ascribed to him, the first 3 stating that the music had been composed by "an African"; Sancho had also been known to write to the press under the pseudonym "Africanus". His collection of *Cotillions &c.*, printed around 1776, was dedicated to Charlotte, the Princess Royal, eldest daughter of King George III, by which time he was comfortable stating that it was composed "by Her Royal Highness's most obedient servant, Ignatius Sancho".

At the core of this collection are the 6 songs he published around 1769 and dedicated to Mrs James Brudenell (born as Anne Legge), whose husband was directly related to the Montegu family. The collection started with Sancho's setting of 'Take, oh take those Lips away' from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, 2 songs from David Garrick's *Ode on Dedicating a Building to Shakespeare*, better known from a setting of the complete Ode by Thomas Arne, 2 anonymous lyrics, 'Anacreon Ode XXIII' and the Scotch Song, 'Kate of Aberdeen', and ends with a lyric by "by a young lady", 'Friendship, Source of Joy'. These are very much in the style of English theater songs, such as ones by John Gay and Johann Christoph Pepusch in *Beggar's Opera* (1728), set for voice and continuo with cues for short instrumental preludes, interludes, and postludes.

The remaining tracks are a judicious selection of 27 short dances from the other 4 published collections of minuets, cotillions, and country dances, often published with dancing instructions. The dances are printed so that they could be played on a keyboard, though the title of the first collection indicates it was composed "for the Violin, Mandolin, German Flute, & Harpsichord". All 5 of the minuets which were printed with additional parts for 2 horns, and one 'Air for German Flute, Violin, and Bass' are also included on the recording. Aside from the 2 horns, the music is performed by a variety of combinations of flute, violin, cello, and an English square piano made by Johannes Zumpe in 1780, which is played by the director, Rebecca Cypess. The recording also includes 5 other works: an abridged version of Arne's setting of 'Sweetest Bard', and Jonathan Battishill's 'Kate of Aberdeen', and 3 anonymous horn duets.

The interpretation of these works is engaging, especially Sonya Headlam's performance of the songs. There may have been ways to arrange all the short dances into smaller groups and place the 6 songs, the 4 minuets with horns, and the 5 supplemental pieces as interludes for a more imaginative program. This is at present the only available collection of Sancho's music. It is unfortunate, especially since there was still space available, that verses were omitted from Songs 4 and 5, both of which do include an additional wordless "instrumental" verse. As is evident from the title pages,

there are many ways to arrange these works, and while the performers on this release, especially Ms Cypess, who adds variations to 2 of the tunes, supply appropriate versions, this recording should help stimulate others to adapt, perform, and dance to the works of Sancho, especially the as yet unrecorded 56 remaining dances.

BREWER

SCARLATTI: 15 Sonatas

Javier Perianes, p

Harmonia Mundi 902768 — 68 minutes

13 Sonatas; KURTAG: Jatekok excerpts

Andras Schiff, p

Audite 97.838 — 75 minutes

Javier Perianes (b 1978) plays the sonatas K 125, 128, 141, 185, 193, 238, 263, 380, 386, 447, 448, 462, 466, 491, and 492 on a Steinway piano in Hanover, Germany. More than half of these are the familiar sonatas from dozens of other single-disc Scarlatti recitals on piano.

If you've heard his Mendelssohn *Rondo Capriccioso* or *Variations Serieuses*, his Grieg Lyric Pieces, his Debussy preludes, his Chopin sonatas, or his Ravel *Tombeau de Couperin*, you will know what to expect here. Perianes offers an impeccably prepared surface with beautiful tone, no spontaneity, and a frequent reluctance to dig into deeper meanings of each phrase. We get "nice" inoffensively bland piano playing. After forming my "so what?" opinion from listening through his Scarlatti program, I listened to the above-mentioned recordings and I read all 15 ARG reviews of his work over the years, searching the Index. It's not my imagination: the other reviewers have heard some similar patterns in his artistry.

This Scarlatti recital sounds mostly like a technical exercise in evenness, with light detached notes that are consistent and therefore uninteresting. As part of that surface, his mild embellishments encrust the melodic lines as formulaic insertions without making the phrases more intense or beautiful. Once Perianes has chosen which rack to pull his ornaments from—and not always a historically plausible rack (such as adding affected lower terminations to so many long trills), they are all the same.

I still had my comparative playlist handy from reviewing the Naxos Volume 29 (July/Aug 2025), where I noted the wide

variation of tempos and moods that keyboardists bring to Sonata 263 in E minor. After those, Perianes's rendition here sounds like a meaningless jogging race. He does much better with 466 in F minor, making it slow and pensive, and allowing his hands to play not together. His Blasco de Nebra sonatas and Mompou *Musica Callada* got considerably more involvement from him, suggesting that he might also play Scarlatti that well. Next to those superb performances, it is disappointing that only the single Sonata 466 took him to that level of expressivity, leaving the other 14 sonatas of this program relatively glib.

Andras Schiff's program is better. It is compiled from 2 previously unreleased Lucerne Festival performances in 1998 (Kurtag) and 1999 (Scarlatti). The Swiss concert audiences are obediently silent except for applause at the end of the sets for each composer. They got to hear Schiff at his very best.

Schiff's Scarlatti selections are K 96, 175, 208, 209, 394, 395, 426, 427, 513, 518, 519, 544, and 545. (His classic Decca CD from ten years earlier had K 115, 116, 144, 175, 402, 403, 449, 450, 474, 475, 513, 516, 517, 544, and 545.) In the sonatas where he was updating his own earlier interpretations (175, 513, 544, 545), his tempos are similar, but the concert performance has more elan and more italicization of interesting details. Indeed, this whole set of 13 sonatas is full of imaginative and spontaneous-sounding risks, succeeding brilliantly and superseding his earlier cautiousness. This is the kind of performance where Scarlatti himself was reputed to sound "as though ten hundred devils had been at the instrument" (Rosein-grave).

In 544, Schiff's treatment of the rhythms gets cloying. It is reasonable to emphasize some of the notes by holding them for extra time, bending the meter around them, but why so many of them? I get it that this was a concert, and he might have felt that such blatant exaggeration was necessary in that big hall for that audience on that day. But this is the exceptional case where I prefer his simpler earlier Decca interpretation.

Gyorgy Kurtag's pieces are 13 selections from volumes 5 and 6 of his *Jatekok* (Games), only a minute or 2 each. These are vignettes of often sorrowful expression. I am shelving this disc with Scarlatti, but the 16 minutes of Kurtag (b 1926) are what I want

to hear more of. The only set in our Index is the composer's own recording (Mar/Apr 1998); I have not heard it yet. That performance was of some piano duets drawn from the collection, as played by Kurtag and his wife. Schiff's notes here say Kurtag has continued to expand these books extensively after 1998. Is Pierre-Laurent Aimard's 2025 recording the most comprehensive? Even that 2CD set (Sept/Oct) omits many pieces, according to the numbering of the selections.

Might Schiff record some more of Kurtag's music, especially given that the composer will be 100 in February? Meanwhile, this concert CD is great to have.

The booklet includes many photos of Schiff from Lucerne, from years before and after this, but oddly none from 1998 or 1999.

References: Perianes Mendelssohn (Mar/Apr 2015), Grieg (Mar/Apr 2015), Debussy (May/June 2019), Chopin (Nov/Dec 2021), Ravel (Mar/Apr 2020), Blasco de Nebra (July/Aug 2010), Mompou (July/Aug 2008). Schiff Decca (Jan/Feb 1990).

LEHMAN

SCATTOLIN: *Hodie Christus Natus est; Cantantibus Organis; Missa Instrumentalis; Meditazioni Mediterranee; Squilli & Riverberi*

Giuseppe Monari, org; Mirco Mungari, oud; Simone Spinaci, harmonica; Angela Troilo, a; Euridice Chorus & Orchestra; Bologna Chorus; Ensemble Circe; Phonurgia Nova/ Pier Paolo Scattolin

Tactus 941904—61 minutes

Italian composer Pier Paolo Scattolin has written more than 100 works, both sacred and secular, for chamber ensembles, choir, orchestra, and theater. His style mixes tradition with innovation, incorporating a wide variety of instruments as on this recording, which uses the oud (Arabic lute), harmonica, harmonic singing, Tibetan bells, and unusual instrumental and vocal effects.

These are elaborate avant-garde soundscapes requiring virtuosic playing and singing, all seemingly going nowhere. I could not make sense out of any of it. Notes on the music by the composer.

DELCAMP

SCHNEIDER, F: *4 Flute Sonatas*

Daniele Ruggieri; Luigi Caselli, p
Brilliant 97060 [2CD] 124 minutes

Occupational surnames include Abbot, Farmer, Hunter, Smith, Miller, Thatcher, Potter, Shepherd, Vickers, and Wheelright or Wagner. Persian polymath Omar Khayyam of Nishapur had one in Arabic: tent-maker. Aponyms are names that suit their owner, like Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt. Many people believe Bach or brook was an appropriate description of the musical family, especially its foremost member. The German name Schneider means tailor and derives from the verb for cutting. It has many variants in Dutch as well as African Dutch, English, French, Polish, Swiss, and Serbo-Croatian. Thus there are Schneiders who are Helvetic, Gallic, Germanic, and Slavic. Our composer was known as Friedrich, so people who know him this way might not recognize the Johann Christian Friedrich Schneider listed on the front and back covers of the album. Translated, here is Frederick Taylor (1786-1853). There is indeed no shortage of Schneiders or variants like Schneiderman, Bretschneider, or Schneidt working in performing and conducting—and even a Schneider Quartet—but make your way through our Index to become acquainted with him better if you are not. CPO has recorded 2 symphonies with overtures. Also distinguish this one from George Abraham played by Gaby Pas-Van Riet on CPO.

This figure was an organist, pianist, composer, and conductor from a village in Silesia (now in southwest Poland, just north of the Czech border). In German the term for people from Silesia is Schlesinger. This region was a Protestant enclave in a predominantly Catholic area. When he was born it was part of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. Thus describing him as a German composer or pianist-composer misses these aspects of cultural and historical importance, which pertain especially to his choral works.

These are first recordings of Opuses 19, 33, 35, and 61 spanning the years 1808 to 27. The last selection has 3 movements; the others have 4. Saxon organist-composer August Eberhard Muller, Cantor from 1804 to 10 at Leipzig's Church of Saint Thomas, was evidently the pioneer in applying 4-

movement or symphonic structure to a flute sonata. The first one has a fancy title: "Great Brilliant Sonata for piano with accompaniment of an obligatory flute". Since 4 works require 2 discs they are obviously substantial.

Modern instruments are heard, and they sound excellent. Based at the Phoenix Theater in Venice since 1979 has been a chamber ensemble called Ex Novo producing 23 albums over the years, including Martucci, Busoni, Casella, Berio, Maderna, Rota, and Solbiati. A founding member, flutist Daniele Ruggieri, has made recordings with them as well as on his own. We have heard from him most recently in an excellent program by Mauro Giuliani (Jan/Feb 2025). Pianist Luigi Caselli has recorded Scriabin for Bongiovanni, not reviewed here. The flute has been balanced well with hefty piano parts. A modern concert grand can easily engulf any flute player today, but that was less a problem in the early decades of the 19th Century. Consider, for example, the interplay between the bass line and flute line in the *Allegro vivace* opening the Sonata in G. Tempos seem on the slow side if anything, and more steady than pushed and pulled for effect. II of Opus 33, marked *Larghetto con espressione*, is too slow, but the pace of the other slow movements is fine.

The very German style of the writing comes across again and again. It is possible to hear the Protestant chorale behind the opening of Opus 19. The scherzo of Opus 33 could have been written only by a German or Austrian composer—not Bohemian, Polish, French, English, Danish, or Dutch. The walking bass and certain harmonies indicate a specifically Germanic approach to handling sound. But we do get a Polish round dance in triple time concluding Opus 35. Since Bach, Germans have been on good terms with their Polish neighbors musically. This example is the only strong or identifiable foreign influence across 15 pieces spanning 2 hours. A subtler and less common touch bears note. Although largely conventional, Schneider's approach to harmony sometimes resembles Dussek.

Our flutist has written 5 pages of perceptive notes with assistance from pianist, musicologist, conductor, composer, and radio broadcaster Paolo Furlani (b 1964) of Venice. As a physical product, this recording was bad two ways. The hinged tray holding the 2 discs broke off when I tried to

move it. It was also difficult to get one disc off the hub. Balancing a secure hold with design that releases easily would please listeners more.

This is sonic territory visited little for a variety of reasons. I was ready and willing to make a career giving the world more Schneider decades ago. One possible suggestion beyond Kuhlau and Schneider would be the album by Francesca Pagnini and Paolo Bidoli on Dynamic (Nov/Dec 1999: 252), which uses modern instruments. Consider exploring flute pieces by Bohemian-born composer, conductor, and violinist Jan Kalivoda (1801-66—German form of his name, Johannes Kalliwoda). Pianists or keyboard aficionados who like Clementi, Cramer, Dussek, Field, Loder, Potter, Mendelssohn, Moscheles, and Ries ought to pay attention to this new set. The Austrian label VMS issued sonatas for cello and piano in July 2023, offering Opus 27, 37, and another without opus number. We should restore this Schneider to the prominence he once had.

GORMAN

SCHNITTKE: *Piano Pieces 1*

Nicolas Stavy
BIS 2797—70 minutes

Alfred Schnittke is not as fashionable as he was in the Perestroika era, but he remains an important composer. I just wrote program notes for Wynton Marsalis's Violin Concerto and was struck by the Schnittke-like "polystylism" in that eclectic work (though one can argue that Ives, as with so many things, did it first). Here Nicolas Stavy, a gifted artist who has recorded Tishchenko and Shostakovich for BIS, gives us Volume 1 of Schnittke's piano works, including pieces from the 1950s to the 90s.

The 5 Aphorisms and Sonata 2 remind us how dark Schnittke's music could be during his health crises in the 90s. They are a bit hard to take, though they certainly have moments of desolate beauty. The 5 Preludes and Fugue come as a relief. They are lyrical and poetic, and sometimes, as in 3, stormy and tempestuous, concluding with a Bachian fugue.

We get a whiff of "polystylism" in the Little Piano Pieces, written in 1971 for Schnittke's 6-year-old son, combining modernism with tradition. Readers who find Schnittke unduly harsh may be surprised by the

charm of these craftily constructed miniatures.

Nicolas Savvy has tremendous emotional and stylistic range; he is compelling in Schnittke's various worlds, has impressive technique, and gets a clean, resonant recording. This series is off to a promising start.

SULLIVAN

SCHREKER: *Gezeichneten Overture;*
see KORNGOLD

SCHUBERT: *Late Piano Sonatas;*
Moments Musicaux
Ammiel Bushakevitz
Hanssler 25030—70:22

Ammiel Bushakevitz embarked on a complete Schubert recording project for solo piano. He is a tremendous lied pianist, which should never be separated from Schubert's solo output. The first movement of the sonata is everything you would expect from a Schubert expert. He adheres to early Viennese romantic performance practice, with values of simplicity and intimate inner emotional response that avoids sentimentality. This is evident through a fairly steady tempo and conservative rubato. The tempo and values are very similar to Schiff's recording, and of course very different from Evgeni Bozahnov's interpretation—in my opinion the most highly personal, unusual, original, and surprising recording of this sonata in the last few decades (not reviewed). Even Schiff's interpretation displayed a little more freedom than Bushakevitz's, by not always aligning the soprano with a bass note, for example—a performance practice which was much more common in the past. The famous slow movement is at a pace that's between Richter's slow tempo and Schiff's much more rapid flow. The pedal use is exquisite, and the poignant mood is delivered with great purity.

The *Musical Moments* are exquisite. Bushakevitz is very conservative in the middle section of the second miniature and brings out the Schubertian flavor in virtuosity comparable to a Michelin star Chef. The tempos are very similar to the ones displayed by Brendel, except for numbers 2 and 5, which Bushakevitz chose to play a tad slower, bringing out a feeling that's perhaps more appropriate to a time when peo-

ple didn't hurry as much in life. Overall, a beautiful and faithful approach to Schubert.

SOLOMONICK

SCHUBERT: *Quartets 3+14;*

MIGO: *Quartet 2*

Alinde Quartet

Hänssler 25048—76 minutes

This is Volume 4 of the Alinde's project to record all the Schubert quartets by the bicentennial of his death in 2028. 2 are presented here: *Death and the Maiden* and an early quartet that Schubert wrote for his family quartet shortly after turning 16. These are joined by a quartet titled *Sardana Quodlibet* by Spanish composer Marc Migo (b. 1993), written as an homage to Schubert.

The Alinde is certainly a fine group, able to play whatever you put in front of them. I would like them more if they played with more warmth (for example, more vibrato) and took a little more time with the music. Fast passages are taken as fast as I can remember, which yields exciting playing, but comes up short. For me Schubert, particularly in the later works, is largely about the intermingling of youthful, innocent joy with the aches of discomfort and disappointment. Here I get lots of toughness, but not enough tenderness. On the other hand the early quartet is quite a nice piece, certainly not on the level of late Schubert, but delightful and creative work for a teenager.

As in other volumes in this series the Alinde includes a contemporary work, designed, I guess, to bring Schubert up-to-date and make him "relevant" (haha). This quartet by Marc Migo strikes me as whimsical, with references to Bach, Beethoven, and Bernstein as well as Schubert. I found it interesting enough, but wonder if it belongs on this disc!

ALTHOUSE

SCHUBERT: *Trout Quintet;*

HUMMEL: *Piano Quintet in C*

Peter Donohoe, p; I Musicanti/ Leon Bosch, db

Somm 712—72 minutes

The unusual instrumentation in the *Trout* (violin, viola, cello, and double bass with piano) stems from its commission by Sylvester Paumgartner, who had assembled those 5 instruments to play a work by Hummel (though not the Hummel played here).

The Schubert is often regarded as his first mature chamber work, written when he was just 22. The Hummel Quintet in C, completed shortly after Schubert's death, was an arrangement of his *Great Military Septet*, written for the same instrumentation as Schubert's *Trout*.

The performances are delightful in every way. The *Trout* is alert and crisp, but never forced or overplayed. The players, particularly pianist Peter Donohoe, bring lots of energy to Schubert, but do not miss the gentleness and lyricism that belong as well. The Hummel is recorded here for the first time, but it too is a fine piece, its style reminiscent more of the classical period than the emerging romantic. Hummel studied, it seems, with everyone—Mozart, Haydn, Clementi—but he was also on good terms with Schubert. In fact Schubert dedicated his final 3 sonatas to Hummel, but both were dead when the pieces were printed, and the publisher changed the dedication to Schumann.

If you're inclined to a CD of a well-known work, excellently done, combined with a fine work you probably don't know at all, this would be a wonderful choice. Great music, excellent sonics, informative notes.

ALTHOUSE

SCHUMANN: *Fantasy Pieces, op 12;*

Symphonic Etudes

Florian Krumpöck, p

Gramola 99357—69 minutes

Here are 2 of Schumann's masterworks, played by an Austrian pianist (b 1978) new to me but not to these pages. Alan Becker (J/F 2006) found his interpretations of Schubert's Impromptus "always interesting" though somewhat extended and extreme in rubato. Brent Auerbach (J/A 2012) was disappointed with a recording of the first 2 books of Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage*, though he did like the *Dante Sonata*. Mark Lehman praised a performance of Weigl's Left-Hand Piano Concerto (M/A 2016). A more recent Chopin album (Sony) and a DVD (Gramola) of a recital with a mixed program have not reached us. Krumpöck is also a conductor and for several years was music director of the Norddeutsche Philharmonie. There are extensive biographical notes in the booklet.

I listened first to the *Fantasy Pieces* and, as is my habit, compared the 8 pieces one-by-one with a recording from my collection.

I chose one by Florian Uhlig that I reviewed some years ago (*J/A* 2018). His is one of those “standard” performances where everything sounds just right, and its sound is excellent. Krumpöck’s sound, which (as I gather from Wikipedia) probably comes from a Blüthner piano, is not quite as pleasing, though satisfactory. It is his touch that gets a bit strong sometimes, bordering on banging. The fast pieces lack delicacy and are played very fast, almost hectically. By contrast, the slow pieces (the beautiful ‘Des Abends’ and ‘Warum?’) are too deliberate, and the tempo contrasts in ‘Fabel’ are exaggerated. On the whole, the interpretations have more personality than Uhlig’s, but I don’t find them as pleasing.

I like Krumpöck’s way with the *Symphonic Etudes* much better. Contrasts of tempo and dynamics are again rather strong, but they work here. And he is capable of great delicacy, which can be heard especially in the 5 posthumous variations that he plays as a group between Etudes 5 and 6. Although there may be reasons for omitting them sometimes in concert performances, these marvelous pieces should be included in every recording. The last 2 especially are a poetic high point; they make one forget that they are surrounded by (partly) technical studies.

My direct comparison in this case was with the young Evgeny Kissin’s performance at his Carnegie Hall debut in 1990 (RCA). He, too, included the posthumous variations, but he did not play them successively but rather inserted them between the etudes. This worked very well and is perhaps preferable to playing them as a group in the middle. Kissin’s interpretation leaves nothing to be desired and is pianistically fulminant. Krumpöck takes 8 minutes longer overall, which reflects his tendency to draw slow pieces out, but he plays them very beautifully. Although his technique is quite up to the task, his performance impresses less with its pianism than with its musicianship, individuality, and engagement.

The liner notes, far from addressing the placement of the posthumous variations in the cycle, do not mention them at all—a serious omission. The hypertrophic biography quotes a Vienna newspaper: “Forget Lang Lang and Arcadi Volodos. There are highly virtuoso keyboard tigers in Austria too.” I see music criticism has not improved

since I left the city in 1969 (mentioning Lang and Volodos in one breath!), and the English translator of the bio needs to be visited by the word police.

REPP

SCHUMANN: *Piano Concerto;*
Violin Concerto

Klara Min, p; Nicolas Dautricourt, v; Manchester Camerata/ Gabor Takacs-Nagy
Hanssler 23055—63 minutes

Korean pianist Klara Min, who is about 50, has a special love of Robert Schumann’s music. That certainly comes across in this remarkable recording of his concerto. A sudden, brilliant flourish in the piano jump-starts the brief introduction, leading to a joyful, keenly energetic main theme. In it, details I’ve never heard in other recordings are like a joyful revelation in both piano and orchestra. The melody line has a special ring from start to finish, especially when it’s in the orchestra with the pianist as accompanist. Min’s long series of chords in the development are detached, not legato, giving the music a dramatic style. Some may find her use of rubato excessive, but I don’t—not with the abundance of details revealed here.

The principal cellist makes the main theme in II quite rapturous. Players, conductor, soloist, and Stoller Hall in Manchester all contribute to the exquisite musicality and the clarity of the textures. The transition from II to III seamlessly introduces what seems like a “grand opening with flares”. Articulation and rhythmic details make the fugal development a special delight. Credit Min and conductor Gabor Takacs-Nagy for the flowing continuity of each movement.

I think this is the third recording I’ve recently reviewed of Schumann’s Violin Concerto. True, it has a couple of lovely melodies—motifs, rather—that are repeated ad nauseum but never developed. Schumann ended work on the concerto in 1853, by which time he was growing seriously demented with a disease that, as an autopsy showed, had eaten away much of his brain by the time he died in 1856. The concerto had its first public performance in 1937.

This is the best recording of this poorly orchestrated and constructed concerto I’ve ever heard, but I still can’t stand the work. Not even the overflowing blarney in the liner notes convinces me otherwise.

Nonetheless, Nicolas Dautricourt has long lyrical lines, articulation, and rubato that draw out maximum musicality. Even in the slower development section of I, he never lets the pacing stagnate. Takacs-Nagy is the first conductor I've heard who makes the usually muddy bass lines clear and functional.

In II's solo melody, Dautricourt's violin is sweet and sensuous, especially in the instrument's lowest register. And Takacs-Nagy fortunately tends to mask the irritating eighth-note off-beat between the violin and orchestra (I've never found it serves any purpose). In III the orchestra, especially the woodwinds, are as chirpy and spiky as they can be in this otherwise dour work. In fact, the players rhythmically achieve an honest-goodness gait when possible.

The engineering on this recording is excellent but not as rich as on a Chandos recording of early Mozart overtures and piano concertos with the same orchestra and conductor made in the same hall (reviewed in this issue). There are fewer overtones, which means less enhancement of the strings and winds. It seems as if the microphones here are a bit further away from the orchestra. Consider that a distinction without a difference. If I hadn't first heard the Chandos, I'd have been perfectly content.

FRENCH

SCHUMANN: *Piano Sonatas 1+3; Kreisleriana; Arabesque; Symphonic Etudes; Blumenstück*

Llyr Williams—Signum 923 [2CD]

This recording is a revelation. Williams's interpretation captures the fleeting spirit of Schumann. The longing feeling is overwhelming in the F-sharp minor Sonata. All the details down to the smallest slur are faithfully brought out in service of musical meaning, and as a part of the formal narrative.

Kreisleriana is right there on the border between passion and madness, properly harking to the spirit of Hoffmann's Kapellmeister. Schumann's wit and multifaceted spirit are brought out. This piece is one of Schumann's most important compositions, played by Williams in an exemplary fashion.

Both discs in this album contain 2 monumental pieces, each ending with a third

piece that is contrasting in nature because of its mellower manner. Schumann's *Arabesque* and *Blumenstück* were referred to by the great Schumann scholar John Daverio, as examples of his idyllic style. They are soul-soothing and strategically—perhaps with healing intentions—placed at the end of each disc.

SOLOMONICK

SCHUMANN: *Marchenbilder*; see BRAHMS

SHIELD: *Quartets*

Dorrit Ensemble

Naxos 574446—61 minutes

William Shield (1748-1829) was an English composer who worked for Covent Garden. These quartets are works of early maturity that were published in 1782. Quartet I has a childlike simplicity like what you would expect from a first-year composition student, so I was afraid that I was in for a very disappointing hour of listening. But the remaining quartets are a significant advance in sophistication over that. I would have advised Shield to omit Quartet I or to compose a replacement. These are very early string quartets, so each has only 2 or 3 movements rather than the 4 that would become standard.

The influence of Haydn is obvious in the remaining 5 quartets, so Shield was likely familiar with Haydn's Op. 20 (1772) or Op. 33 (1781). One could easily mistake these for early Haydn quartets; there are numerous Haydnesque touches, like the extended melodies assigned to the first violin with the next prominent role assigned to the cello. The textures have a Haydnesque transparency and lack the more complex counterpoint and chromaticism of Mozart's *Haydn* Quartets (1782-85). If you enjoy Haydn's quartets, I'm sure you will enjoy these. It is a pity that, apparently, he wrote no more quartets. The Dorrit Ensemble does a fine job playing these works and is especially attentive to balances.

MAGIL

Life is, in fact, a battle. Evil is insolent and strong; beauty enchanting but rare; goodness very apt to be weak, folly very apt to be defiant; wickedness to carry the day; imbeciles to be in great places, people of sense in small, and mankind generally unhappy.

—HENRY JAMES

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Chamber Symphony in C minor (Quartet 8); 6 Poems by Marina Tsvetayeva; Prelude & Scherzo; Piano Quintet; Quartets 1+4; Piano Sonatas 1+2; Suite in F-sharp minor; Tarantella; Concertino in A minor; 24 Preludes; March in D; Song of the Great Rivers; Polka from Jazz Suite 1* with **SCHNITTKE:** *Prelude in Memory of Shostakovich*

Zoryana Kushpler, mz; Ewa Kupiec, Margarete Babinsky, Holger Busch, p; Petersen Quartet; Moscow Virtuosi/ Vladimir Spivakov
Capriccio 7470 [4CD] 3:57

This album is billed on the cover as containing “Chamber Music”, but actually, that’s all on the first 2 discs. Discs 3 and 4 contain solo piano music, sprinkled with a few pieces for 4 hands. It is a nice cross-section of the composer’s intimate output without any pretensions toward completeness. If you want a sort of “Best Of” set, this box will do nicely, even if none of the recordings are the very best of the works in question. They are all very well played, thoughtfully interpreted, and cleanly recorded.

Recently in a conversation with my brother about our record-collection habit, he pointed out that we really never had the time to listen to as many CDs as we acquired. I have to agree. The classical recording industry—and hence reviewers like us—tends to devote a lot of resources to complete cycles of works. But not everybody needs or wants *everything* a composer wrote in a certain genre. That’s why this box is particularly handy.

Spivakov’s take on Rudolf Barshai’s “adjustment” of Shostakovich’s Quartet No. 8 for string orchestra didn’t strike me as particularly distinguished when it first came out. But now I find it perfectly serviceable, crisply and cleanly played and decently recorded. I would have preferred to trade the late, gloomy *6 Poems by Marina Tsvetayeva* for mezzo-soprano and string quartet for one of the trios, but here it is. The singer delivers her part with depth and intensity, and I cannot find any fault with the contribution of the Peterson Quartet. Spivakov and his Moscow Virtuosi are back for the wild Prelude and Scherzo, Op. 11 and Schnittke’s gloomy Prelude in Memory of Shostakovich.

We get back to familiar Shostakovich chamber music on Disc 2 with the Piano

Quintet expressively rendered by the Peterson Quartet with Eva Kupiec. Then 2 more quartets—1 and 4.

With Disc 3 we shift to early piano music, starting with the Suite for 2 Pianos, Op. 6, dynamically played by Margarete Babinsky and Holger Busch. This is a strikingly mature, tuneful, very Russian-sounding work that really makes full use of the extra pair of hands. Ms Babinsky carries on alone for the 2 piano sonatas, the very early, experimental No. 1 from 1926 in 11 short movements and the later, second one from 1943 in the traditional 3 movements. Not my favorite pieces by Shostakovich by any means, but good to have in my collection.

Most of Disc 4 is taken up by the 24 Preludes for solo piano, prefaced by the short (under 10 minutes) Concertino for 2 Pianos dedicated to the composer’s son, Maxim. Ms Babinsky is back for the Preludes, again joined by Mr Busch in the Concertino and the miscellaneous short, lightweight pieces that finish out the disc.

So this set is really an amalgam of well-known works that belong in every Shostakovich collection (Quartets 1, 4, & 8, the Piano Quintet, and the 24 Preludes) and some rather less-known works. So it’s not quite suited to somebody who simply wants the Shostakovich chamber music “highlights”, and the commonly available works tend to mitigate against serious Shosty collectors who are looking for the hard-to-find works.

All the recordings here were made from 2002 thru 2006, reissued with well-written notes by Jens Laurson. If you like Shostakovich’s solo piano music AND chamber music but do not like it enough to invest in “Compleat Cycles”, this box is a great way to get nearly 4 hours of some of his best music in these genres.

HANSEN

SIBELIUS: *Symphonies 6+7; Tapiola*

English Chamber Orchestra/ Kenneth Woods
ESO 2502—67 minutes

These 2 symphonies, Sibelius’s last, were completed about the same time (1923-24). He was to live another third of a century, dying in 1957 at 91, but he was never able to write another symphony that he was content with. (He did begin an Eighth, possibly finishing it in the 1930s, but he destroyed it in the 1940s.) These works strike me as

products of a composer unsure of himself. The Sixth, begun in 1914 and requiring a decade to finish, came from a period when tonality was under attack in Vienna. Sibelius rejected that and settled on a style with very few climaxes or rhetorical statements. And the Sixth is mostly in Dorian mode, so the “pull” of tonal harmony is lessened. It is easy to see why this work doesn’t do well in the concert hall, where the audience expects more excitement, but I would argue it works quite well in the privacy of your listening room.

The Seventh is also unconventional. It was conceived as a 3-movement work, but evolved into a single-movement with lots of tempo changes. It sounds a bit like a never-ending transition, and you, the listener, can feel lost, at least on first hearing. As with the Sixth, though, the CD may be a better avenue for appreciating late Sibelius. At the least, we should admire Sibelius’s achievement in rethinking symphonic form at a time when music was undergoing such great change.

With the tone poem *Tapiola*, though, we have no fear. Although written also in the 1920s, the work seems to present no problems, and in fact it has been popular since its premiere. Taken together, these 3 works give a wonderful look into the Sibelius of the 1920s.

The performances with the ECO and Kenneth Woods are persuasive and enjoyable. Woods takes tempos that are a little on the quick side, so the bleak, melancholy side of Sibelius is lessened. There were a couple of spots (in *Tapiola* and the Sixth) where I felt the intensity flagged, but generally the playing is rich and expressive. Sibelius’s music is almost always euphonic, and indeed, Woods makes it beautiful.

I recommend this, though I should mention there are two competitors with exactly the same coupling: Atlanta with Spano on ASO 1004 and Vanska on BIS 864; both were given glowing reviews (M/J 2014 & M/A 1998). I should also mention that the Woods disc is labeled Vol. 1, so we should look forward to more Sibelius from this source.

ALTHOUSE

SMETHERGELL: *Overtures, op 2*
SW German Chamber Orchestra/ Douglas Bostock

CPO 555 541—52 minutes

William Smethergell (1751-1836) was an English composer, and his whole life seems to have been spent around London. His music is derivative and ordinary. These “overtures” are 3-movement symphonies that last 8 to 10 minutes. They were well liked in their time. The Fourth one has great horn parts. Sometimes it sounds like Haydn (and not just the horns). And its middle movement does nice things with the oboes. The Fourth is the only one I came back to the next day.

None of his music was published after 1800. It would seem that tastes were changing.

The orchestra has 21 players on this recording. I would like them and the music better if Bostock didn’t make the strings play without vibrato. When the strings aren’t covered by winds they are pure acid to my ears, and that certainly doesn’t help the music—which needs all the help it can get.

VROON

SMITH BRINDLE: *Solo Guitar 2*

Sonatas, Songs, & Dances
Duilio Meucci

Naxos 574634—75 minutes

British composer Reginald Smith Brindle (1917-2003) studied guitar (and saxophone, clarinet, and organ) and was championed by Julian Bream in the 1960s and is perhaps best known in the classical guitar world for *El Polifemo d’Oro*, which appeared on Bream’s iconic *20th Century Guitar* LP issued in 1967. This CD, second in a series by guitarist Duilio Meucci, brings to light several works for solo guitar that illustrate Smith Brindle’s range of compositional styles.

Meucci clearly loves this music, presenting a challenging program that alternates very modern-sounding, multimovement sonatas with shorter, more tonal works that incorporate elements of jazz and Spanish idioms that serve as palette cleansers between the longer, more esoteric works.

Notable is the 3-movement *Sonatina Florentine*, an accessible work that leads us

through idea after idea, always projecting the beauty of the guitar, especially in the second movement. The lively sections in III are delightful and made even more so by Meucci's deft articulation.

Two pieces, 'Fuego Fatuo' and 'Danza Pagana', were written for Segovia, but he never played them; one wonders if they didn't sound as authentically Spanish as the master would have wanted, but they are nonetheless quite interesting.

Meucci's tone is exquisite, and his phrasing enables the listener to make sense of the rather complex music. His dynamics encompass the instrument's entire range as he brings this technically demanding music to life without a hint of laboriousness.

Liner notes by Graham Wade are pithy and give the listener an excellent understanding of the composer and music. Recording quality is excellent, with a very low noise floor, possibly making Meucci's breathing more audible, occasionally distracting from the purity of his guitar playing in the quiet passages.

MCCUTCHEON

STEVENSON: *Don Quixote*;

see MOUSSORGSKY

STRAUSS: *Alpine Symphony*

Colorado Mahlerfest Orchestra/ Kenneth Woods—Mahlerfest 37—50 minutes

The opening of this journey up and down an Alpine mountain is dark, almost murky, and in the lower winds a bit muddled. After that, it settles down on the fast side but is still a little muddled. All told, this is a mostly standard reading with a little scrambling in places. The storm is dark and menacing as it should be. After the storm, the tempo becomes very slow, perhaps too slow. The strings sound a bit challenged in those post-storm scenes. Despite quibbles with a few other passages here and there, I found this performance growing on me and quite absorbing. After it was over I felt as if I climbed a real mountain (well, almost). It also stands up well to repeated listening. The only problem is sound that, while OK, is not as good as the interpretation and playing. Slightly better sound—and probably playing in a very few places—would turn this performance from good to first class.

Colorado Mahlerfest was founded in 1988 by conductor Robert Olson to cele-

brate Mahler by playing a Mahler symphony every summer in a festival setting. Colorado seemed ideal, and this site resembled an Alpine setting. The Festival draws Mahler devotees, scholars, etc. from all over the world, and its orchestra includes strong professional and nonprofessional players. 37 years have passed since its founding, hence the disc number 37.

HECHT

STRAUSS: *Ein Heldenleben*

Philharmonia/ Santtu-Matias Rouvali

Philharmonia 6—50 minutes

Richard Strauss finished *Ein Heldenleben* in 1898 and died in 1949. A person listening to this recording and knowing little about the composer might believe that the work was his last word to this life rather than a heroic piece by a composer in his 30s. *Ein Heldenleben* is German for "a hero's life", but here it comes across as an introspective examination of an average person's life. Most performances of it last around 45 minutes. This one, at 50 minutes, is the slowest I have heard, but Conductor Santtu-Matias Rouvali keeps it moving and maintains tension without wallowing.

The opening is eerie and weirdly cold in manner. 'Des Helden Gefahrtin' (the hero's companion) is very slow, and the orchestra sustains what sounds like a piece in itself. In 'Des Helden Walstatt' (the battlefield hero) the distant off-stage trumpets sound like they are playing in the next county, and the drums startle a bit in contrast. The reflective music here is slow but interesting, and the big horn passage is impressive. 'Des Helden Friedenswerke' maintains the slow tempo and is quite eerie. 'Des Helden Weltflucht und Vollendung' (escape from the world and perfection) begins after a long break. It is a bit wild at first, but it soon calms down with a tempo that is very slow save for muted brass sections, which are closer to the usual tempo.

The result of all this is a *Heldenleben* that is interesting and has plenty of appeal but is not for everyone. It is a good thing that the Philharmonia is one of the world's great orchestras because anything less in orchestral endurance, technique, and ability to sustain a slow line would be insufficient for this interpretation. The sound is fine and lifelike.

Santtu-Matias Rouvali is the chief con-

ductor of the Gothenburg Symphony, principal conductor of the Philharmonia, and artist-in-association with the Tapiola Sinfonietta. Before that he was Chief Conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic. Included in the short booklet are Gavin Plumley's interesting essay on *Ein Heldenleben*, a history of the Philharmonia (including its roster), and an account of Strauss's relationship with the orchestra.

HECHT

SZYMANOWSKI: *Mythes*; see BARTOK

TAUBERT: *Piano Sonatas*

Lucas Wong—
Naxos 574585—75 minutes

This is the second release in Naxos's new "Romantic Piano" series. Wilhelm Taubert (1811-91) was a Berliner and spent his whole life in that great city, where he was active as pianist, conductor, and teacher. He composed symphonies, operas, more than 300 songs, and at least 6 piano sonatas—1, 2, 4, and 6 are here. Although he lived in the age of romanticism, his music is classical in style, inspired largely by Beethoven but more lyrical and less dramatic.

Sonatas 1, 2, and 4 are relatively short early works, composed between the ages of 19 and 25. Each has 3 movements, and they seem well constructed. Sonata 1 in A, Op. 4, employs a triadic motif in I; II is clock-like, with a nice middle part in a minor key; III is playful with a seemingly final chord—but on the dominant, with a long coda following. Sonata 2 in C minor, Op. 20, is more dramatic and technically more demanding, especially in I. II is graceful and rather slow for a scherzo. A long transitional passage leads directly into a turbulent III, which has a quiet ending. (The final chord is lacking the tonic in the bass. Was that the composer's or the pianist's doing?) Sonata 4 in C-sharp minor, Op. 21:2, has a classical I, a nice melody with accompaniment in II, and a III that despite agitated triplets in the left hand is not stormy, though there are some stronger passages. It ends quietly.

Sonata 6 in D minor, Op. 114, is a later work (1857) and almost twice as long as any of the others, but not more interesting. II and IV have filigree a la Hummel, and there is some passion in IV. Pleasant, but not earth-shaking.

Lucas Wong, a Canadian teaching at the University of British Columbia, plays with a rather strong touch but good expression, and the sound of his Fazioli is excellent. I was pleased to meet him here again, for I remember him as a student at Yale. I particularly remember attending his DMA recital in 2011, which had a most unusual program: Liszt's transcription of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* followed by Book II of George Crumb's *Macrocosmos*. I wish all pianists were that adventurous!

REPP

TCHAIKOWSKY: *Piano Concertos; Sonata* Peter Jablonski, Polish Radio/ Lukasz Borowicz

Ondine 1467—72 minutes

André Tchaikowsky won third prize in the Queen Elizabeth Competition in 1956. Vladimir Ashkenazy and John Browning won the first two prizes—good company! With the support of Arthur Rubinstein he had a decent career.

He was born in November 1935 in Warsaw as Robert Andrzej Krauthammer. Before the age of 4 he could read 3 languages and had begun to study the piano with his mother. She was murdered in the Warsaw ghetto in 1942; he escaped but never got over her death. He escaped partly because of false documents that gave him the name "Andrzej Czajkowski". He westernized the spelling later on, but realized that the name was a liability, putting him always in the shadow of the Russian composer.

He was certainly a genius; he could look at a piece of music and play it from memory after only one reading. And, like many geniuses, he had no tact and no social skills. He alienated many people in his tours of the USA, where he was supposed to record with Fritz Reiner.

The first piano concerto was completed in 1957, premiered in 1958, then forgotten until this recording. I found it boring, uninspired.

The second one was given its premiere performance in London in 1975 by Radu Lupu with the Royal Philharmonic. The composer himself played it later—though he did not generally like to perform his own compositions. The booklet notes describe this concerto as "powerful, complex, and extraordinarily difficult" and "near in spirit

to composers of the Berg-Bartok era". German reviews later described it as a masterpiece and "the best since Brahms". Well, it is difficult for the listener too. And only a cold intellectual could call it the best since Brahms. Brahms is so much more emotionally rewarding.

There are no other recordings, so you may need this one to satisfy your curiosity. Jablonski is, of course, a remarkable pianist. Each concerto takes about half an hour, and the sonata is 15 minutes. Rubinstein advised the composer to "open up! Let your soul sing. Make everyone in the audience cry." I don't think any of these pieces manages that or even reaches a satisfying conclusion. They just end—after lots of work and little joy.

VROON

TELEMANN: 9 *Flute Fantasias; improvisations*

Richard Craig

Ulysses Arts 250030—56 minutes

Interspersed with improvisations from the performer are Fantasies 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 from the set of 12. There is enough time to add the rest. Why not? The improvisations use weird modern techniques and certainly contrast with the Telemann. Whether that difference is welcome or unwelcome is up to you.

This Scottish flutist is a fine player with a robust, beautiful sound, entirely nimble in the fast sections, florid in the slow ones, and with some of the fastest trills I've heard. He does more with these pieces than anyone else on record in terms of ornamentation and interpretation. Vibrato is allowed and included. The instruments here are both old and new. We hear 2 modern instruments made from cocus wood from English maker Rudall Carte, one dated 1907, the other a little later, both shown in the booklet. The recording gives a pleasant resonance to the sound, which is close enough for clarity.

A view of nautilus shells cut in half constitutes the cover, evoking fractals, ratios, and the complexity of life in nature—all stimulants to the imagination just like music in free form. The cardboard case with a pocket for the booklet makes a beautiful presentation.

GORMAN

TELEMANN: 2 *Violin Concertos; Trumpet Sonata; Overture-Suite for Violin; Gulliver's Travels Suite; Fantasia for Solo Violin; Concerto for Violin, Trumpet, and Cello;*

QUANTZ: *Circle Canon for 2 Violins*

Isabelle Faust, Bernhard Forck, v; Ute Hartwich, tpt; Akademie fur Alte Musik Berlin
HM 902756—80 minutes

Before I listened to this I thought that it would be just another collection of violin concertos, but it has a refreshingly different sort of program. The first work is the 7-movement Overture or Suite for violin, strings, and continuo. The orchestra plays much of the time while the violin is silent, rather like the way that the solo viola weaves in and out of the orchestral textures in Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*. We today would classify the Sonata for trumpet, strings, and continuo as a trumpet concerto. It is an excellent work, conveying the heroic character of the trumpet without being overbearing. In the middle Largo, the trumpet is silent while a violin, either the concertmaster or Faust, plays the solos. The Concerto for violin, trumpet, and cello is an excellent work. I recognized it immediately because as a boy I listened to a wonderful RCA LP released in 1969 of Telemann concertos played by the principals of the Philadelphia Orchestra that I desperately wish Sony would reissue. It's a joyous piece, one of Telemann's best, and I could listen to it over and over.

Ute Hartwich is a fine trumpeter with a strong clear tone. One of the more interesting works here is *Gulliver's Travels Suite* for 2 violins, published in 1728 after the publication of the German translation of Swift's masterpiece in 1727. It is in 5 movements: *Intrada; 'Lilliputian Chaconne', 'Brobdnagian Gigue', 'Dream of the Laputians, Along With Their Awakeners', and 'Loure of the Civilized Houyhnhnms/Fury of the Naughty Yahoos'*. The book is hilarious, and Telemann makes several musical jokes that require a certain sophistication to understand. My favorite is the *'Lilliputian Chaconne'*, which was introduced to me by Gerald Fischbach. Chaconnes are usually grand, deliberately paced statements lasting, in the case of Bach's Chaconne for solo violin, upwards of 15 minutes. Telemann's, however, is very brisk and lasts all of 25 seconds in this performance. This makes me

wonder if he knew Bach's Chaconne (the two were good friends). I'm sure Bach would have gotten a kick out of it. Some of Telemann's jokes are only apparent to the musicians. The Brobdingnagians are giants, so the meter of the 'Brobdingnagian Gigue' is 24 whole notes per measure. You can't hear it, but the score certainly looks funny. Another humorous work here is the violin concerto titled *The Frogs*. Here, the composer attempts tone painting by making the strings and soloist imitate a chorus of frogs.

The Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin is an excellent period-instrument group, so prepare yourself for a lean, vibratoless string sound. The recorded sound is very good and resonant enough that the strings have some body. Faust plays the "Sleeping Beauty" Stradivarius built in 1704.

MAGIL

TELEMANN: *Viola Concerto*; see BACH

TIPPETT: *A Child of Our Time*

Nadine Benjamin, Sarah Connolly, Kenneth Tarver, Roderick Williams; London Adventist Chorale; London Philharmonic & Choir/Edward Gardner

LPO 136—65 minutes

When I reviewed the Andrew Davis *Child of Our Time* in Sept/Oct 2024 and then named the late conductor's valedictory recording (Chandos 5341) one of the Year's Best, I didn't think I'd be commenting on another account of Tippett's anti-war oratorio so soon. But I am. I also wouldn't have thought that the second *Child* would turn out to be more gripping and better recorded than the first. But it is. I say this for two reasons. First of all, Maestro Gardner's efforts were caught in closer, more arresting sound than Davis, who was accorded comfortable, rear-of-the-hall sound by the his engineers. Though flattering to the participants, that Chandos sound was less visceral than the sonics on offer from this LPO concert performance at Royal Festival Hall in November of 2022.

The other notable difference comes via this team of soloists, with soprano Nadine Benjamin the prime difference-maker. The voice is strong and gorgeous, and there is no mistaking her words or the intensity of feeling behind them. Dame Sarah Connolly was Davis's mezzo, too, so her inclusion here is a wash, as she is superb on both. If you press me, though, I'd admit to preferring

Detroit-born tenor Kenneth Tarver and baritone Roderick Williams to their counterparts on Chandos. Both sound better suited to the music.

I just started working on college selection matters with a high school junior who tells me that his Albanian family is still scarred by the horrors of the ghastly war in Kosovo, which is nearing its 30th anniversary. And with conflicts currently boiling over in Gaza and Ukraine, Sir Michael's message is as powerful and timely as ever. As another distinguished composer named Pete Seeger once put it, "When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?"

GREENFIELD

TOSI: *Il Martirio di Santa Caterina*

Valeria Girardello (Santa Caterina), Luca Greco (Massimino), Vittoria Giacobazzi (Regina), Leopoldo Punziano (Testo, Filosofo), Enrico Torre (Porphyrius); Cosarara/ Giuseppe Camerlingo

Dynamic 8066 [2CD] 106:17

Martyrdom of St Catherine is a dramatic oratorio by the castrato, Pier Francesco Tosi (1654-1732), most noted as the author of a significant treatise on singing, "Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni", published in 1723 and soon translated into Dutch, English, and German. He performed in London at the end of the 17th Century, and in the first two decades of the 18th Century traveled extensively in Central Europe, as a musical and diplomatic representative of Emperor Joseph I and Johann Wilhelm, the Elector Palatine. Though some of his cantatas and arias are found in various manuscripts, this oratorio is Tosi's only remaining major work. He was in Vienna by 1701 and this oratorio was performed that year during Lent before Emperor Leopold I, and the bound manuscript was kept in the Emperor's personal library. The libretto by Vincenzo Parisi follows the traditional pattern of other oratorios for the Hapsburg court, in two parts (separated by a sermon), with recitatives, arias, one short duet, and a final choral epilogue with the moral for the soloists.

Tosi's music is very effective but the performance sounds rather academic, with very little dramatic effort from the vocal soloists. Valeria Giardello's voice sounds a bit covered; and though she is the principal

character, her interpretation lacks emotion. Luca Greco, whose bass role as the king who martyrs Catherine, unfortunately lacks a strong lower register. The tenor, Leopoldo Punziano, the Philosopher and narrator, has a nasal timbre always prominent. Giuseppe Camerlingo does elicit a more dramatic interpretation from the instrumentalists of Cosarara, though the realization of the continuo by the organist, Maurizio Rea, is rather pedantic.

Tosi's only oratorio deserves a more sympathetic and better prepared recording, and also should have something this new release lacks—a complete libretto and translation (Tosi's manuscript, along with the original printed Italian libretto and its contemporary German translation are available on the website of the Austrian National Library).

BREWER

TRASI: *Guitar Pieces, 1988-2001*

Guido Fichtner, g; Federica Napoletani, s
Da Vinci 1061—69 minutes

Guitarist Guido Fichtner, who for a period of time partnered in a duo with composer Rino Trasi (b. 1960), presents Trasi's works for guitars.

Composed for 2 guitars with both parts performed by Fichtner, the opening, 8-minute 'Prelude' from *Il Compagno di Viaggio*, *Sonata Ciclica* sounds like an entire piece unto itself, with contrasting sections whose musical intent, ranging from quietly exploratory to deliberately driving, draws the listener through several moods. The following 'Andante', with its somewhat more contemporary language, sets a more somber atmosphere that contrasts with the lively 'Toccatà' that concludes the work. This work illustrates the inventiveness of the composer, whose knowledgeable use of the guitar is obvious, infusing the capabilities of the instrument with a creative flow of unexpected yet understandable harmonies and contrasting sections, each one offering deeply expressive opportunities for an excellent performer, and Fichtner respectably rises to the challenge.

Stepping further out into the world of contemporary composition that is difficult for the listener to understand, Trasi's *Anhelitus*, *Variations on a Theme of John Dowland* suggest allusions to Benjamin

Britten's *Nocturnal* but without the theme stated at the end.

Trasi's *Sonatina* is more accessible, with the opening movement, 'Do You Like Brouwer?' an entertaining take on several of the contemporary Cuban composer's idiomatic rhythms and compositional styles; and the concluding 'Postcard from Istanbul' is energetic and delightful; what a splendid encore piece this would make!

The concluding work on the program is scored for 2 guitars and soprano, and, with a story line about a suicide in post-WWII Paris, is strongly expressive and connects with a rawness that one will not soon forget. Soprano Federica Napoletani projects the wide range of emotions with clarity. Texts of the lyrics, or at least links to them and translations, would have been greatly appreciated.

Recording quality is excellent. Liner notes are helpful, and are especially appreciated by listeners not yet accustomed to contemporary music—but sometimes come off as more poetic than didactic.

MCCUTCHEON

TUUR: *Cello Concerto*; see Collections

USTVOLSKAYA: *Symphonies 1-5*

Sergej Merkusjev, narr; Jonas Ahonen, p; Barbara Kozelj, mz; Oliver Barlow, Arlo Murray, s;
London Philharmonic/ Christian Karlsen
BIS 2304 [SACD] 87 minutes

Galina Ustvol'skaya (1919-2006) was unyielding, severe, and hermetic, both in life and in her avant-garde music, particularly her later works. A college professor of mine once likened her music to laser cutting. There is a disarming directness and clarity of expression in her music and a sense of breaking it down to its barest elements. She was a student of Shostakovich, but famously renounced any influence from him or any other composer (he reinforced this, claiming he learned more from her than she from him). How much of this is true is certainly up for debate—she certainly was prone to self-mythologization and no composer can truly work in a complete vacuum—but her originality is undeniable.

Compared to her later works, her Symphony No. 1 (1955-56) is practically conventional, bearing some vestiges of the work of her peers, Shostakovich included—yet it

leaves a considerable and uncompromising impression. It is scored for 2 boy sopranos and orchestra (her only work with full orchestra) and consists of an instrumental prelude and postlude surrounding settings of 8 poems by Italian communist writer Gianni Rodari describing poverty, racism, and the ravages of capitalism in the United States. Ustvolskaya disavowed any choice in these poems and claimed they do not relate to her music; but there are clear moments where the music seems to resonate with the text—circular motives in ‘Carousel’, piercing winds imitating factory whistles in ‘When factory chimneys die’, and the high, blinding textures as if by the glare of the sun in ‘Sun’. Yet a sense of abstraction is also palpable, as there are moments when icy, yet impressionist color and texture between the orchestra and 2 boy sopranos seems to be foregrounded.

More than 20 years later, she wrote her astonishing Symphony No. 2, *True and Eternal Bliss!* (1979), which she considered her most important work. By this point, her sound is noticeably more severe and crystalline. Her style begins to truly eschew any attempt at thematic narrative, opting instead for theatrical ritualism. It is scored for a male reciter and a small orchestra of sextets of flutes, oboes, and trumpets, single trombone, tuba, piano, and bass and tenor drums. An obsessive and brutal march in the piano and drums sets the stage for non-developmental rhythmic and melodic motives that recur across the piece. It is otherwise dominated by clusters of sounds in the winds and the reciter’s anguished cry, his strangled, ecstatic prayers. The symphony leaves us in the gloom, its title laden with bleak irony.

Her sound is ever more hardened and concentrated in Symphony No. 3 “Jesus Messiah, Save Us!” (1983) for male reciter and a small orchestra of 5 oboes, 5 trumpets, trombone, 3 tubas, 3 drums, piano, and 5 double basses. Melodic motives are simple and unchanging—like at one point an obsessively repeated rising whole tone—and are heard in various colorful combinations. It is modeled on a bizarre sonata form led primarily by rhythm, with a development section for percussion alone. The reciter becomes more independent from the music, intoning the prayerful text in screams and whispers.

Symphony No. 4, *Prayer*, (1985-87) chal-

lenges the label of the symphony with a duration of barely 7 minutes and concentrated instrumentation: contralto, piano, trumpet, and tam-tam. The music is reduced to its barest, skeletal essentials of melody, rhythm, texture, and color. The contralto speaks directly to God in prayer, moving in solemn counterpoint with the trumpet against the piano and tam-tam.

Her final symphony, No. 5, *Amen* (1990), is scored for male reciter, oboe, trumpet, tuba, violin, and wooden cube—the last specified to approximate the sound of passing time. The overall sound, though still obsessive and unyielding, is more subdued and even numb as the reciter intones text based on the Lord’s Prayer. By now, the music doesn’t express or even comment on the text; instead, it is as if it is mocking and weakening the prayer.

This is one of the strangest and most original symphonic cycles. By her later works she is subverting the harmonious origins and connotations of the symphony and breaking it down to its purest building blocks. Stratified, isolating, and gloomy, prayers into the void left unheard—it’s a bleak, frightening vision but utterly unique and compelling all the same.

This is an important release—never before have all 5 symphonies appeared on a single disc and never have the performances and recorded sound been so good as this. Christian Karlsen is a truly sympathetic interpreter of this music—and you’d certainly need to be! He leads his performers to lean into the ugliness, the sharp edges, and the ritualistic theatricality. He also coaxes from them a purity of tone that makes her music disarming and imposing. This is certainly not music for everyone—you’ll either love it or hate it depending on your openness to the avant-garde. I, for one, am overjoyed to have such a valuable new reference recording for these beguiling works. Extensive notes, texts, and translations included.

FARO

VAINBERG: Songs

Jewish Songs, opp 13+17; *Akacje*, op 4; *Piesni*, op 22; *Stere Listy (Old Letters)*, op 77

Joanna Klisowska, p; Katarzyna Neugerbauer, p—Brilliant 97553—65 minutes

The music of Polish-born Mieczyslaw Vainberg (1919-60) is attracting a renewed level of interest. He is a complex and engaging

composer. Several recordings of his works for chamber ensembles as well as his large symphonic and vocal works have been produced since around 2003. Many have been reviewed in ARG, but this may be the first dedicated exclusively to his art songs.

The introductory essay by Aleksander Laskowski offers basic biographical information about the composer, noting that he began studies as a pianist at the age of 12 at the Warsaw Conservatory. In 1942 he fled Warsaw, settling in the Soviet Union, but his family was left behind, dying in the Holocaust. "He spent the rest of his life in his adoptive homeland, suffering from the bouts of Soviet antisemitism but also benefiting from the rich and well-subsidized cultural life in the USSR." Laskowski offers brief comments on the 4 poets here: Julian Tuwim, Adam Mickiewicz, Izik Lejb Perez, and Shmuel Halkin.

Vainberg's modern style is tonal, reflecting his childhood with popular Jewish music when he played in the Warsaw cafes, and his exploration of classical music in his adopted home. His friendship with Shostakovich and his knowledge of the music of Szymanowski certainly had an influence on his style.

The 5 collections on this album include songs in Polish and Yiddish, settings of both serious and whimsical poetry. *Jewish Songs*, Op. 13, are settings of Yiddish poetry by Izik Lejb Perez written in 1943. Also referred to as 'Children's Songs', the cycle begins and ends with a playful melody sung on 'la-la-la', juxtaposed against a more somber piano accompaniment. Vainberg's familiarity with Klezmer music is evident.

Akacje is a somber set with texts by Polish poet Julian Tuwim, perhaps Vainberg's favorite poet. Plaintive vocal melodies float above sparse piano accompaniments, creating a hauntingly beautiful effect in the second song, while the third, 'Jestes znnowu!@!' (You are again...) is energetic and driving, requiring brilliant outbursts from the pianist.

This is a beautifully performed program by 2 exciting performers. Klisowska has a clear and flexible lyric soprano voice, demonstrating a delicate quality in some songs while singing with great power in others. Listeners can hear the full gamut of emotions of these songs as she performs the challenging angular melodies, tastefully using portamento and straight tone.

Neugerbauer is a wonderful collaborative pianist, supportive of the vocal lines, but also excelling in virtuosic passages. The connection between these 2 outstanding musicians and the music is obvious.

Unfortunately, there are no translations in the booklet. Listeners will certainly enjoy hearing these exciting, mournful, and relatively unknown songs. Some may recognize the brief homage to Strauss's *Blue Danube Waltz* in the fourth song of *Stere Listy* (Old Letters), 'Walc Starych Panien' (The Waltz of the Old Maids). But the power and beauty of the poetry, the perceptive settings, and the performers' exquisite interpretations will not be fully understood if you do not understand Polish or Yiddish.

VALENTE

VANHAL: 4 Symphonies: in A, F, A minor, G minor

Munich Radio/ Ivan Repusic
CPO 555433—68:34

His dates are 1739 to 1813, so he was a contemporary of Haydn. He wrote 77 symphonies in a dozen years, ending in 1780, when he decided the market for them was weakening. At that point he took up sacred music.

We have reviewed quite a few recordings of his symphonies, and I have gone back to read many of those reviews—after listening to this new one. On this same label Mr Hecht reviewed one in May/June 2012. That was a "period" performance, which did not help it. The Munich Radio Orchestra, heard here, is not a "period" group but does go light on vibrato (too light for my taste).

Carl Bauman liked the Chandos recording by Matthias Bamert above all. I might also, knowing Bamert's proclivities. (We were born a few hours apart. Some would posit that that may be why we think alike when it comes to music—or at least feel it the same way.)

Paul Althouse reviewed a Naxos recording of Vanhal symphonies (none of these) in May/June 2022. I agree with him when he says Vanhal resembles Haydn but is less imaginative. He is energetic (Mr Hecht says "vigorous"), sometimes charming.

After listening I decided it's much like lesser Haydn—before Haydn became so great.

VROON

V **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *Symphonies 5+9*

London Symphony/ Antonio Pappano

LSO 900—75 minutes

In Sept/Oct 2021 I reviewed a CD of Ralph Vaughan Williams's Symphonies 4 and 6 with enthusiasm. Part of the reason was that Antonio Pappano seemed so comfortable directing VW's two most violent symphonies, and his interpretations were somewhat inventive. When I saw this new one with two more Pappano-led VW symphonies, I wondered if he was working on a complete set of VW symphonies. Symphonies 5 and 9 are quite different from 4 and 6. Given Pappano's interpretation of them, I am not as enthusiastic about that prospect as I was.

Pappano's recording of No. 5 sounds unlike any other I've heard, and it is not for the better. The first movement sounds too directed and does not float as serenely as the best recordings of this music do. Adding to the problem is some too-aggressive trumpet playing. II is jauntier than usual to good effect, and is more marked in rhythm than most recordings of this work. III is stately in a good way. It sings, and its middle section is more direct than usual with bright brass. The big brass chorale is nicely done; some moments are exquisite. IV is too fast and bright at first, though it does settle in. On the down side, Pappano's approach to that grand major chord in the brass is a bit too fast, thereby robbing this passage of some of its grandeur. Later the brass and timpani make their mark before the opening theme returns and settles things down.

Pappano's reading of Symphony No. 9 is a strong one, and the addition of 3 saxophones (2 altos and a tenor) is well handled. The beginning is fast in tempo, yet muscular, broad, powerful, and a little bright in the strings. A viola solo leads to a complete change of character. The opening to II is mysterious then marchlike and hushed in places. At first it suggests a continuation of I, but then it breaks into a march that offers nice contrast to the string melody that follows. Things get almost violent in the loud passage, but they are still controlled. The jaunty opening to III goes well, and the saxophones are quite interesting here. Things then turn weightier and more stately before going back to jaunty and even mocking. Some of this movement is aggressive until a

saxophone restores some lightness in approach. IV is clear-headed, direct, stately, and large in scale—sometimes recalling the Sixth Symphony—but eventually it turns a bit moody before leading to a big coda. This fine performance of the Ninth Symphony is the reason to buy this recording.

These nicely recorded Vaughan Williams symphonies sound different from the more Anglican standards led by Adrian Boult, Andre Previn, Vernon Handley, Andrew Davis, and other English conductors. For me it is too different, but it might appeal to people who have found these symphonies too English, proper, and/or dignified and want something different.

HECHT

V **VERRIJT:** *Flammae Divinae, op 5*

Emma Kirkby, s; Consort of Musicke/ Anthony Rooley

Brilliant 97007—63 minutes

It is a great irony that, after spreading their imitative polyphonic style so prolifically across Europe during the Renaissance, music from the Low Countries all but disappeared in the baroque era. But tastes change, and the stile concertato style, developed and practiced by Italian composers, came to dominate the musical culture. And so it is unsurprising that the extant works of Jan Baptist Verrijt, one of the few Dutch-born composers to have achieved some measure of fame in the early Baroque, are in the Italianate idiom.

This is a reissued program, first released in 2000 and reviewed favorably by Peter Loewen (Sept/Oct 2001). He noted that the works themselves are quite beautiful, "clearly composed by a very talented and mature composer", and deemed the entire project "well conceived". But some of the prefatory material seems to have been removed from this reissued version—unlike the original, no texts or translations are supplied, and the commentaries on each piece that Loewen alludes to have disappeared.

As usual, Kirkby, Rooley, and the Consort of Musicke offer artful interpretations of these otherwise under-recorded works. (The Netherlands Bach Society has recorded a few of these motets, and Musica Amphion programmed one on their "Music from the Golden Age of Rembrandt".) The motets are accompanied gently (if even unobtrusively) here by organ and lute. The

vocal passagework is lovely, fluttering delicately from one tessitura to the next. These soloistic moments are impressive, but I prefer the rich sonorities that are produced when the singers join forces, as in the homophonic expressions of “Ave”, in “Ave, Dulcis Iesu”, or the stunning suspensions that often precede Verrijt’s cadences.

The liner notes (which supply some context, cover Verrijt’s biography, and briefly describe the collection of motets) are in English, Dutch, and German.

WILKENING

VITTADINI: *Organ Pieces*

Maria Cecilia Farina
Tactus 882290 [2CD] 160 minutes

Franco Vittadini (1884-1948) was one of the group of Italian composers in the early 20th Century labeled as minor and mostly forgotten. He wrote 6 operas, ballets, and some sacred music. These organ pieces were written under the influence of the Cecilian movement, a response to the theatrical aspects of 19th Century liturgical music which advocated a return to the use of Gregorian chant and polyphony in choral and organ music. These are not virtuosic or concert pieces, but are intended for liturgical use. They are all under 5 minutes, tonal with modal inflections, of modest technical demands, and, for practicality, can be played on the harmonium. I found them bland, boring, and nondescript, with little of interest.

Farina plays on 4 organs: a 1837/1910 Serassi/Tamburini in the Fidenza Cathedral; a 1910 Lingiardi in the Basilica of the Holy Saviour in Pavia; a 1915 Tamburini in the Parish Church of St Clare of Assisi in Villachiaro; and the 1917 Tamuburini in the Parish Church of St Bartholomew in Quistello, Italy. Detailed notes on the music by the performer, but no specifications.

DEL CAMP

VIVALDI: *La Gloria & Imeneo*

Teresa Iervolino, mz; Carlo Vistoli, ct;
Abchordis Ensemble/ Andrea Buccarella
Naive 8877—54:39

This short serenade was commissioned by the French ambassador to Venice, Jacques-Vincent Languet, Count of Gergy, to celebrate the marriage of Louis XV and the Polish princess, Maria Lezczynska. It was first

performed on September 12, 1725 in the Palazzo Rizzo Pataro. Perhaps the next year, the ambassador also commissioned Vivaldi’s *Sena Festeggiante*.

Vivaldi’s autograph has no title and it is now referred to by the names of the 2 principal roles, Gloria (alto) and Hymenaeus (soprano), which were probably sung by castrati. There is no real plot, rather a series of arias and 2 duets whose texts praise the royal couple.

There were 2 earlier recordings of this serenade (Nov/Dec 1995). Mr Loomis noted that “neither performance is ideal”, an opinion I share. In the midst of his “Vivaldi” period, Robert King released a recording of both *La Gloria e Imeneo* and *La Sena Festeggiante*, and Catherine Moore had some reservations about the singers (Mar/Apr 2003). The overall style of King’s interpretation was subdued.

I have some reservations about the singers on this new release, in that Teresa Iervolino’s voice is not as flexible as needed for Vivaldi’s style, and Carlo Vistoli’s timbre sounds covered. The overall interpretation by Andrea Buccarella and the Abchordis Ensemble is much more engaging than the earlier recordings, and this new release would be my present recommendation. The booklet includes an informative essay and a complete libretto and translation. Another recording of *La Gloria e Imeneo* is due for release soon on the Versailles label.

BREWER

WAGNER: *Der Fliegende Holländer*

Brian Mulligan (Dutchman), Jennifer Holloway (Senta), Bryan Register (Erik), Ain Anger (Daland), Richard Trey Smagur (Steersman);
Hong Kong Philharmonic/ Jaap van Zweden
Naxos 660572 [2CD] 132 minutes

After recording all the operas in Wagner’s *Ring* cycle with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Jaap van Zweden now turns to Wagner’s first authentically Wagnerian masterpiece, the 1843 *Flying Dutchman*. The hallmarks of Zweden’s style are in evidence, with the big *forte* moments applied judiciously, keenly balanced and never blaring. His choice of tempos is good, and the orchestra plays with beauty and accuracy. The combined choruses of the Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Netherlands Radio are mellifluous spinning maidens and sailors, singing with refined articulation that

fits with Zweden's aesthetic. Even the boisterous Sailors' Chorus that opens Act III retains an elegant sheen. This is not your grandfather's smoldering *Dutchman*, but it makes for enjoyable listening.

3 of the principals are Americans. Baritone Brian Mulligan is a lyrical Dutchman for whom attention to the text is paramount. The opening monolog 'Der Frist ist um' has the compelling quality of great *lieder* singing. Some passages want more fullness of tone and solid legato, like 'Wie aus der Ferne längst' in Act II. Without thinking back to legendary Dutchmans of the past, compare the recent recording by Gerald Finley (conducted by Gardner), "whose technique more contemporary singers should emulate" (Reynolds, S/O 2025). But reservations aside, Mulligan's vocal timbre is consistently pleasing and his interpretation convincing.

The charismatic soprano Jennifer Holloway, despite some weakness in the lower notes (surprising for a former mezzo), cannily conveys Senta's mix of innocence and dark yearnings. The floating quality in her upper range is especially attractive. She and Mulligan have good chemistry in their central duet. The third American in the lead roles is tenor Bryan Register, an ardent Erik who lacks some warmth that would make the character more sympathetic.

In supporting parts, Daland is sung with character by the excellent Estonian bass Ain Anger. His sensitivity to text makes him a fitting partner to Mulligan in the Act I Dutchman-Daland duet. Israeli mezzo-soprano Maya Yahav Gour brings tonal clarity and color to Mary's interjections. Richard Trey Smagur, yet another American, is a congenial Steersman.

ALTMAN

WAGNER: *Excerpts from Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Parsifal, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, Tristan & Isolde; Siegfried Idyll; Huldigungsmarsch;*

WAGNER,S: *Overture to Der Bärenhäuter*
Bayreuth Festival Orchestra, Berlin Opera Orchestra, London Symphony/ Siegfried Wagner

Somm 5043 [2CD] 116 minutes

Siegfried Wagner (1869-1930), the son of Richard and the grandson of Franz Liszt, made a career in music, but never lived up to the legacy of his forebears. In 1908 he

succeeded his mother Cosima as general director at Bayreuth and stayed until his sudden death in 1930. He wrote 10 operas, none of which has entered the repertory. He also became a conductor, the results of which we can hear now. These recordings, all made between 1925 and 1927, are fortunately all electrical and sound remarkably good in these restorations by Lani Spahr.

Included here are the usual items. All but one are done in orchestral versions, so we hear favorites like Wotan's Farewell and the Liebestod without voices. The one exception is the Good Friday Spell from *Parsifal*, where Alexander Kipnis sings Gurnemanz and Fritz Wolff has the title role. A few are outside Wagner opera: the *Siegfried Idyll* (which was, after all, written as a birthday present to Cosima after the birth of this Siegfried!); the *Huldigungsmarsch*, written for King Ludwig II, and the overture to Siegfried's own opera *Der Bärenhäuter*.

The conducting on the whole is disappointing and seems uniformly slow and labored. Everything feels a bit gloomy and foursquare, and nothing is conventionally exciting. I would not, though, attribute my response to the age of the recordings—they are quite satisfactory. This is, then, a valuable document because it is an actual tie to Wagner, but if you want great performances from an earlier age, look at Furtwängler, who was only 17 years younger than Siegfried Wagner.

ALTHOUSE

WALTON: *Viola Concerto;*

HOWELLS: *Elegy for Viola, String Quartet, & String Orchestra;*

BENJAMIN: *Romantic Fantasy for Violin, Viola, & Orchestra*

Mathis Rochat, va; Abigel Kralik, v; BBC Wales/ Howard Griffiths

Evil Penguin 72—59 minutes

Might as well start with the best performance. *Elegy* (1917) by Herbert Howells (1892-1983) opens with a solo viola, here with Mathis Rochat (born in Geneva in 1994) creating a meltingly gorgeous, long-lined theme with luscious touches of portamento, especially in the instrument's deepest register. The music's romantic, melancholy moodiness brings to mind Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, especially with its use of a string quartet (presumably the orchestra's princi-

pals). Not only Rochat but Howard Griffiths and the BBC of Wales—and the balancing engineers—have created 9 minutes of seamless, integral musicality.

After that album opener, my expectations were high for the Viola Concerto (1929) by William Walton (1902-83). Once again, Rochat's playing is gorgeous, and each orchestral instrument serves its function in the balanced sound. All that is lacking is tension, drama, and an integral shaping of each movement. What happened to the long-lined continuity heard in the *Elegy*? In I Griffiths seems to be drily following directions but immune to Walton's moody melancholy. There's no emotional carry-over from the Howells. II likewise is accurate and well-rehearsed but without thrust or intensity. In III the sound is bright but not blended. Is the conductor or the engineer responsible?

The *Romantic Fantasy for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra* (1935) is by Australian Arthur Benjamin (1893-1960), who wrote the *Storm Cloud Cantata* used in "The Man Who Knew Too Much", both the 1934 and 1956 Hitchcock films. The Fantasy's 3 movements (24 minutes) are played without a break. The Nocturne is wistful with long-lined lyricism and portamento. In a quasi-development section and a cadenza, violinist Abigel Kralik, who is probably in her mid-20s, matches Rochat's style perfectly. (Kralik is American-born but steeped in Hungarian tradition.) The Scherzo is rather like the middle movement of Walton's Viola Concerto with its "rapid chase" motif full of scales and arpeggios. The Finale opens with light, rapid teasing as in Berlioz's Queen Mab music, whereas the second theme is lyrical and (again) Walton-like. It's an upbeat, sparkling, light conclusion, maintaining the feeling of a rhapsody—perhaps the freest of musical structures. Excellent work, excellent performance.

This is my first encounter with both the *Romantic Fantasy* and the 2 soloists. More, please, from Mathis Rochat and Abigel Kralik, 2 gorgeous players steeped in the traditions of great string players in the early and mid-20th Century.

FRENCH

WILLAERT: *Laudate Deum Mass; madrigals*
Dionysos Now!/ Tore Tom Denys
Evil Penguin 75—52 minutes

Dionysos Now! returns with yet another program dedicated to Adrian Willaert, one of the Flemish composers who immigrated to Italy, bringing his characteristic imitative polyphony to the chapels of Rome, Ferrara, and Venice. The album opens with 4 madrigals—evidence of Willaert's early experimentation with the novel genre (and its associated techniques) of his adopted country. 'Amor mi fa morire', for instance, is a typical poetic lament about the sweet pain of love, filled with clever moments of word painting: the "mi fa" of the first line ("Amor mi fa morire", or "Love makes me die") is aligned with the corresponding pitches in the tenor line, before "morire" is treated with fleeting dissonances. The line "e pur il vo seguire" ("And yet I still long to follow it") appears imitatively each time, with the voices quite literally following one another. The centerpiece of the program, however, is Willaert's *Laudate Deum Mass*—a polyphonic setting of the Mass Ordinary. This parody mass (modeled on the eponymous motet of Johannes Mouton) is weighty, both in terms of time (around half an hour) and polyphonic density.

This recording brilliantly illuminates the counterpoint; the listener can hear each of the musical lines as they smoothly weave around one another. This clarity is partly owing to the wonderful purity of the singers' tones—there is not a speck of vibrato to distract! Countertenor Franz Vitzthum's sound is particularly striking; his melismas positively soar. But the recording itself is also well balanced. When I reviewed the previous installment (Adriano 5, Nov/Dec 2024), I found it too resonant and lacking in clarity. Not so in their sixth disc: the sound is lively and lush, but allows the intricacy of this music to come through clearly.

Liner notes in Dutch and English, with English translations of texts.

WILKENING

WINTERBERG: *Piano Sonatas 1-5*
Jonathan Powell—EDA 54—79:36

A fascinating album containing the complete sonatas by Hans Winterberg. It should

be noted that Powell is the first pianist to do such a recording. Performances of music by Winterberg are very rare. I could find only one other pianist—Brigitte Helbig, who recorded the first two sonatas with other piano works.

Powell's playing is dynamic and professional. He is a thinking pianist. His cerebral qualities come across from the way he varies sound and articulation, displaying a sort of strategic coldness that guides the craft of these interesting pieces. This kind of playing is an invitation to the listener to pay attention and engage. Unlike the entertainer-pianist, who feeds the listeners with a shiny spoon, Powell puts the complexity of text above cheap theatrics.

The music of Winterberg is absolutely enchanting through the delivery of Powell. It stirs the soul on many levels. It's very appropriate these days to play and record composers of Jewish descent. Europe has become once again a dangerous place for the Jews. Deep feelings of guilt led to empathy that opened the doors to immigrants from certain countries. As Mehdi Hassan himself admitted in an article from 2013—in these communities anti-Semitism isn't merely tolerated, but it's mainstream. The Europeans unfortunately became a prime example of the eternally ambivalent truism uttered by Chernomyrdin—our intentions were the best, but the result turned out to be as always.

SOLOMONICK

WOLOSOFF: *Matisse Fantasies; Blues for the New Millennium*
Deborah Buck, Michelle Ross, v; Clarice Jensen, vc; Narek Arutyunian, cl; Bruce Wolosoff, p—Avie 2810—48 minutes

New York composer-pianist Bruce Wolosoff (b. 1955) draws inspiration from the blues, his wife, visual artist Margaret Garrett (b. 1965), and Armenian-born New York clarinetist Narek Arutyunian (b. 1992). On this recording, he joins Arutyunian on his *Matisse Fantasies* (2022) for clarinet and piano trio and his *Blue Mantra* (2024) and *Blues for the New Millennium* (2000) for violin, clarinet, and piano.

Deborah Buck is an Assistant Professor of Violin and the Head of Strings and Chamber Music at SUNY Purchase, near the Connecticut border; California native Michelle Ross is a New York based Grammy Award-

winning violinist, composer, and improviser; and cellist and experimental composer Clarice Jensen, also based in New York, writes scores for film and television.

The music is affable and genteel; and the renditions are polished and pleasant, even if the clarinet tone is sometimes a little thin. Clarinetists may find some nice ideas for future recitals.

HANUDEL

YSAYE: *Solo Violin Sonatas*
Roman Simovic
LSO 5130 [SACD] 71 minutes

This is a very impressive recording—one of the finest sets of the Ysaye sonatas. The virtuosity is of the rarest quality. Sound quality and intonation are nearly perfect, and the style almost always persuasive, with a whimsical and improvisatory character from beginning to end. The rubato is mostly tasteful, though sometimes the text gets distorted. There is no justification, for example, for the way he suddenly pulls back the tempo on some of the runs in III, holding some notes for a very long time, contrary to what is printed. It seems more like a concession that he is not quite able to play it at lightning speed more than a musical thought. It comes across like a lack of musical integrity; it is one thing to take time or push forward, but it is another to alter the rhythm entirely.

KELLENBERGER

It is unlikely that many of us will be famous, or even remembered. But not less important than the brilliant few that lead to fresh achievements are the unknown many whose patient efforts keep the world from running backward; who guard and maintain the ancient values, even if they do not conquer new; whose inconspicuous triumph is to pass on what they inherited from their fathers, unimpaired and undiminished. Enough for us to hand on the torch and not let it down, content to win the affection...of a few who know us.... The destiny of mankind is not governed wholly by its stars.

—FL LUCAS: *STYLE* (1955)

Collections

Collections are in the following order: orchestral, chamber ensembles, brass ensembles, bassoon, cello & double bass, clarinet, flute, guitar, harp, harpsichord, miscellaneous, oboe, organ, piano, trumpet & brass solos, viola, violin, wind ensembles, early, choral, vocal.

Eugene Ormandy

Philadelphia Orchestra: Columbia Stereo
1958-63

Sony 774328 [88CD]

Sony is releasing all of Eugene Ormandy's recordings that were originally on Columbia and RCA. We have had two monaural boxes already, one with the Minneapolis Symphony, and one of Columbia recordings of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Here is the first box of the Columbia stereo recordings. A few recordings from later are included as couplings where appropriate. The CDs are released with original cover art and liner notes. Most of this music has been previously reviewed on earlier releases; if I can, I note the issue of the review.

The editor wrote a two-page Profile of Eugene Ormandy (Nov/Dec 1999), to which I direct the reader's attention.

CD 1: RESPIGHI: *Pines of Rome; Fountains of Rome; Roman Festivals*. This recording of *Pines* and *Fountains* has long been my favorite. *Roman Festivals* was originally coupled with Sibelius. These are still highly regarded in our Overview ("glorious playing in every department"—July/Aug 2010)

CD 2: GROFE: *Grand Canyon Suite*. I have enjoyed this recording for years. Mr Haldeman, in his review of a reissue, agreed (Sept/Oct 1996).

CD 3: PROKOFIEFF: Symphony 5. In his review (July/Aug 1994), the Editor used the words lush, glorious, and beautiful. It is great.

CD 4: GRIEG: Piano Concerto; RACHMANINOFF: Paganini Rhapsody, with Philippe Entremont. Entremont has a hard touch; there is no doubt the piano is a percussion instrument. Grieg is beaten down bloody and bruised. Rachmaninoff comes out no better. Ormandy plays everything very straight with no sensitivity.

CD 5: SIBELIUS: Symphonies 2+7. Ormandy's Symphony 2 was recommended in our Overview (July/Aug 2014). He has the measure of Sibelius. Highly enjoyable, with sympathetic, powerful playing.

CD 6: This CD is called *Rhapsodies*, and has LISZT: *Hungarian Rhapsodies* 1 and 2, with ENESCO: *Romanian Rhapsodies* 1 and 2. There is a bonus piece, Liszt's *Liebestraum*, recorded years later. The editor has some nice things to say about the Enesco in the Overview (Sept/Oct 1999); this sort of music, though well played, always leaves me cold.

CD 7: DELLO JOIO: *Air Power Symphonic Suite*. This was the music from a 26-part 1956 CBS television series on air flight from Kitty Hawk to the space program. It's grand and sweeping sometimes, but a bit corny as well. Mr Raymond gave this a positive review when it was reissued (Sept/Oct 1997).

CD 8: BIZET: *Carmen Suites*. The reissue on Sony Essential Classics includes the two suites from *L'Arlesienne* as well. Presumably they will be in the next box. I compared this performance with Stokowski's recording on the CBS label, also paired with the two *Arlesienne* Suites. Ormandy's sound is more immediate, Stokowski's more recessed. There is more hall presence with Stokowski. Stokowski also characterizes each movement more. I am happy with both recordings.

CD 9: Sinfonias Concertantes by MOZART and HAYDN plus Haydn's Trumpet Concerto. These are the wind symphony concertantes, with absolutely terrific playing by the principal musicians of the orchestra: John De Lancie (oboe), Anthony Gigliotti (clarinet), Gilbert Johnson (trumpet); Mason Jones (horn), Bernard Garfield (bassoon), Lorne Monroe (cello), and Jacob Krachmalnick (violin).

CD 10: PROKOFIEFF: *Peter and the Wolf*, narrated by Cyril Ritchard, with BRITTEN: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. Cyril Ritchard is a classical British actor who doesn't talk down to the listener. He reads the narration straight, with meaning and clarity. Ormandy has a grand time with the music.

CD 11: TCHAIKOVSKY and MENDELSSOHN Violin Concertos, with Isaac Stern.

Stern and Ormandy do not seem to be in agreement on this music. It's not obvious but after listening several times, I'd say that Ormandy is conducting a warhorse and Stern is playing a sensitive and romantic piece of music.

CD 12: BRAHMS: Symphony 1; Handel Variations—a set of 25 variations and a concluding fugue, all based on a theme from Handel's Harpsichord Suite No. 1. Rubbra orchestrated it in 1938. This is a big-bones reading of the symphony, moderately paced but rich in sound. The violins sing out sweetly and do not shriek, which is important for me. The timpani are always present and firm when playing but do not overwhelm the strings.

CD 13: "The Lord's Prayer" with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Here are 16 tracks of hymns and choral movements from classical works such as Mozart's Requiem, Handel's *Messiah*, Gounod's *St Cecilia Mass*, and Brahms's German Requiem. There are also excerpts from Gounod's *Redemption* and Robertson's Oratorio from the Book of Mormon. The hymns include 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic', 'Ave Maria' by Schubert, 'O My Father', 'How Great the Wisdom and the Love', 'David's Lamentation', 'Londonderry Air', 'The Lord's Prayer', and 'Psalm 148: Lord, Who Hast Made Us for Thine Own', by Gustav Holst. The last 5 tracks are labeled Volume 2 in the booklet and have a slightly different sound. Everything is sung in English, and almost everything is clearly understandable. With 'Londonderry Air' and the last 5 tracks, the chorus blends into a mush of vowels, and who knows what they are singing? This is a very American sounding choir with very hard Rs. Most of the selections are slow, and this is hard to listen to straight through. 'For Unto Us a Child is Born' from *Messiah* is taken from Ormandy's complete recording (see below).

CD 14: FRANCK: *Symphonic Variations*; D'INDY: *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*, with Robert Casadesus. Superb sensitive playing from all concerned, a glowing reading.

CD 15: LISZT: Piano Concertos. Philippe Entremont plays with much feeling and sensitivity.

CD 16: TCHAIKOVSKY: *1812 Overture*; BORODIN: *In the Steppes of Central Asia* and *Polovtsian Dances*; MOUSSORGSKY: *Night on Bald Mountain*. 'Galop' from *Mas-*

querade, 'Saber Dance' and 'Dance of the Young Maidens' from *Gayane* by KHACHATURIAN; Polka from *The Golden Age* by SHOSTAKOVICH; Galop from *The Comedians* by KABALEVSKY; Hopak from *Sorochintsky Fair* by MOUSSORGSKY; Polonaise from *Christmas Eve*, 'Dance of the Tumblers' from *Snow Maiden*, and 'Slava!' by RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF. The first 4 pieces are substantial Russian showpieces and are given the full treatment with glorious full orchestral colors and grand conducting designed to bring out the best each piece has to offer. The short dances that fill up the CD are from another LP and are lively and colorful. The transition from the end of a quiet *Night on Bald Mountain* to a very loud Galop will wake you right up.

CD 17: DEBUSSY: *La Mer* and *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*; RAVEL: *Daphnis & Chloe* Suite 2. This is a beautiful CD, but having just heard Pretre's recording of *Daphnis and Chloe* (Jan/Feb 2025) I am aware of what more there could be. Compared to Pretre, Ormandy is pedestrian.

CD 18: TCHAIKOVSKY: Piano Concerto 1; CHOPIN: Concerto 2. Eugene Istomin is known for his chamber music performances, and here he brings that chamber music sensitivity to what are usually termed warhorses. He makes me hear new things in this music, and I am very glad to have these performances.

CD 19: MOZART: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, BACH: Air on the G String, CORELLI: Christmas Concerto, and MENDELSSOHN: Scherzo from the Octet. This is very impressive string music, with everything played to perfection.

CD 20-21: HANDEL: *Messiah*. The sung text is in the liner notes, if you have a strong enough magnifying glass to read it. This is the Mormon Tabernacle Choir with Eileen Farrell, Martha Lipton, Davis Cunningham, and William Warfield. The recording is abridged, and about half of Part 2 and Part 3 are not here.

CD 22: RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *Le Coq D'Or* Suite, *Russian Easter Overture*; GLINKA: *Ruslan and Ludmila* Overture; TCHAIKOVSKY: *Marche Slave*; BALAKIREV: *Islamey*. This is the sort of music that Ormandy excelled at and the Philadelphia Orchestra with its lush strings and virtuosic winds and brass played so well.

CD 23: HANDEL: *Royal Fireworks Suite* and *Water Music Suite*, with CORELLI: Suite

for Strings. Historic music performance purists will hate this disc but I love it, and wish it were longer. The *Royal Fireworks* is arranged by Hamilton Harty and the Water Music (only 6 movements) is arranged by Ormandy. I wish Ormandy had given us more.

CD 24: TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony 5. This is still my preferred recording after all these years. It is one of our Overview's top choices as well.

CD 25: RACHMANINOFF: Symphony 2. This is another powerful performance, but I prefer a little more romance in this most romantic of symphonies. Ormandy plays it a little too straight, but it is very grand and beautiful.

CD 26: SHOSTAKOVICH: Cello Concerto 1, with Mstislav Rostropovich (premiere recording); also Symphony 1. Both performances highly recommended by our Overviews. The concerto was praised as "electric" (Mar/Apr 2006) and the symphony was praised as "irresistible, especially for the great Philadelphia winds" (Nov/Dec 2009).

CD 27: MENDELSSOHN: Piano Concertos; excerpts from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Rudolf Serkin is the piano soloist in a classic recording recommended in our overview (Nov/Dec 2003). He is appropriately brilliant in the first concerto and romantic in Concerto 2. I have had these recording for years, first on LP and then on CD (coupled with Isaac Stern's recording of the violin concerto). The MND excerpts are the Overture, scherzo, intermezzo, and nocturne. This is a disappointment, with a booming bass and heavy chords that overwhelm the delicate melodies in the strings and winds.

CD 28: BRAHMS: Violin Concerto, with WIENIAWSKI: Concerto 2. Isaac Stern, though closely miked as was the practice at the time, is sweet and flexible in the Brahms. Ormandy matches him phrase by phrase, and it's a beautiful performance.

CD 29: DEBUSSY: *The Martyrdom of St Sebastian* (complete) with Hilde Gueden (soprano) and Vera Zorina (narrator). This is all in French, and very clear, so it is easy to follow along. There is no libretto or notes. The narration is not tracked separately, so one cannot program it out and just listen to the music. Much of the music is melodrama; that is, spoken word with a musical background. This also is not tracked sepa-

rately. The way most people can hear this music is the 4-movement extract, subtitled Symphonic Fragments.

CD 30: PROKOFIEFF: Symphony 4 (revised 1947). In 1929, Prokofieff composed a ballet for Serge Diaghilev based on the Biblical parable of the Prodigal Son. He used much of this music to form his 4th Symphony, but it was not well received. After World War II he substantially revised it and expanded its orchestration, but his music was banned in the Soviet Union by Stalin. The symphony was not performed until after his (and Stalin's) death (the same day). Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra gave the US premiere in 1957. As I listen, its ballet origins are clear. It's a superb piece, whose reissue is long overdue.

CD 31: BRAHMS: Piano Concerto 2—Serkin. Here Brahms gets a grand, serious treatment. Our reviewer said Serkin "grabs the work with his two hands and tries to subdue it", and that Ormandy "brings romantic urgency to the music". (Nov/Dec 1990) I'm not sure I can quarrel with this, but I'm also not sure I want it to sound like a life-and-death struggle every time I listen to it.

CD 32: TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony 6. "This recording alone would place Ormandy among the great conductors, and the Philadelphia among the very greatest orchestras." (Overview, Jan/Feb. 2001) Every note is in the right place and it all sounds beautiful. It has moments of heartache, to be sure. One can't listen to the beginning of IV without being moved by the pain of the soul.

CD 33: SIBELIUS: *Swan of Tuolena*; Violin Concerto with David Oistrakh. This is the classic recording that is one of the standard recommendations, with good reason. Oistrakh is sweet, the orchestra practically glows, and Ormandy conducts everything perfectly.

CD 34: ORFF: *Carmina Burana*. Ormandy's is one of the great recordings, now sounding better than ever. The engineers have given every movement its own track, so you can repeat your favorite parts. Our Overview (Nov/Dec 2000) says "convincing singing", "majesty", and "tremendous impact".

CD 35: RAVEL: *Bolero*; *Alborada del Gracioso*; *Tombeau de Couperin*; *Pavane pour une Infante Defunte* and *La Valse*; *Espana* by

CHABRIER, *Clair de Lune* by DEBUSSY. The producers did a good job combining two LPs into one French (and mostly Ravel) CD. This is music that Ormandy did better than anyone else, in sound that can't be beat (Jan/Feb 1991).

CD 36: VINCENT: Symphonic Poem after Descartes; Symphony in D. John Vincent (1902-77) was an American composer, conductor, and educator who was Schoenberg's successor at UCLA as professor of composition from 1946 to 1969. The Symphony is in one 18-minute movement, falling into two sections: an allegro moderato, which is very lyrical, and an allegro, which is more rhythmic. The Symphonic Poem after Descartes is a tribute to the philosopher, especially the Meditations, with the famous quote of "I think, therefore I am" performed rhythmically by the timpani, followed by a fanfare of trumpets. Mr Vincent has only one mention in our Index—a prior release of this recording (Sept/Oct 1997). (A second Vincent recording is for Simon Vincent's music.) Our reviewer said, "For a conductor who gets so little respect, Eugene Ormandy certainly made a lot of excellent recordings, and this is one of the most interesting."

CD 37: 3 pieces by JS BACH arranged for orchestra by Ormandy, and one symphony by Bach's son Johann Christian—Tocatta and Fugue in D minor; Sinfonia for Double Orchestra, Op. 18:1; Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C; and Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor. Ormandy proves to be an able orchestrator as well as a great conductor.

CD 38: VIVALDI: *4 Seasons*, with solo violinist Anshel Brusilow, the Philadelphia concertmaster. Ormandy reduces the orchestra to appropriate proportions and achieves magic. This is a disc that purists will scoff at but it will give plenty of enjoyment to someone who just wants to listen to good music.

CD 39: Scandinavian program pieces. GRIEG: *Peer Gynt Suite* No. 1, ALFVEN: *Swedish Rhapsody* 1; and 3 works of SIBELIUS: *Valse Triste*, *Finlandia* (with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir), and *En Saga*. The central theme of *Finlandia* was used as a patriotic hymn, and the choir sings that hymn translated into English "edited into this recording", as the booklet says. The music is done extremely well and is the kind of thing Ormandy was most famous for.

CD 40. Zino Francescatti performs two

violin concertos: the WALTON, and the LALO *Symphonie Espagnole* with Dmitri Mitropoulos conducting the New York Philharmonic. This CD is also in the big Mitropoulos box I reviewed recently (Jan/Feb 2025) but I didn't comment on it separately. Francescatti is a powerful, commanding violinist with a strong vibrato. Ormandy offers sympathetic support, making every subtle nuance of the score audible. Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* is performed without the 'Intermezzo' (III), as was common at the time. Mitropoulos conducts in his "faster and louder" style, not paying much attention to details or nuances. For both of these pieces I prefer Joshua Bell in his recent retrospective box from Decca (July/Aug 2025).

CD 41. 4 VIVALDI concertos for two violins and orchestra, with Isaac Stern and David Oistrakh—R 514, 509, 517, and 512. The first 3 are in minor keys, and the last is in D major. Stern and Oistrakh play in such perfect synchronization that it sometimes seems like one player with two violins and bows. This is beautiful music, but not for period instrument purists.

CD 42. RACHMANINOFF: *Symphonic Dances*; CASELLA: *Paganiniana* (July/Aug 1993) Our review of the reissue of the Symphonic Dances praised Ormandy's "tremendous excitement and passion", and "subtlety and shimmering beauty". The reviewer did not care for the saxophone, but I like it. It adds the right touch of earthiness. *Paganiniana* is a 4-movement work by Alfredo Casella. It is played with great brilliance and panache, but there is not a lot of heart or emotion. The recording of this piece had a great introduction to the classical music audience with its coupling, but was not reissued until now.

CD 43. Serenade for Strings. TCHAIKOVSKY: Serenade; BORODIN: Nocturne; BARBER: Adagio; VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Fantasia on Greensleeves; GRIEG: 2 Elegiac Melodies; SCHUBERT: Serenade; MACDOWELL: 'To a Wild Rose'; MASSENET: Meditation from *Thais*, with Anshel Brusilow, violin. Our Overview (Jan/Feb 2001) praises the Tchaikovsky as "simply wonderful". The booklet notes that in addition to Ormandy's usual cut in the Finale, he also omits bars 91-209 in I. The "simply wonderful" comment also applies to the rest of the pieces here.

CD 44. JOHANN STRAUSS: 'Voices of

Spring', 'Emperor Waltz', 'Vienna Blood', 'Blue Danube', and 'Tales from the Vienna Woods'. Ormandy isn't just playing rump-tum waltz music here: he treats each piece as almost a tone poem. We get the full Philadelphia sound, complete with harps, every small theme and nuance brought out so the listener can enjoy it.

CD 45: YARDUMIAN: Passacaglia, Recitative, and Fugue, with John Pennick, p; *Veni, Sante Spiritus*; *Cantus Animae et Cordis*; Symphony No. 2 (*Psalms*) with Lili Chookasian, alto. Richard Yardumian (1917-85) was an American composer of Armenian heritage, who began composing at the age of 14. The Great Depression and World War II interrupted his studies, but then in 1945 Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra performed his *Desolate City*. After this, there followed a long association with Ormandy and several recordings. The CD brings together two LPs, one with the symphony and one with the other pieces. The music is eloquent and has a spiritual basis, and is clearly in the same sound world as Alan Hovhannes.

CD 46: REGER: Piano Concerto, with Rudolf Serkin. Max Reger's piano concerto has half a dozen reviews in our index, the most recent from Sept/Oct 2009, where Mr O'Connor gives a detailed description and says, "It's a thick, turgid piece...difficult to bring off. ...But it has fared well on records, probably because it's not a work anyone would tackle frivolously." Serkin and Ormandy rise to the occasion, giving a probing, thoughtful reading to this most intricate concerto.

CD 47: WEBER: *Invitation to the Dance* (orch. Ormandy); *Euryanthe Overture*; LISZT: 'Mephisto Waltz' 1; SAINT-SAENS: 'Danse Macabre'; BRAHMS: Hungarian Dances 17-21 (orch. Dvorak); GLIERE: 'Russian Sailors' Dance'; WEINBERGER: Polka and Fugue from *Schwanda*. This is sparkling, toe-tapping music that Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra could record as freely and as well as anything else. When the Weinberger comes on in all its glorious stereophonic sound, I finally understand why Ormandy recorded it so many times. In 1931, when he stepped in as a substitute for Toscanini, this piece was on the program. As it happened, some record executives from RCA were in the audience that night and wanted to record it with Ormandy. What we hear on this disc is

undoubtedly similar to what they heard, and no wonder they offered Ormandy a contract on the spot. This recording got Ormandy his first recording contract, and he made several monaural recordings of this piece.

CD 48: BERLIOZ: *Symphonie Fantastique*; SAINT-SAENS: Bacchanale from *Samson and Delilah*; DUKAS: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. The Berlioz is a classic recording, but not one of the select few to make it to the top of the overview's recommended list. That's OK. It's highly enjoyable and very well played, though not in the French style (like the top-rated Munch recording) and there is no obbligato cornet in II (as in some other recordings). The Saint-Saens and the Dukas are perfect companion pieces, very slick and sleek.

CD 49: STRAUSS: *Ein Heldenleben*. I am not a huge Strauss fan, but this is well played and works fine for me. Comparing it to the top-rated Beecham recording, I can hear reasons it is not as highly rated by connoisseurs. The solo violinist is not as voluptuous, and the conducting is not as stylish as Beecham's. Beecham is able to get more out of these musical phrases by his subtle emphases and highlighting.

CD 50: CHOPIN: Piano Concerto 1; LISZT: *Totentanz*. Alexander Brailowsky is the soloist. When the Chopin concerto begins, I am pleasantly surprised. Ormandy, in his earlier monaural recording and his later stereo RCA recording, favored a bass heavy balance, with the violins barely audible. They come through very clearly in this recording. Brailowsky also plays very lyrically. *Totentanz: Paraphrase on Dies Irae* (to give the work its full title) is a bracing antidote to the lyricism of the Chopin concerto. It's a set of variations for piano and orchestra; some are lyrical, some are blood and thunder. I can't imagine it better played.

CD 51: WALTON: *Belshazzar's Feast*, with Walter Cassel, baritone, and the Rutgers University Choir. With ROUSSEL: *Bacchus et Ariane*, Suite 2. This is a vigorous performance of a 20th Century oratorio, in the English tradition. With a huge modern orchestra and full percussion section, this sounds a little like Vaughan Williams crossed with Prokofieff. It's hard to make out what the chorus is singing sometimes, but the words are printed on the back of the CD sleeve. Walter Cassel (1910-2000) was an American baritone with a career at the

Metropolitan Opera from 1942 until he retired in 1974. In 1961, when he recorded this, he was in good voice. *Bacchus et Ariane* was written in 1930 for the Paris Opera ballet. Roussel extracted two suites from it, and Suite No. 2 was arranged by Charles Munch and first performed by Pierre Monteux in 1934. The music shows the strong influence of Debussy and Ravel, with exotic orchestral colors, complex rhythms, and strong harmonies. In both of these works, Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra find themselves working with music that shows their strengths.

CD 52: RAVEL: Left Hand Piano Concerto. MOZART: 2-piano Concerto, with Robert and Gaby Casadesus. Casadesus was a specialist in Ravel and Mozart, and these are perfection.

CD 53: BARTOK: Violin Concerto 1 (op. post.); VIOTTI: Concerto 22. Isaac Stern gave the first New York performances of Bartok's first violin concerto, and this is the first recording. There are two movements. I is an andante, and II is an allegro giocoso. I don't think the piece holds together, especially in II. Our Overview (Mar/Apr 2001) says: "[Bartok] was right to leave it on the shelf; you should too." Giovanni Viotti (1755-1824) was an Italian violinist and composer who knew Haydn and Beethoven. Concerto 22 is lyrical and allows the violinist to express the most flowing musical expressions. In both of these works, Isaac Stern plays with great power and virtuosity. Even though the musical value is slight, the entertainment value is high.

CD 54: MOZART: Piano Concerto 22 & Sonata 4, with Philippe Entremont. Fine, cleanly executed recordings that, compared to recent performances I have heard are just a little faceless. There are so many places where the pianist plays a very plain line, which Mozart would probably have ornamented (and which pianists today ornament). Styles have changes in 60 years!

CD 55: TCHAIKOVSKY: *Sleeping Beauty* (extended excerpts). The notes on the back of the sleeve explain the action well enough; the music is enchanting. This is the recording ARG has consistently recommended since it was first issued.

CD 56: FRANCK: Symphony in D minor. From a mysterious quiet low rumbling beginning to a blazing major chord at the end of the first movement, Ormandy leads

the orchestra in a sensitive and stunning reading.

CD 57: TCHAIKOVSKY: Violin Concerto. This is the first time I have heard David Oistrakh playing this. I was struck by Oistrakh's incredible phrasing and dynamic control. It's as if he is having a conversation with Ormandy and the orchestra, with the listener overhearing it. It's amazing and I have never heard anything like it. At the beginning of the cadenza the violinist plays very high pitches. I have heard a lot of performances of this concerto. Almost always this cadenza is played with poor intonation and sounds either flat or sharp. Oistrakh plays it perfectly in tune, on pitch. In III there is a phrase that begins in the oboe and is answered by the clarinet. The oboe plays the phrase again, and the clarinet replies again. The oboe plays the phrase a third time and the reply this time comes from the English horn. Then the violinist plays the phrase, which is answered by the cello. This is repeated back and forth by different instruments and finally by the orchestra, and is an exquisite moment as played here.

CD 58: BRAHMS: Piano Concerto 1. This recording is an interesting contrast between the strong contribution of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the sensitive, poetic artistry of Rudolf Serkin. In most of the recordings I have heard, the pianist tries to out-bravura the orchestra. Not so much here. Serkin wins through charm.

CD 59: TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake* (extended excerpts). As with *Sleeping Beauty*, this is the recording most often recommended by ARG.

CD 60: STRAUSS: *Don Juan; Death and Transfiguration*. Quite simply beautiful. But given the subject matter, more than beauty is required; these readings skim the surface. For more meaningful performances, consult our Overview (May/June 2005).

CD 61: The BACH Family. JS Bach's sons. Johann Christian Bach (1735-82) was Bach's youngest son—known as the English Bach. Eugene Ormandy arranged his Sinfonia for Double Orchestra in D for large orchestra. Its 3 movements (fast-slow-fast) last about 14 minutes. It is elegant. Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's (1720-84) Sinfonia for 2 flutes and strings in D minor is in two movements played without a break, slow-fast. The CPE Bach is a Concerto for Orchestra in D, transcribed by Maximilian Steinberg. But wait! The booklet tells us this is not CPE at

all, but Henri Casadesus “in the style of CPE Bach”. Whoever wrote it, whether it’s an 18th Century original or a 20th Century pastiche, it’s 16 minutes of pure charm.

CD 62: TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony 7. This was actually written before Symphony 6. Tchaikovsky sketched it out but was not happy with it so he turned it into his third piano concerto, which he was not able to complete before he died. The second and third movements were orchestrated by Taneyev. In the 1950s, composer Semyon Bogatyrev took the sketches of the symphony, the piano concerto, and various other works that Tchaikovsky had written and massaged them together into a workable form. The album notes give the full details. Does it work? To a certain extent, it does. It’s much more convincing than some attempted 4 movement reconstructions of Schubert’s Unfinished Symphony I have heard. This is a recording I have had in one form or another for the last 20 years, and here it is again. I’m glad for it.

CD 63: Carnival in Vienna. 3 waltzes and 8 polkas. First, by Josef STRAUSS, we have the ‘Fireproof! Polka’. This is really fun, with a percussionist ringing a fire engine bell at certain spots. The rest of the album is by Johann Jr: ‘Tritch-Tratch-Polka’, ‘Roses from the South’, ‘At the Hunt Polka’, ‘New Pizzicato Polka’, ‘Thunder and Lightning Polka’, ‘Explosions Polka’, ‘Wine, Women and Song’, ‘Annen Polka’, ‘1001 Nights’, and ‘Light of Heart Polka’. Many of these dances are new to me, and Ormandy never lapses into routine. He always treats each one as a miniature tone poem.

CD 64: RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *Scheherazade*. It seems that Ormandy’s recording gets no respect, yet it’s sensitive, thrilling, and in great sound, with Anshel Brusilow playing his heart out in the solo violin part. The standout recordings are London Symphony/Stokowski on Decca and Royal Philharmonic/Beecham.

CD 65: “The Glorious Sound of Christmas”, with the Temple University Choir. Here are 13 traditional Christmas songs, plus SCHUBERT: ‘Ave Maria’, BEETHOVEN: ‘Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur’ (sung in English as ‘The Worship of God’), and HAYDN: ‘The Heavens are Telling’ from *The Creation*. All are performed exactly to the score, with perfect triangle and other percussion playing and fine singing. The arrangements sound contemporary to

the 1950s, which is the wrong period for me, and I kept visualizing Doris Day being involved. You might like it.

CD 66: DELIUS: *Brigg Fair; Dance Rhapsody 2; On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring; In a Summer Garden*. The sound is spacious, detailed, rich. It is glorious. I compared it to Beecham (all except *Summer Garden*). Although Beecham’s way with the music is without equal, his sound is not as good. Ormandy’s readings are his own; not inferior to Beecham’s, but different. They are a little weightier and a little grander. As the editor said in his review of a reissue (Nov/Dec 1996), “Today I would have to have both [Beecham and Ormandy].”

CD 67: BARATI: Chamber Concerto; ROCHBERG: Symphony 2. New York Philharmonic/Werner Torkanowsky in Rochberg. George Barati (1913-96) was a cellist and composer who came from his native Hungary to America in 1938. He studied composition with Roger Sessions and played in the San Francisco Symphony. His Chamber Concerto is scored for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Strings. It is lyrical and dissonant. It is in 4 movements (July/Aug 1999). While the liner notes point out Rochberg’s use of serial techniques and tone rows in his symphony, what most struck this listener was the composer’s inversion of the rhythmic theme of Beethoven’s Fifth. This recording has been reissued to great acclaim (Jan/Feb 1998).

CD 68: SIBELIUS: Symphony 1; Violin Concerto, with Isaac Stern. Ormandy directs a powerful reading of the symphony. Beautiful strings and sound. I have listened to Stern’s recording of this concerto many times over the years, and he always seems to run out of steam in III. Heifetz doesn’t have that problem, but he has never moved me. I usually end up listening to Marcovici. (Overview, July/Aug 2014)

CD 69: Organ and Orchestra, with E Power Biggs. POULENC: Organ Concerto; STRAUSS: *Festive Prelude*, with New York Philharmonic/Bernstein; BARBER: *Toccata Festiva*. The Poulenc was commissioned by a French princess who wanted an easy piece she could play at home with friends. She was expecting something along the lines of Poulenc’s *Concert Champetre* for harpsichord and strings, light and bubbly. Poulenc had a religious conversion during the work’s composition and created something more serious. The work is in one move-

ment, with 7 contrasting tempo markings. The organ part is rather simple—chords and scales mostly—while the small string orchestra plays around it.

The *Toccata Festiva* was commissioned for the installation of a new organ at the Academy of Music. This piece and the Poulenc are played on that organ, an Aeolian-Skinner. The *Festive Prelude* was commissioned for the opening of a new concert hall in Vienna and given its premiere in 1913. It was performed at the opening week at Philharmonic Hall, Lincoln Center by the New York Philharmonic, as recorded here in 1962.

CD 70: BARTOK: Piano Concerto 1, Serkin with George Szell; PROKOFIEFF: Piano Concerto 4, Serkin with Ormandy. Bartok's 1 is a difficult piece to love, spiky and violent with powerful rhythms. Serkin has its measure (Mar/Apr 2017). Prokofieff's concerto is for the left hand, commissioned by Paul Wittgenstein but never played by him. Serkin and Ormandy gave the US premiere in 1958.

CD 71: This is My Country: The World's Great Songs of Patriotism, with Mormon Tabernacle Choir. There are 10 songs, as originally issued. Then there are 6 tracks from another album, and 5 of them are instrumental only. All vocal performances are in English. Among the songs are 'Land of Hope and Glory' (Elgar); 'On Great Lone Hills' (*Finlandia*); and 'Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean'. The instrumental pieces are SOUSA: 'Washington Post March'; KAY: 'Walkabout'; IVES: Variations on 'America'; COPLAND: 'Hoe-Down'; SMITH: 'The Star-Spangled Banner'. The Smith arrangement of our national anthem is not as familiar as the Sousa arrangement, and it's nice to hear something different. In some of the songs, awkward word placement results in wrong syllables being emphasized.

CD 72: BARTOK: *Bluebeard's Castle* (complete, in English). Rosalind Elias (Judith), Jerome Hines (Bluebeard). This recording does not include the spoken "Once upon a time" introduction by a narrator over the instrumental prelude, as in Dorati's Hungarian language recording on Mercury (Sept/Oct 2025). Elias was 30 when she recorded this and is in great voice, coaxing and demanding at the same time. Hines, who was about 10 years older, has such a deep voice it's sometimes difficult to distinguish his words. To be fair, this is a problem

I have with most sung texts. Much of what the composer wants to communicate is in the pitch, dynamics, and tempo of the notes, and often the listener can be moved by just those qualities of the music without catching each word.

CD 73+74: BACH: Mass in B minor. Eleanor Steber, Rosalind Elias, Richard Verrau, Richard Cross; Temple University Choirs. Text and English translation. Ormandy is using as many musicians as are needed for each movement. It's a very moving performance of a work I have often thought was dry and dull. Eleanor Steber and Rosalind Elias are in youthful vigor and have such purity of tone that in their duets and solos I want to hit the repeat button. This is my first exposure to Richard Verrau (1926-2005), a French-Canadian lyric tenor who specialized in the French repertoire. This is also my first exposure to Richard Cross, an American bass baritone (b. 1935) who has retired from the stage. At the time of this recording, he was actively working with the Philadelphia Lyric Opera.

CD 75: WAGNER: *Lohengrin*: Act III Prelude; *Siegfried*: 'Forest Murmurs'; *Meistersinger*: Act III Prelude, 'Dance of the Apprentices', 'Entry of the Masters'; *Tannhauser*: Overture and Venusberg music; *Siegfried Idyll*. Such velvety-smooth strings, such musical brass! The Lohengrin prelude is not as exciting as some other conductors make it (Leinsdorf) but it is more musical. (Nov/Dec 1989)

CD 76: SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony 4. The first American performances were given in 1963 by the Philadelphia Orchestra, and this recording followed. It's a powerful work, biting and sarcastic as Shostakovich often is, with moments of beauty and warmth. In Sept/Oct 1996, Mr Hansen gave this recording a glowing review.

CD 77: WALTON: *Facade*; IBERT: *Divertissement* and *Escapes*. The narrator in *Facade* is Vera Zorina. The narration is very tricky, like a Gilbert and Sullivan patter song but without melody. It has to be performed very quickly and perfectly in rhythm and in time with the music or it won't come off. I have heard the classic recording by Edith Sitwell, and Zorina is wonderful and even better because one doesn't have to adjust for the English accent. *Divertissement* is a 6-movement suite from the incidental music to a comedy, *The Italian Straw Hat*. *Escapes* (Ports of Call) is a 3-movement work depict-

ing a Mediterranean voyage, with stops in Rome, Tunis, and Valencia. Both are among Ibert's most popular works, played here brilliantly (March/April 1997).

CDs 78+79: MOZART: Bassoon, Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet Concertos. Bernard Garfield, bn; William Kincaid, fl; John DeLancie, ob; Anthony Gigliotti, cl. Fine recordings with exemplary playing and conducting. The Overview (Sept/Oct 1994) says they could easily be first choice for most listeners. But I think I will always want to hear the clarinet concerto performed on an extended range instrument, and David Shifrin's recording is usually on my player (Delos, July/Aug 1999). Gwydion Brooke's Bassoon Concerto recording with Beecham always wins my heart (EMI, now Warner), but Garfield's is a close second.

CD 80: YARDUMIAN: Symphony 1; Violin Concerto with Anshel Brusilow. These two works are lyrical and sound American. There are moments that sound like Hovhanness and moments of pure Blues. I don't understand why Yardumian is not programmed more often.

CD 81: SAINT-SAENS: Symphony 3 (Organ); *Carnival of the Animals*. E Power Biggs, organ; Claude Frank & Lilian Kallir, p. The symphony is in 2 movements, performed without a break. Each tempo change has its own track, and there is an unfortunate split-second break in sound between track 6 and 7 in the last movement. Both works are stylish and powerful. I compared the Organ Symphony to the French recording with Jean Martinon and found several differences I liked on that recording. Martinon emphasizes the rhythms and the quick note patterns; his timpanist plays with hard mallets; his trumpets play in the French manner (with vibrato). Overall, it's more exciting. His organist, Bernard Gavoty, plays on an organ in the Church of St Louis des Invalides. It's a reedy instrument, with quite a different sound from Biggs. I also listened to Ormandy's later recording on Telarc, which is too smooth.

CD 82: 12 marches. SOUSA: 'The Stars and Stripes Forever'; MEYERBEER: Coronation March from *Le Prophete*; BEETHOVEN: Turkish March from *Ruins of Athens*; GOUNOD: 'Funeral March of a Marionette'; GOULD: 'American Salute'; VERDI: Triumphal March from *Aida*; BIZET: Prelude to *Carmen*; HERBERT: March of the Toys; SCHUBERT: March Militaire; PROKOFIEFF:

March from *Love for 3 Oranges*; STRAUSS: 'Radetzky March'; KNIPPER: 'Meadowlands'; ELGAR: 'Pomp and Circumstance'. Everything is played as in a concert hall setting, not a theatre setting. The opera extracts do not sound like they would in the opera. Dynamics and balances are perfectly judged for the concert hall.

CD 83: BRAHMS: German Requiem (in English), with Phyllis Curtin, Jerome bar; and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. We are not told who did the translation. Phyllis Curtin and Jerome Hines, both with extensive opera careers, seem too large for their roles here. The chorus is fine, but most of the time one can't understand what they are singing, and that's the whole point of singing in the vernacular. Stick with Klemperer; or, if you must have English, the Telarc recording conducted by Craig Jessup.

CD 84: PROKOFIEFF: Symphony 6. This is the top-rated recording in our overview (Jan/Feb 1997). It has sweep, grand balletic movement, and terrific sound.

CD 85: MOZART: Piano Concerto 7; BACH: 3-Piano Concerto; Italian Concerto. With Robert, Gaby, and Jean Casadesus. I like Bach on the piano, so this works for me. The French pianist family here has the perfect light touch. They also work together in the 3-Piano Concerto by Mozart.

CD 86: CHOPIN: *Les Sylphides*; Nocturne; DELIBES: *Sylvia*, *Coppelia* (excerpts from the suites). The Chopin ballet was first performed in 1906—arrangements of piano pieces for orchestra by Glazounov, beginning with a prelude and ending with the Grand Valse Brillante. Most of the pieces are waltzes or mazurkas, just the sort of danceable music one needs in a ballet. Ormandy used an arrangement by the English composer, Roy Douglas. The two suites from the Delibes ballets have all the best music, including the pizzicato from *Sylvia*.

CD 87: STRAUSS: *Don Quixote*, with Lorne Munroe, vc; Carlton Cooley, va; BLOCH: *Schelomo*, with Leonard Rose, cello. Two good recordings, but outclassed by the competition (Munroe's later recording of the Strauss with Bernstein, and Rostropovich in the Bloch).

CD 88: RACHMANINOFF: Piano Concertos 1+4; with Philippe Entremont. Dutiful performances. If you must have Ormandy, get his monaural recording with the composer. The one to have for best playing and

sound is Peter Rosel with Sanderling on Berlin (July/Aug 2023).

BALLEW-RENFRO

American Collection

ELLINGTON: *The River excerpts*; **COPLAND:** *Billy the Kid Suite*; **THEOFANDIS:** *Rainbow Serpent fr Dreamtime Ancestors*; **RANDS:** *Symphonic Fantasy*; **THOMAS:** *Of Our New Day Begun*

Yale Symphony/ William Boughton
Nimbus 6462—76 minutes

The recorded sound is outstanding, “demonstration quality”, and certainly adds a lot to this highly enjoyable program with excellent repertoire and first-rate orchestral playing. There is no shortage of the Copland on records, and this is as fine a rendition as any of the best recordings I’ve heard. But for me the real treasure is the Ellington—I would have gladly sacrificed some or all of *Billy the Kid* for more of *The River*, of which we get 4 movements here. (Naomi Main’s notes suggest there are at least 7 movements to this loose ballet score.)

The program opens atmospherically with the Ellington. Boughton and his young players convey the portent and mystery of the first movement, ‘Spring’, with superb nuance, from the discordant horn calls that open it to the expansive melody later in the movement. The orchestra gets into the jazzy swing of the next movement, ‘Meander’, which progresses with far more purpose than its title suggests, followed by the lively, brass-accented ‘Giggling Rapids’. Much longer than the other movements, the sophisticated ‘Lake’, with its dance-band influenced rhythms is a tone poem in itself. Wonderful music superbly played—I just wish there were more!

As the name of the orchestra indicates, the Yale Symphony is the university’s student orchestra, but their playing here is as polished as many major orchestras. It is fascinating to read thru the roster and see so many players from the classes of 2026, 27, and 28 and realize that these people are still in college and play this well. Conductor Boughton is a name many of us recognize from Nimbus recordings made in the UK in the 1980s and 90s. He’s been teaching at Yale since 2013 and directing the orchestra since 2018. He has honed his ensemble to a

level on par with his English Symphony in those older recordings.

Despite how much I’m taken with the Ellington, the heart of this program is really the 3 works by living composers, 2 of them, by Rands and Thomas, getting their first recordings. The very helpful album notes are written by the composers.

Christopher Theofandis’s short (6 minutes) *Rainbow Serpent* takes its inspiration from the creation story of the Australian aboriginal people. The serpent of the title created the surface of the earth, then left a rainbow in its wake. According to Theofandis, the music uses “the strings and vibraphone to create a melodic line where certain notes ‘stuck’ and lingered beyond the movement of the melody, evocative of this aboriginal being carving rainbows through air”. This compact yet powerful music IS very evocative and superbly orchestrated.

Bernard Rands set out to create a work that is a tribute to one of his favorite pieces, Sibelius’s Symphony No. 7. But his notes contain a warning for, “Anyone listening (hoping!) for music that sounds like Sibelius is doomed to disappointment! I am not in the plagiarizing business! What I strived to create is a self-contained piece of music for orchestra with its own voice, vocabulary, nuances, mysteries, ambiguities, and energies in a stylistic unity [that] at the same time pays respect and tribute to the Sibelius.” I’d say the composer achieved exactly that with his Symphonic Fantasy! It does share with the Sibelius a certain cool, forbidding quality, a sparseness of instrumentation, and a restless, wide-ranging series of moods. But no, it is not in any way a copy of the Seventh Symphony. Mr Rands and William Boughton are close friends; the work is dedicated to the conductor. Is it possible for there to be a better performance of the Symphonic Fantasy to be committed to a recording? Yes. Is it likely? Not very likely at all, I suspect!

Omar Thomas’s *Of Our New Day Begun* was composed in response “to honor 9 beautiful souls who lost their lives to a callous act of hatred and domestic terrorism on the evening of June 17, 2015, while worshiping in their beloved sanctuary, the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.” According to Thomas, the piece is anchored by the old song “Lift Every Voice and Sing” (actually sung, by the orchestra, at about the

6 minute mark) mixed with blues melodies and harmonies. This dramatic, 10 minute work covers a lot of emotional ground from anger and outrage to, at the end, some degree of serenity. It is brilliantly orchestrated and delivers an emotional gut punch to the listener. It takes the program, which started so ominously with the first movement of the Ellington, full circle to end on a powerful but equivocal note. I would really like to hear this piece played by my local orchestra!

The outstanding playing by the orchestra is one of the glories of this album. Boughton guides them with a sure hand that keeps the music moving forward and concentrated without stifling the emotional energy—outstanding leadership to match the playing. And yes, as I noted at the beginning of this review, the sonics engineered by Matt LeFevre and Benjamin Schwartz (credit where it is due!) are superb—spacious and open but not diffuse, with a firm, solid bass that does not boom, and a clean sheen to the string instruments. There is so much detail and subtle nuance in the orchestrations of all of these pieces, ably captured by the sonics, which added a lot to my enjoyment of this program.

HANSEN

French Concert

LALO: *Namouna Suite 1*; **DEBUSSY:** *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*; **ROUSSEL:** *Bacchus and Ariane Suite 2*; **DUKAS:** *Sorcerer's Apprentice*

Les Siecles/ Francois-Xavier Roth
Harmonia Mundi 902736—61 minutes

This album is from a concert on January 10, 2023, at Paris's Champs-Elysees Theater, celebrating the 20th anniversary of this 19th-Century period-instrument orchestra's founding by François-Xavier Roth.

First of all, the theater's acoustics generally deaden the sound. The instruments are not projected. When *ff*, they sound like they're shouting, and the sound is distorted (crackling, overloaded)—I was afraid my speakers would be damaged. When *pp*, the music becomes two-dimensional, depersonalized, and swallowed up by the theater. This makes the *Namouna Suite* intolerable: violins distorted, brass wiry and excessively bright. The orchestra sounds as if it's "down

there". Also, the music's textures are cluttered; blame both Roth and the engineers.

The same with Debussy's *Afternoon of a Faun*. Even this tender work borders on distortion. Also, the solo flute can't make up her mind about using vibrato, and her tone is pedestrian. Nor does Roth illuminate the piece's inner details.

Even worse is the solo violin that opens Roussel's *Bacchus and Ariadne*, Suite 2. Not only does he play with a hollow tone, but it apparently was necessary to make an after-concert edit in his solo at 00:18. (A number of times I suspected edits in the other works as well.) After the brief, prosaic, rhythmically square introduction, Roth's pacing becomes vibrant as he builds drama and sustains excitement, right to the end of the 20-minute work. Still, too many inner details remain muddled, and in the big final measures the orchestra's ensemble almost falters twice. In this work Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra can't be beat in their 1960 recording of Suite 2 (see review above). My runner-up is Jean Martinon with the Chicago Symphony, still available in an RCA 10-CD box.

Midway through the Roussel, I decided that, for any gratification, I simply had to risk turning up the volume—and I did find it more engaging. It also seemed that the distortion heard earlier had lessened. In fact, it all but disappeared in Dukas's *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Once again, in the introduction, Roth's rhythmic sense is utterly foursquare. Once past that, he maintains an alert pace that at first seems unvarying but becomes engaging, even thrilling, by the end. Still, no one can match Charles Munch in this work in 1957, whose Boston Symphony on RCA seems almost possessed, as the tempo and volume slyly impel one toward an orgasmic climax. When Munch was hot, he was incomparable.

FRENCH

Russian Trios 9

Grechaninoff, Tcherepnin, Amfitheatrof, Weinberg

Brahms Trio
Naxos 574690—76 minutes

The work that stands out here is by Daniele Amfitheatrof (1901-83), who spent most of his life in Italy (hence the first name). He studied with Respighi and never went back

to Russia. His music (from 1932) is less Russian sounding than the others. Some think they detect touches of Mascagni and Puccini. It's quite beautiful.

The other trios are not very moving—often quite ordinary. Grechaninoff (1864-1956) lived in Paris and then in New York but always sounded Russian, though not always inspired.

Jacob Weinberg (1879-1956) also came to New York and should not be confused with Moïshe Vainberg (Weinberg), a Polish composer who spent most of his life in Russia. This Weinberg studied with Taneyev. His trio is “on Hebrew themes”. It is compared in the booklet to a child playing with blocks. There are references to those themes as well as themes from other composers. It is not striking, but it repays careful listening.

Alexander Tcherepnin (1899-1977) was one of a family of Russian composers. He spent time in Paris and got to know Honegger and Martinu there. In Russia he knew Rimsky-Korsakoff, Liadov, Glazounov, Stravinsky, and Prokofieff. He doesn't have their gifts. His music lacks “soul”. The booklet mentions the audible influence of French modernism and the Russian avant-garde and its “emotional restraint”. His trio only takes 8 minutes; the others take more than 20 each.

Despite the dates of the composers these are early works, written from 1925 to 1943. The Tcherepnin is the most modern sounding, though it is the earliest.

VROON

Postcards from Ukraine 2

KOSENKO: *Violin Sonata*; **LIATOSHINSKY:** *Violin Sonata*; **STANKOVYCH:** *2 Pieces*; **BARVINSKY:** *Trio 1*

Markiyán Melnychenko, v; Josephine Vains, vc; Peter de Jager, Stewart Kelly, p

Toccata 43—73 minutes

Viktor Kosenko (1896-1938) wrote his two-movement violin sonata in 1927 in a late-romantic style. It is good music, and the violin playing is lovely. Hints of modernism appear in II. Boris Liatoshinsky (1895-1968) wrote his 3-movement sonata in 1926, and it comes from a more troubled, expressionist world. The music evokes actors in silent films clutching their breasts and necks in tortured agony. Their inner turmoil is

unbearable. The music is deep and poignant, and the performers execute it with skill and understanding.

Yevhen Stankovych (born 1942) wrote two duets for violin and cello in 1972. I is quiet and dissonant, with many long, held tones. It briefly grows animated, and returns to its motionless void. II is a fiery rhythmic presto. Vasyl Barvinsky (1888-1963) composed his piano trio in a Gulag, but the Soviet authorities destroyed his works. Years later he was recalling them to life, but he died, leaving 3 movements of an unfinished trio. I has emotional depth. Aching romantic themes seek after not only love, but beauty. II has some of the loveliest playing in the strings one will hear. III is warm and optimistic, not the greatest in its dramatic narrative, but the commitment of the performers is such that they pull the life out of it. The writing is of a very high quality, and rare in its ability to grab the heart with longing and wistfulness for some other place and time.

KELLENBERGER

Estonian Bassoon Concertos

Korvits, Tamberg, Tuur

Martin Kuuskmann, Estonian Symphony/
Mihhail Gerts—Orchid 100384—61 minutes

In August 2021, University of Denver bassoon professor Martin Kuuskmann traveled back to his native Tallinn to record 3 early 21st Century Estonian works for bassoon and orchestra with compatriot and maestro Mihhail Gerts and the Estonian National Symphony.

Tonu Korvits (b. 1969), a longtime professor at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, weaves postmodern impressionism into his single-movement tone poem *Beyond the Solar Fields* (2004). Eino Tamberg (1930-2010), renowned for his neo-romantic 3-act opera *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1974) after the 1897 play by French dramatist Edmond Rostand (1868-1918), crafts a theatrical ambiance in his 4-movement Bassoon Concerto (2001).

Erkki-Sven Tuur (b. 1959) adapts his two-movement Cello Concerto (1999) for bassoon. At almost 17 minutes, the opener is more than 3 times as long as the finale.

Each piece pits the soloist against a gigantic vibrant orchestra that reverberates with thunderous proclamations and casts

tranquil eerie spells. In front of this, the bassoon sings, wails, grunts, and engages in virtuosic displays. Kuuskmann and the orchestra are thoroughly professional, with resonant timbres, expert technique, heartfelt phrasing, and uncanny special effects. The program, though, is very filling; and the invested listener may seek a Haydn string quartet or some coffeehouse jazz to wind down.

HANUDEL

American Vignettes

Pann, Garrop, Paulus, Frank, Puts, Bonds
Aron Zilkowicz, vc; Christina Wright-Ivanova,
p—Toccatà 23—73 minutes

Aron Zilkowicz and Christina Wright-Ivanova present a recital of American pieces for cello and piano, mostly written in the last 40 years and drawing from a wide range of folk songs and popular idioms.

The showstopper work here is Stephen Paulus's *American Vignettes* (1988), a set of virtuosic variations on recognizable American folk songs, of similar character to those in Aaron Copland's *Old American Songs*. Paulus's settings are more rustic and ram-bunctious, culminating in a delightfully free-wheeling account of 'She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain' that must be heard to be believed. 'Manhattan Serenades' (1995), a light, though demanding early work of Gabriela Lena Frank, is also worthy of note, heard here in its first recording. A bluesy central movement is encompassed by two bubbly, jazzy movements, the latter calling for improvisation from both players. Her writing for both instruments is exceptional—cellists and accompanists take note!

The remaining pieces include 'Troubled Water' (1952) by Margaret Bonds, a superbly written concert paraphrase on the spiritual 'Wade in the Water'; a lushly romantic 'Air' (2004) by Kevin Puts; *Differences* (1996), a suite of contrasting dances by Carter Pann, ranging in influence from folk and blues to pop and musical theatre; and *Noir Vignettes* (2014) by Stacy Garrop, a short suite purporting to explore noir motifs like cigarettes and femme fatales. The pieces by Pann and Garrop are written competently for the instruments and give surface enjoyment, but both fall too easily into cliché. As a noir fan, I was especially curious

about Garrop's piece, but was disappointed by how little it explored its subject matter.

The best pieces here make this album worth your time—along with the superb playing from Zilkowicz and Wright-Ivanova, who give all these works strong personality, directness, and clarity. Great recorded sound and extensive liner notes.

FARO

Latin Connections

Aquarelle Quartet; Sara Dowling, p, vc, voice
Chandos 20376—57 minutes

The Aquarelle Guitar Quartet formed in 1999 at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, and has performed worldwide with several recordings to its credit. On this recording, the quartet combines talents with multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Sara Downing.

As boundaries between classical music and other styles can blur, so does the music on this excellent recording, with technical and compositional elements combined with flawless execution that one would expect of classical musicians using Latin American dialects of jazz and improvisation to excite the listener from beginning to end.

'Salt of the Earth' by English composer and saxophonist Andy Scott (b. 1949), catapults us into a high energy rollercoaster ride arranged by quartet member Mike Baker from a concluding movement from a tuba concerto. It makes one wonder just how impossibly good that tuba player who premiered the work must have been!

Following is Clarice Assad's creative arrangement of Lennon and McCartney's 'Blackbird' with Downing playing the piano and singing a unique take on the melody, keeping most of the notes but definitely making it her own with delightful scating and the quartet responding in kind.

An inventive arrangement of Hermeto Pascoal's 'Bebe' adds Downing's piano and voice to the quartet, with sections that take a variety of tempos.

The program flows with varied textures, with Downing playing solo piano and soulfully singing Jobim's 'Por Causa de Voce' in Portuguese, followed by a spicy arrangement for piano and quartet of Chick Corea's 'Armando's Rumba' and Ismael Ledesma's engaging 'A Mi Pueblo', originally composed for Paraguayan harp.

Recording quality is excellent, and liner

notes are very informative but not in order of the recorded tracks.

Each track is a gem, but while listening to this recording I became convinced that if your “dance gene” has been inactive, even for many years, this music could well activate it. Listen to Jobim’s ‘Lamento no Morro’ and Pixinguinha’s ‘Um a Zero’—rhythmically compelling and brilliantly performed. You WILL want to move and dance!

MCCUTCHEON

Between Worlds: Song of the Birds

Avi Avital, mand—DG 486 7526—62 minutes

Mandolinist Avi Avital, reviewed in ARG many times for his excellent and varied programming as a soloist, presents a stirring collection of world music where his principal role is that of music director coordinating the efforts of chamber players and the Ensemble Rustavi Choir from Georgia. Avital also participates in the ensemble.

Arranger David Bruce contributes a stunning arrangement of Falla’s ‘Danza del Amor Brujo’ from *El Amor brujo* with flamenco guitarist Jose Quevedo ‘Bolita’ and flamenco singer Marina Heredia, giving us authentic insight into the raw origins of Falla’s more “cultured music”. Bruce’s arrangement of a traditional Sicilian ‘Virinedda’ uses the orchestra players, who perform flawlessly in tutti passages; the work ends with a distinctly smaller, renaissance chamber feel.

The entire program flows from emotion to emotion and is captivating. Avital paints with a palette full of depth and color, ranging from vocal solos such as the traditional Pugliese ‘To To To’ to the instrumental Sephardic song ‘Esta Montana d’Enfrente’. Contributions from contemporary Turkish pianist and composer Fazil Say (b. 1970) fit in seamlessly. The program concludes with Falla’s ‘Andaluza’ (from *4 Spanish Pieces*) followed by the title track, ‘Song of the Birds’, a Catalan favorite of Pablo Casals.

Recording quality is first-rate, especially considering the several different venues. Liner notes are helpful but would have benefited from including lyrics or a link to them.

For a memorable, unique experience of the world of music, listen to this recording in its entirety. I couldn’t stop.

MCCUTCHEON

Harmonies of the New World

Orlandini & Luco Guitar Duo

Naxos 579164—54 minutes

A unique program of Latin American music for two guitars in a variety of styles. Chilean guitarist Luis Orlandini and one of his accomplished students, Raimundo Luco, formed a duo in 2021.

Opening the program, Guido Santorsola’s *Suite all’antica* offers a welcome peek at this composer’s baroque or romantic side, quite different from his 2-Guitar Concerto and other contemporary-sounding works.

The often-contrapuntal *Musica para 2 Guitarras* by Carlos Farinas (1934-2002) shows the strong connection between the performers with effective, abrupt dynamic shifts and contrasting moods.

The program concludes with 4 world premiere recordings by Chilean composers beginning with Carlos Zamora’s ‘Azares’, a delightful addition to the guitar duo repertoire, giving us enough structure to hold onto during a wild ride to the end. Commissioned by the duo, the final 3 works are all interesting, beginning with Oscar Ohlsen’s ‘Desde mi terraza’, 3 short but effective tonal and expressive movements. Concluding the program are ‘Los Guitarristas’ (2024) by Eleonora Coloma Casaula and *Ludoteca* by Florencia Novoa, clearly the most obtuse pieces on the recording, requiring a lot of work on the part of the performers to deliver this complex music.

Liner notes by the duo are brief but informative and enough to help the listener understand music that is new to us. In the booklet we are treated to a hilarious photo of the duo with Orlandini’s guitar raised over the head of a quizzical but smiling Luco, bringing to mind a typical teacher-student relationship!

Bravo to these two fine musicians for taking their relationship to this point!

MCCUTCHEON

Concertos and Movements

Bjarke Mogensen, accordion; Aarhus Chamber Orchestra/ Magnus Piejdrup

Orchid 100393—51 minutes

The major piece here (22 minutes) is the Accordion Concerto by Ukrainian composer Ihor Shama (from 1981). The notes tell us that he treats the accordion almost like an organ, with sustained chorales and contra-

puntal textures". It's rather attractive—at least until the frenzied final movement (Toccatà).

Anders Koppel (born 1947, not to be confused with many other Danish Koppels) gives us 2 movements from a concerto, arranged by Mr Mogensen—somewhat odd. The final 15 minutes is an obnoxious Concerto 2 by Ole Schmidt (1963). People left the room when I played it.

Mr Mogensen is Danish, and his profile on the album cover is not flattering. A picture inside is better. He must be in his 30s or 40s.

VROON

Her Voice

Chaminade, Delaplain, Esmail, Grandval, Price, Schumann

Theresa Delaplain, ob; Miroslava Panayotova, p—MSR 1854—62 minutes

University of Arkansas professors Theresa Delaplain and Miroslava Panayotova present a recital of original works and transcriptions by female composers for oboe and piano.

Clara Schumann (1819-96) wrote her 3 *Romances* for violin virtuoso and close friend Joseph Joachim (1831-1907); and Clemence de Grandval (1830-1907) completed her 4 *Pieces*, for English horn, for eminent oboist, teacher, and Paris Conservatory professor George Gillet (1854-1920). Meanwhile, in her short 'Capriccio' for violin and piano, Cecile Chaminade (1857-1944) fashioned an encore for instruments she studied in childhood.

Little Rock native Florence Price (1887-1953), whose first symphony was performed by the Chicago Symphony in 1933, continues her rising profile in recent years with *Song Without Words*, originally for solo piano. Delaplain (b. 1959) submits her own *Monet Suite*, about a set of 5 paintings by the famous impressionist; and Indian-American Juilliard graduate Reena Esmail (b. 1983) explores the 5 types of yoga breathing in *Pranayam*.

Delaplain appears more comfortable on the English horn than her parent instrument. On the former, she manages consistent fundamentals and a nice plaintive quality; but on the latter her basics need work. Her oboe tone is sometimes pleasant, yet mostly hollow; her tuning wanders from

acceptable to poor; her low register is wobbly; and her legato is occasionally bumpy. And even though she boasts a solid command of dynamics, her phrasing and ideas are usually pedestrian. This is too bad, because the scores have merit; and Panayotova's fine and thoughtful piano playing is not enough to elevate them.

HANUDEL

Toccatas and Meditations

RAVEL: *Toccatà*; **VIERNE:** *Meditation*; *Toccatà*; *Clair de Lune*; **DURUFLE:** *Meditation*; *Toccatà*; **GUILMANT:** *Premier Meditation*; **BOELLMANN:** *Toccatà*; **WIDOR:** *Meditation*; *Toccatà*

Dariia Lytvishko, org

Naxos 551488—58 minutes

An interesting program of oft-recorded pieces, save for the Ravel arrangement, played in a vigorous and energetic manner. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Lytvishko has played some 40 benefit concerts raising money for various aid organizations. She plays on the 4-manual, 35-stop Grenzing organ in the Baurenkirche, Iserlohn, Germany. Unfortunately the room is acoustically dry, recalling the immortal words of Thomas Murray: "French organ music in a dry room is a transcription". Notes on the music with specifications.

DELCAMP

American Dream

SUESSE: *2-Piano Concerto*; **BEACH:** *2-Piano Suite*; **BABIN:** *2-Piano Concerto 2*

Ludmila Berlinskaya; Arthur Ancelle; Victor Hugo Orchestra/ Jean-Francois Verdier, Laurent Comte

Alpha 1171—65 minutes

This new recording by the acclaimed Russian-French duo presents 3 little-known American compositions for two pianos. Dana Suesse (1909-87) was born in Kansas City and composed mostly popular music. But she did study with Nadia Boulanger in Paris and, like Gershwin, began to compose in a more "classical" vein. Alas, she lacked Gershwin's genius. Frankly, her concerto is a piece of trash that should never have been recorded.

Amy Beach's *Suite for Two Pianos Founded Upon Old Irish Melodies*, Op. 114, has more substance but also does not strike

me as one of her best works. The most enjoyable piece here is the concerto by Victor Babin (1908-72), a renowned duo pianist himself. It is in an appealing neoclassical style and has a brilliant and technically demanding part for the soloists.

Berlinskaya and Ancelle play with perfect ensemble, and their technique is admirable. But I am not impressed with their musicianship here. When the music is lyrical, they sound wan and uninvolved; when it gets virtuosic, they get hard and clangorous. It is true that the concertos, in their different ways, do not give them much opportunity to bloom. But they could have made more of the Beach suite. The orchestra also does not make much of an impression. So this release is a bit of a disappointment.

REPP

Small Treasures

SCHUMANN, R: *Waldszenen; Arabeske; SCHUMANN, C:* *4 Fugitive Pieces; Impromptu; POULENC:* *3 Novelettes; TAILLEFERRE: Sicilienne; BRAHMS:* *4 Pieces, op 119; MOZART: Kleine Gigue*

Sarah Beth Briggs, p
Avie 2771—76 minutes

The first 47 minutes of this recital survey homey domestic music-making opuses of the Schumanns. In the era before ubiquitous electronic entertainments, bourgeois families amused themselves playing piano pieces of modest difficulty—and many composers, including the Schumanns, made a living catering to them. The last 28 minutes, beginning with Poulenc's *Novelettes* and ending with Mozart's 'Kleine Gigue', are more challenging. Briggs is stubbornly cool, polite, and tasteful, never revealing much emotion.

WRIGHT

4 Hands, 2 Hearts, 1 Hope

ALMASHI: *Carpathian Song; CORIGLIANO: Gazebo Dances; SKORYK: Extravagant Dances; LIEBERMANN: Romance, Etude, and Chorale; SEHIN: Ru-um-bambar; GORDON: Ring-a-ding-ding*

Anastasiia Larchikova & Mykhailo Diordiiev, p
Reference 762—59:15

This album is a thoughtfully constructed dialog between Ukrainian and American

traditions, and the duo of Anastasiia Larchikova and Mykhailo Diordiiev gives that conversation depth and intimacy. Their ensemble is impeccably balanced—melodic lines, and other musical texture interlock with precise mastery, voicings stay transparent even in dense textures, and a rhythmic integrity gives the music its character and energy. The recording captures a wide dramatic arc—from whispering cantabile to muscular climaxes—without sacrificing the warm healthy sound of the piano.

The program is interesting, and the duo creates some amazingly raw effects. The folk elements that are done so well call for unity and respect between the two great cultures. One can only hope, alongside these two talented musicians, for a better future.

SOLOMONICK

Beth Levin

MOZART: *Piano Sonata 8; TIESSEN: 5 Pieces; SCHUBERT: Sonata in G*

Aldila 26—77:41

Highly personal and idiomatic playing. The fact that the recording is of a concert brings out the idiosyncrasies in her playing even more, avoiding the lab grade cleanliness that is so often produced in studio recordings.

The playing is very orchestral, exploiting the full potential of the instrument's varied registers. The pedal use is very liberal. What sounds like excessive pedaling can be deceiving on this recording owing to microphone placement; the hall's needs might have actually required it. However, the Mozart specifically sometimes suffers from an oil color-like muddiness.

What moves me most is Levin's uncompromising approach to her interpretation. She is not an artist who sits on a fence—she makes clear artistic decisions, and she goes all in.

The Tiessen pieces are fascinating, exemplifying the late stages of tonal disintegration—a final effort clinging to a tonal framework. This is a world premiere recording, and Levin's performance is thoroughly enjoyable.

She finishes the concert with Schubert's monumental G-major Sonata. Her passion shines through every note. A deeply warm interpretation, exhibiting a genuine connection to the composer's poetic genius. Again,

as in the Mozart, clarity is missing. Even a highly personal, passionate interpretation could be presented in a transparent way, as the famous recording of this sonata by Volodos demonstrates (July/Aug 2002).

SOLOMONICK

Jusqu'à la nuit—le bleu

BEACH: *Pieces*; **SCRIABIN:** *Piano Sonata 6; Poem-Nocturne; Poems, op 71*; **MESSIAEN:** *Preludes 2+5*

Cassandre Marfin, p
Cypres 1689—46 minutes

When I saw this release I immediately thought of Isil Bengi, the adventurous Belgian pianist who has recorded 3 albums with fascinating titles and rather short programs consisting almost entirely of rarities by many different composers, selected according to a theme (M/J 2020, M/J 2022, M/A 2023). So it is here, the main difference being that only 3 composers are represented, each by several relatively unfamiliar pieces. Their pieces are interleaved: B-M-S-B-S-M-S.

The theme is the color blue, which Marfin relates to the night. In the liner notes, which are in the form of an interview, she gives us her thoughts with regard to color synesthesia, its relation to the music of Scriabin and Messiaen, and how it influenced her selection of the pieces. I find her discussion intelligent but too “artistic”. Whatever inspires an artist is good, even if it is not quite rational. What matters to me is the music and its performance.

Amy Beach's *Cradle Song of the Lonely Mother*, Op. 108, and *By the Still Waters*, Op. 114, are both beautiful. I have an old LP recording of the latter by Virginia Eskin that is 3 times as fast as Marfin's rendition—the largest tempo difference in two performances of the same piece I have ever encountered. It really sounds like a different piece. But Beach's tempo marking is “Lento, molto tranquillo”.

Of Scriabin's *Poem-Nocturne* I have a 2018 recital performance by Pierre-Laurent Aimard (recorded from the radio) that seems rather bland compared to Marfin, who plays more expressively. For comparison of Scriabin's Sixth Sonata I pulled out a 1952 recital performance by Sviatoslav Richter (Parnassus), which is fast and explosive but marred by poor sound and a cough-

ing audience. Marfin not only sounds much better but also takes more time and makes more detail audible, especially the arcane harmonies.

For comparison of Messiaen's two preludes, “Chant d'extase dans un paysage triste” and “Les sons impalpables du reve” I have a recording by Peter Hill (Unicorn). Here again Marfin's interpretation is more varied and interesting, especially in the latter, where she also takes a faster tempo than Hill. The clarity and penetration of her playing is always impressive, and the recorded sound is excellent.

So, this is an admirable recording in the Bengi mold. Too bad the program is so short. There may be sequels inspired by the colors red and yellow.

REPP

Mikhail Pletnev—Erato Recordings

SCARLATTI: *31 Sonatas*; **HAYDN:** *Variations in F; Sonatas 33, 60, 62; Concertos 4, 7, 11*; **MOZART:** *Piano Concertos 9, 20, 23, 24*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Sonatas 14, 21, 23*; **CHOPIN:** *Sonata 2; Nocturnes 5, 13, 18, 20; Barcarolle, Scherzo 2*; **BRAHMS:** *Clarinet Sonatas*; **WEBER:** *Grand Duo Concertante*; **MOUSSORGSKY:** *Pictures at an Exhibition*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Sleeping Beauty (arr; Pletnev); 6 Pieces, op 21; Seasons; Piano Concertos 1-3; Concert Fantasy; Symphony 6; Marche Slave*; **SCRIABIN:** *24 Preludes, op 11; op 51:2, op 49:2; Sonatas 4+10; Reverie; Morceaux, opp 45+57; Poeme Languide; Danse Languide*; **RACHMANINOFF:** *Concerto 1; Paganini Rhapsody*

with Michael Collins, cl; German Chamber Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra/ Mikhail Pletnev

Erato 661395 [16CD] 15 hours

The title should be “Mikhail Pletnev—the Virgin Recordings”! Here's what happened. In May 2013 Warner Classics absorbed the Virgin artists roster and catalog into Erato Records but lost the rights to use the EMI or Virgin labels.

The liner notes say that Pletnev's piano is “a personal Kawai, handcrafted for him and no one else.” Often I wish he played a Steinway.

I'll start with all of the albums for piano solo. On two of the 16 CDs, Pletnev plays 31 sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti. They are sometimes delicate, often rushed without

feeling, highly articulated but not very shaded. One sonata is slow and moody with tender rubato; the next makes me exclaim, "What's the rush?" After a while, they can begin to sound the same. Then along comes the Sonata in G minor, K 8, where I hear every detail, lovely legato, and ringing notes sustained into perfect harmonization. In brief, even when Pletnev is on autopilot, he's still alert and thinking, with occasional teasing, sensitivity, and dynamics. The engineering is full-range but with a hard edge. For listening in the dark, I turn to Ivo Pogorelich playing 15 sonatas on DG.

The Haydn album with solo piano opens with the Andante with Variations in F-minor, which shows that Pletnev is obviously ambidextrous, as he flies like a butterfly over those left-hand scales. His playfulness with Haydn is epitomized in Sonata 33 in C minor, especially in his use of rubato and his invincible rhythmic timing—the beat falls precisely where Pletnev wants it, no matter tempo fluctuations. Haydn made Sonatas 60 in C and 62 in E-flat of sterner stuff, but they're well played (playfulness returns in 62:III).

Pletnev is wildly inconsistent in 3 Beethoven sonatas. In I of Sonata 14 (*Moonlight*), he's rote and rhythmically square—the repeated left-hand arpeggios are deadening. In II he's expressive but rhythmically rote. Then III is terrific—rhythmically secure with furious, perfectly weighted scales and contrasts between *pp* and *ff*. That's a forecast of the other two.

Sonata 21 (*Waldstein*) is rushed in I; in II tempos are wildly erratic, destroying the drama. It's "preciously dramatic" like a melodrama with a damsel tried to the tracks. Then Sonata 23 (*Appassionata*) is utterly coherent and terribly exciting. Rhythm, melody, line, and nuances are crystal clear in a furious, gnarled, contrary-motion assault.

The Chopin album is mostly a disaster. The engineering is excessively resonant—sounds like Pletnev is recorded in a large, empty hall—an effect producer Andrew Keener and engineer Mike Hatch often get in English churches. In Sonata 2 the pianist is too fussy, all taffy-pulling, with no form or flow. Pletnev and the acoustics result in a blur of sound. Then up pops the Nocturne, Op. 62:2, as serene and integral as possible. Oops! Another nocturne (in C minor) and

Scherzo 2 are bangy, harsh, echoey, and the piano sounds downright ugly.

Pletnev joins clarinetist Michael Collins in Brahms's two clarinet sonatas. What a contrast: In No. 1 there is no tonal quality or subtlety. When *ff*, Collins talks L-O-U-D and Pletnev pounds away. Rhythms are stiff. All that technique, and so little feeling for the music! But they give No. 2 lovely flow. Teamwork is mellow, relaxed, bright with a tight partnership. In Carl Maria von Weber's *Grand Duo Concertante*, Pletnev is kitten on the keys in I; Collins's phrasing and expression are the perfect match. They're boilerplate in II. But III is bright and coherent—no taffy-pulling. Even the piano's bass details are clear, articulate, and balanced with the clarinet.

Pletnev's all-Scriabin album is outstanding. All of the 24 Preludes, Op. 11, plus two preludes and other pieces are miniatures (one or two minutes). Only Piano Sonatas 4 and 10 are longer works. In all of them, it's evident that one of Scriabin's foundations was Chopin. Pletnev's playing twinkles with reflections as fragile as a distant star. He has given literal meaning to Scriabin's use of the term "color coding". When the sonatas arrive following the preludes, I felt like I was listening in a state of suspended animation, despite the hard edge of the sound (softer on Erato than on Virgin).

In *Pictures at an Exhibition* the spread between *pp* and *ff* has me adjusting the volume constantly. Bass clusters are just massive noise. Technique is stunning, but Pletnev plays without style. He's excessively dramatic, even in the 'Catacombs'. The companion work is Pletnev's piano arrangement of *Sleeping Beauty*. I must have been in a different world when it first came out. 21 years later his performance is non-stop rushed.

An album of Tchaikovsky's works for solo piano opens with 6 Pieces, Op. 21. It's a "bust", both the hard sound and the unremarkable music. *The Seasons* here is like a series of exercises rather than music. Pletnev milks everything with exaggerated tempos and taffy-pulling. Even 'June', perhaps the most poignant of the 12 pieces, is deconstructed into parts. 'October' is sensitive and lovely; in 'November' he tries too hard. Finally, 'December'—a lovely waltz where he accelerates, brakes, accelerates, brakes.

6 of the albums are concertos with

orchestra. One has 3 by Franz Joseph Haydn with Pletnev conducting the German Chamber Philharmonic from the keyboard. In the Concerto in G he is rhythmically 1-2-3-4—not plodding but square. Once the engine starts, he's on autopilot. The woodwinds are almost brassy. The orchestra has a quasi-period tone quality that drowns Pletnev's Kasai piano sometimes. In Concerto in F the piano and strings are much better balanced. The performance is fine, even if the music is not very interesting. The Concerto in D is the most famous one, here with bright tempos and really effective woodwinds in I. II has plodding pacing, but III is especially spiffy.

There are two albums of Mozart piano concertos, again with the German Chamber Philharmonic. In Concerto 9, I is short-phrased to death, and pacing is square. II is expressive, highly articulated, and verging on romanticism (ah, but he touches my heart). III is rhythmically precise and articulated at a dizzying pace—so much so it seems like showing off at the expense of making music. Switch gears for Concerto 20, here slower than usual. I's longer phrases are broken into 2- and 3-note phrases and lack continuity. II, on the other hand, is smooth as ice with fine continuity, and III “trips right off the tongue” with its full dramatic energy. It loses some steam midway but reignites in the coda. Balance between piano and orchestra is perfect.

Concertos 23 and 24 were recorded 4 years earlier in a different German hall. What a difference that makes. In Concerto 23 when music is *pp*, both piano and orchestra sound lifeless. When *ff*, excessive resonance of the piano's ringing tone turns runs into a blur and also swallows runs in the violins. II, though, is soft and silken. Harmonic movement, instrumental coloring, and expression are beautiful and poignant. Then III is off to the races. The woodwinds cut through, but the piano is often a blur. In Concerto 24 the piano is placed too far from the orchestra, but it all balances out in an eloquent performance. Mood, atmosphere, incisive playing in I, a beautifully relaxed II, and perfect understatement and lyrical strings make III's theme and variations gorgeous, flowing, even magnificent.

Vladimir Fedoseyev and the Philharmonia Orchestra accompany Pletnev in Tchaikovsky's 3 piano concertos and the

Concert Fantasy. Concerto 1 serves up an old problem: when *pp*, the strings are distant and disembodied; when *ff* they're present like the rest of the orchestra. Both piano and orchestra are rhythmically square in I. In II Fedoseyev lacks poetry and subtlety. Pletnev takes the finale at furiously rushing speeds, and the cadenza leads to a blurred climax. The *Concert Fantasy* moves nicely without much dickering in I. II is plodding but blends nicely into a spirited III. I wish Pletnev had used a Steinway instead of that weird Kawai!

Concerto 2 opens with one charge from start to finish with rushed garbled passages in the piano. The strings left versus right are clear and effective. II here is the full 14-minute movement, not the 8-minute edited version we often hear. Pletnev mutes the opening bars, and the Philharmonia is most tender. III it right out of the chute with a furious coda where the piano is blurred. Concerto 3 is tight, quick, and excitingly paced. Violin articulation is sensational. Pletnev does his too-loud too-soft thing. But the pacing never lets up—thrilling to the end. But Ormandy makes it even better by incorporating the percussion from the same music used in his recording of Tchaikovsky's Symphony 7.

One disc has Pletnev not as pianist but conductor of the Russian National Orchestra, which he founded. It was Russia's first orchestra independent of the state. This album with Tchaikovsky's Symphony 6 (*Pathétique*) and *Marche Slave* was their first recording. In the symphony, I is a masterpiece of articulation. Stereo textures are clear, even strings left and right. What lift Pletnev brings to the 5/4 waltz in II! III is furious yet clear and expressive—mesmerizing, hypnotizing. The finale works its way slyly from soothing to utterly cathartic—there is no let-up. The excessive resonance on the Virgin release is modified here. What wasn't fixed is the staggered entry of the first and second violins in IV after the peak climax and pause. In *March Slave* rhythms are strict as excitement grows. Now *this is a march!*—quickstep, unyielding, crisp, precise, terribly exciting with no letting go. One caveat: Pletnev skips the repeat in the coda.

The one utterly worthless album here is the Rachmaninoff with pianist Pletnev and Libor Pesek conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. In Concerto 1 the introductory cords are blurred. The orchestra is distant,

the piano up front. The first theme is retarded to death. Muddy piano, muddy orchestra. Did the producer (Keener) and engineer (Clements) have ears with which to hear? In *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini* orchestra details are all but inaudible in Variation 7. The tone quality is blunt. The performance has no sense of inevitability.

When God made Pletnev, he blessed him with divine technique and interpretive powers that are unmatched when he's good and rote when he's not. (So was Leonard Bernstein. Who isn't!) Or as one person I once worked with said about sex, "And when it's bad, it's still pretty good!"

FRENCH

Rodolphe Menguy

short pieces by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, Grieg, Dukas, Bonis, Korngold, Stravinsky—Mirare 750—62 minutes

Impressive piano playing in a mostly salon style repertoire of the 19th Century "virtuoso" tradition. This album is a salad mix of vegetables and fruits, served with sweet bread and a kind of compote to wash it down. The choice of repertoire includes fairytales, Russian folklore, Greek mythology, and other western delights. A bakery a la Rodolphe Menguy is open for all to dine, until Rachmaninoff's etude crept in, which felt like a dish that came from a different kitchen, and then the program went back to more of the same. By the end of the album I realized I wasn't in a bakery at all, and yet was deeply saturated with sweet virtuosity.

SOLOMONICK

Transcriptions

WALTON: *Orb & Sceptre*; **FAURE:** *Après un Reve; Nell*; **TRENET:** *En Avril a Paris*; **DOWLAND:** *Now, O Now, I Needs Must Part*; **BACH-GRAINGER:** *Blithe Bells*; **WILD:** *Etude I*; **RUMSEY:** *Variations on Shall We Dance*; **PURCELL:** *Dido's Lament*; **DUKAS:** *Sorcerer's Apprentice*—Tim Rumsey, p

Luminate 256710—60 minutes

Mr Rumsey opens and closes this recital with his own extravagant and thrilling virtuosic transcriptions of Walton's *Orb & Sceptre* march and Dukas's *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. In between lie gentler arrangements by Percy Grainger (Fauré, Dowland, and Bach), Alexis Weissenberg (Trenet), and

Rumsey again with Henry Purcell's 'Dido's Lament'. His technique is liquid and transcendent in Earl Wild's difficult 'Gershwin Etude No. 1'. Rumsey's own *Variations on Shall We Dance?* combines cheeky wit and flashy technical showmanship. This album's a delightful and stimulating way to spend an hour; I hope to hear more from this interesting and gifted artist.

WRIGHT

Ilya Shmukler

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata 1*; **SCHUBERT:** *Sonata in A, D 664*; **LISZT:** *Funerailles*; **BARTOK:** *Suite*; **STRAVINSKY:** *The Shrovetide Fair Prospero* 117—59 minutes

This disc contains the recital by the winner of the 2024 Geza Anda piano competition. Moscow native Ilya Shmukler currently studies in the USA.

The Beethoven is very well conceived, lacking any surprises. The tempos are not extreme in any direction. We hear a very poetic Schubert, with balanced tempos. It is played with a proper flow as indicated by the composer. I prefer a slower tempo.

The dark *Funerailles* is such a tremendous evocative piece, portraying a sorrow of national proportions. It always perplexes me how singular personalities like Liszt are so unique—highly individual, and at the same time they are heroes of culture representing the voices of the many. Shmukler strategically builds this piece, displaying explosive energy in the climax. Very persuasive.

The recital ends with the last movement of *Petrouchka*, vividly executed in an orchestral manner—musical colors evoking the ballet's plot and the sounds of the instruments. Absolutely brilliant playing, intelligently conceived by a master pianist.

SOLOMONICK

Viktor Soos

BRAHMS: *Piano Pieces, op 118*; **SCHUMANN,** **C:** *Nocturne*; **SCHUMANN, R:** *Davidsbundlertanze*—Genuin 25930—68:20

A lovely album dramatically portraying the remarkable triangular relationship of these composers. Brahms's miniatures are played in a very mellow, reserved manner—an aristocratic approach that values simplicity and avoids sentimentality.

I must confess that Clara's nocturne isn't a favorite piece of mine, and yet this reading of it is persuasive. The main course is of course the David's league dances. Soos approaches it very differently. It is wild and passionate.

Even though all of the pieces on the program are closely related to each other, the rich variety of dramatic content Soos displays is magnificent, proving himself to be a mature and highly intelligent artist. *Dauids-bundlertanze* is incredibly vivid. This interpretation effectively brings out that unique Schumannesque quality of living on the very edge of reality, slipping into some fantastic realm and losing the grip on what's real, mundane, and sane.

SOLOMONICK

Piano Discoveries

SCHUBERT: *Divertissement, D 823; Polonaise, D 599:4*; **FROHLICH:** *Fugues, op 12*; **MOSCHELES:** *Sonate Symphonique 2*
Adrienne Soos, Ivo Haag, p
Prospero 114 [2CD] 88 minutes

The well-known Swiss piano duo (we have reviewed 13 of their recordings) regales us here with one of Schubert's less familiar compositions for 4 hands (plus a "bonus" piece) and two obscure works in the same genre, one of them of substantial length, by faintly remembered composers. So the title "Piano Discoveries" is quite justified. The question is whether the music is worth discovering.

In the case of Schubert the answer is obviously "yes". Even the least significant of his pieces is worth hearing. And the *Divertissement sur des motifs originaux francais* is by no means insignificant. It lasts over half an hour, and its II is a charming theme and variations. I and III are perhaps less inspired but very good pieces nevertheless. Soos and Haag play nicely but not as incisively as Yaara Tal and Andreas Groethuysen (Sony) whose sharp rhythms, crisp articulation, and dynamic nuances make them sound merely routine by comparison. This is also the case with the Polonaise, one of 4 with that Deutsch number. One wonders why it is called a "bonus" here and why the duo did not decide to give us all 4 polonaises—there is a lot of empty space on the first disc.

While I enjoyed that part of the program,

I was bored stiff by the second half. Friedrich Theodor Fröhlich's 3 Fugues, Op. 12, are dreary and academic; and the 4-movement *Grand Symphonic Sonata 2*, Op. 112, by Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870) is totally empty and uninteresting. These dead compositions are not worth reviving, and Soos and Haag do not have the wherewithal to bring them to life. The liner notes by Ivo Haag reflect greater enthusiasm for this music than I am able to muster.

The recorded sound is good, but the bass of the Bösendorfer is a little tubby. The program could have been accommodated on a single disc if the "bonus" piece—or, better, the whole second half of the program—had been omitted.

REPP

Still Glides the Stream

Parkin, Einaudi, Wilby, Nishimura, Williams, Newton, Roussanova, Ritchie, Wallen
David Childs, eu; Christopher Williams, p
Naxos 574684—63 minutes

This is a most welcome offering by David Childs—one of the world's best euphonium players—and excellent pianist Christopher Williams. Simon Parkin's *Skunk* (2001) is an amusing scamper. Next is Ludovico Einaudi's gentle *Due Tramonti* (2 Sunsets, 1999), originally for cello and piano. Then comes the big piece, Philip Wilby's 4-movement, 14-minute *Still Glides the Stream*, composed for soloist Childs in 2021. After Carl Nishimura's quiet *Hiraeth* (Homesickness, 2020) comes pianist Williams's wacky *Romp* (2020). And so goes the rest of the program by these world-class artists.

KILPATRICK

L'Appel du Cor

Planel, Busser, Presle, Boucard, Pugno, Barraine, Balay, Flem, Bousquet, Bozza
Herve Joulain, hn; Fanny Azzuro, p
TyxArt 25203—68 minutes

I was recently enthusiastic about Herve Joulain's bold horn playing in an album of works by Georges Barbotou (July/Aug 2024). It was my introduction to Joulain, who (I now know) has made an impressive list of recordings. Here he has a go at 18 pieces that play on the horn's roots as a signal device for hunters on horseback. Despite having reviewed many horn and hunting

horn recordings, I had heard of only half of these composers and none of these works. All play on the natural horn's quirkiness, on the typical gestures of hunt-inspired music, and on a listener's nostalgia. Joulain, on a modern valved instrument, plays boldly. Fine collaboration by Ms Azzuro.

KILPATRICK

Fantasia

Bach, Panufnik, Krebs, Barnard, Pachelbel, Pritchard, Martini, Park

Matilda Lloyd, tpt; Richard Gowers, org
Chandos 20345—59 minutes

This is the fourth album in the past two years by young English trumpeter Matilda Lloyd. All have been very good (Mar/Apr 2019: 202, Nov/Dec 2023: 140, Mar/Apr 2025: 153), including this one with music for trumpet and organ. The program alternates between new works and arrangements. None of the 4 new pieces (composed in 2024 by Roxanna Panufnik, Richard Barnard, Deborah Pritchard, and Owain Park) are noisy and assertive, as trumpet-organ works so often are. These are contemplative and often enigmatic.

Inserted between the new works are arrangements of old ones. Most natural are two fantasias by Johann Krebs, since they were originally for a solo instrument with organ. The minor-key one for oboe is somber, while the major-key one for flute is lively, high-pitched, and technically challenging. The rest of the arrangements are of organ works that had no solo part. In Pachelbel's Fugue, Lloyd simply plays one of the 3 fugue voices. GB Martini is represented by 3 little pieces, one of which (Toccatà) is already a favorite of trumpet players. Lloyd's reading is lively and buoyant.

Of the 3 Bach pieces, the Toccata & Fugue in D minor is the most famous—and also the least natural as a trumpet-organ transcription. More suitable are the S 564 Adagio and the S 562 Fantasia.

KILPATRICK

Lost American Violin Sonatas 1

by Cole, Huss, Schoenefeld

Solomia Soroka; Arthur Greene, Phillip Silver,
p—Toccatà 46

Henry Holden Huss (1862-1953) wrote his violin sonata in 1894 in 3 movements. I is

mostly in sonata form; II is a slow, lyrical movement, with quick moving parts in the middle; III is a fast movement. Henry Schoenefeld (1857-1936) wrote his in 1903. I is built off a single rhythmic gesture in sonata form, II is a romance, and III is a rondo. Rossetter Gleason Cole (1866-1952) wrote his in 1917 in a late romantic style, a good piece. I is a more and generous sonata-form movement. II is a typical ABA scherzo form, with beautiful writing in the slow section. III is a beautiful slow movement, though the violin covers the piano melodies. IV is a quick finale, though the music seems to drag on.

The drama is inconsistent, but the pieces are worthy to be resurrected and recorded for the first time. Unfortunately for the cause of introducing these pieces in a favorable light, the violin plays too aggressively, slapping notes, ignoring phrasing. There is no sophistication; it is brutish and rough. The intonation is unbearable. So while it seems like the music might be beautiful, it is quite difficult to judge under the circumstances.

KELLENBERGER

Tango & Choro

NAZARETH: *Brejeiro*; *Odeon*; **VILLOLDO:** *El Esquinazo*; *El Choclo*; *Cuidado con los 50*; *Yunta Brava*; **BORTER:** *Tango Nostalgia*; *On my Way*; **GONZAGA:** *Atraente*; *Corta-Jaca*; **GADEL:** *Por una Cabeza*; **ABREU:** *Tico-Tico no Fuba*

Duo-B

Hirono Borter, v; Philip Borter, vc
MSR 1855—48 minutes

Argentine tangos and Brazilian choros, original compositions and arrangements by the performers. The juxtaposition of the two genres is not effective. They are jumbled together on the disc, and the average American listener will have no idea whether it is a tango or choro without following with the booklet notes in hand. The performers are too rigid. Dances would seem to necessitate strict rhythmic adherence, yet these should be executed in a way that feels carefree and graceful. Instead we detect a stiffness that belies what we wish to see from dancers. Sometimes it almost sounds perfunctory, as if the players are performing by force; sometimes the leans do not feel authentic, and the blend is not perfect when they play

homogenously; sometimes the sound is too crass when it is not supposed to be. But it is the perfect cafe music—it is evocative, and most listeners will be charmed.

KELLENBERGER

Itzhak Perlman

Warner 619938 [78CD] 67 hours

Itzhak Perlman was born in Tel Aviv on August 31, 1945. He began to study the violin at age 3, but this was interrupted when he caught polio at age 4. He continued his studies when he recovered and moved to New York when he was 13 to study at the Juilliard School with Ivan Galamian and Dorothy DeLay. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 1963, won the Leventritt Competition in 1964, and began recording for RCA in 1966.

Perlman is to the second half of the 20th Century what Jascha Heifetz is to the first half. Each is renowned for his superb technique and instantly recognizable tone and vibrato. Heifetz's distant, fire-and-ice temperament and his sleek, burnished tone contrast strongly with Perlman's infectious warmth and cheerfulness and fat tone like crushed velvet. Both violinists established the supremacy of the Russian school of violin playing, with its emphasis on drawing a powerful, solid tone from all 4 strings. Early acoustic recordings by Joseph Joachim, the leading representative of the German school, and Pablo de Sarasate, the leading representative of the French school, reveal a thin tone that was especially weak and hollow on the G string because these two schools did not understand how to use the weight of the arm to press the bow into the string. Heifetz showed the world how this was done, and Perlman inherited the mantle. Listening to the violin became a much more sensuous experience than it had been before the 20th Century.

It should surprise no one that Perlman is also a fine singer. He shows off his bass voice here in an excerpt from Act III of Puccini's *Tosca* on disc 77 where he sings the role of the jailer. To my knowledge, Perlman and his friend Pinchas Zukerman are the last two violinists who have such distinctive sounds.

He is a cultural icon and celebrity with great charisma, even having hosted the Tonight Show. He advocates for the handicapped and is not embarrassed to show

himself using crutches and wheelchairs. Remember how Franklin Roosevelt hid his handicap despite founding the March of Dimes?

These recordings were made from 1971 to 2016 and were originally released by EMI, Teldec, Erato, and Warner. This is the same collection as the 77-CD box set from 2015 except for the addition of his disc with Martha Argerich of Schumann's Violin Sonata 1 and 3 Fantasy Pieces, Brahms's Sonata Movement, and Bach's Violin Sonata 4 (Jan/Feb 2017). Completists who own that set need only acquire this disc.

Perlman's first recording contract was with RCA beginning in 1966, but the recordings he made with EMI beginning in 1971 reproduced his remarkably full-bodied tone more accurately.

I noticed this when I first heard him in concert with the Detroit Symphony in 1973 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the cavernous Civic Auditorium. The concertmaster, Gordon Staples, played some brief solos in Richard Strauss's *Don Juan*, and I had to strain to hear him. After that, Perlman walked out on his crutches to play Wieniawski's Violin Concerto 1. When he began playing, I started looking around for loudspeakers. I thought that he must have had a pickup attached to his violin because he was unbelievably loud. After I couldn't see any loudspeakers, I realized that all of that massive sound was coming out of that tiny violin. Before handing it to Perlman, Staples and his stand partner had been bent over and ogling it. I learned later that it was the "Spanish" Stradivarius built in 1723, one of the loudest violins in existence. It also had a gorgeous tone, especially on the G string, which Perlman exploited to wonderful effect in the second movement titled 'Prayer'. The score directs that the entire movement be played on the G string with "beaucoup de son" (lots of sound), and Perlman delivered. I haven't heard such a beautiful, full sound from a violin's G string to this day. His technique, musicality, and charisma were also remarkable and held me spellbound. Aside from his playing, I remember that he smiled the whole time. The man loves to perform, and the audience is his circle of friends. The young Perlman was a phenomenon who could take your breath away, as he did mine.

Every coin has two sides, though, and he has his limitations, minor though they are.

Full of energy and drive, he tends to rush the ends of phrases. Sometimes his partners rein him in and make him give the music some breathing room, as Carlo Maria Giulini does to great effect in their recording of the Brahms Violin Concerto. He is also too sanguine to convey the darkest emotions. He recorded Shostakovich's Violin Concerto 1 once, and never recorded the Violin Sonata, and that's fine. The Concerto recording is not among the best. The Soviet violinists David Oistrakh and Leonid Kogan, friends and contemporaries of the composer, convey the despair, bitterness, and suffering much better.

Several of Perlman's recordings are the best ever made of a work or among the best. As this is probably the only opportunity that I shall have to do this, I have assembled a list of what I believe are his outstanding recordings from every record label that he has worked with.

RCA: Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* and Ravel's *Tzigane* with the London Symphony under Andre Previn recorded in 1968. We at ARG generally agree that these are the best recordings ever made of both works. The Lalo is better than his later recording with Daniel Barenboim, and the Ravel is better than his later recordings with Jean Martinon and Zubin Mehta.

Prokofieff Violin Concerto 2 with the Boston Symphony under Erich Leinsdorf (1966). Leinsdorf was very good at interpreting Prokofieff, and no one, including Perlman in his later recordings with Gennady Rozhdestvensky and Daniel Barenboim, ever made the long-lined melody in the slow movement soar as ecstatically as he does here. No matter what mood I'm in, listening to this recording always makes me happy. The outer movements are superb too.

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the Boston Symphony under Leinsdorf recorded in 1967. This is better than either his enervated recording with Eugene Ormandy from 1978 or his concert recording with Zubin Mehta in Leningrad from 1990.

Prokofieff Violin Sonatas 1 and 2 with Vladimir Ashkenazy (1969). David Oistrakh and Franziska Pietsch are best in this music, but Ashkenazy shows Perlman how it's done and the results are very fine.

Mozart Two Duos for Violin and Viola. Perlman recorded these with his friend Pin-

chas Zukerman playing viola in 1990, and their rapport and taste are superb.

EMI: Paganini Violin Concerto 1 and Sarasate *Carmen Fantasy* with the Royal Philharmonic under Lawrence Foster (1971). The Paganini has Emile Sauret's remarkable cadenza, and the Sarasate is better than his later recording with Zubin Mehta.

Bach 2 Violin Concertos and Double Concerto with Pinchas Zukerman and the English Chamber Orchestra under Daniel Barenboim recorded in 1971. This is old-school playing uninfluenced by period performance practice. Vibrato and full-bodied, Russian-school tone production reign.

Paganini 24 Caprices (1972). This is the first really musical recording of the Caprices and brings out their Italian character.

Wieniawski Violin Concertos with the London Philharmonic under Seiji Ozawa (1971). This remains the most idiomatic and tonally voluptuous recording of both concertos. Concerto 2 here is better than his later recording with the Orchestra of Paris under Daniel Barenboim.

Bartok Violin Concerto with the London Symphony under Andre Previn (1973). This is a very muscular and heartfelt account. The recording lets Bartok's counterpoint come through by not spotlighting the soloist, as other recordings often do.

Dvorak Violin Concerto with the London Philharmonic under Daniel Barenboim (1974). This is by far the most red-blooded performance of the concerto that I know and my favorite. It contrasts starkly with the celebrated, more delicate recording from 1960 by the composer's great-grandson Josef Suk and the Czech Philharmonic under Karel Ancerl.

Scott Joplin Rags, with pianist Andre Previn (1974). After the success of the Robert Redford-Paul Newman movie "The Sting", which had a soundtrack of Joplin rags, Perlman arranged several of them for violin and piano. These performances are irresistibly charming.

Fritz Kreisler Pieces. Perlman and pianist Samuel Sanders recorded 4 LPs of Fritz Kreisler's short compositions and arrangements in 1975, 1976, 1979, and 1985. Kreisler's *gemutlich* bonbons have become staples of the violin repertoire, and Perlman plays them even better than the composer did.

Brahms Violin Concerto with the Chica-

go Symphony under Carlo Maria Giulini (1976). This is every bit as good as the great recording that David Oistrakh made with the Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell in 1969. It is magnificent and better than his later recording with Daniel Barenboim.

Vieuxtemps Violin Concertos 4 and 5 with the Orchestra of Paris under Daniel Barenboim (1976-77). His Concerto 5 is equal to the Jascha Heifetz from 1961 but very different. Perlman is boldly heroic and expressive, but Heifetz is aloof and Apollonian but fiery.

Dvorak 4 Romantic Pieces recorded with pianist Samuel Sanders in 1983. Here, Perlman is unabashedly romantic and unapproachable.

Beethoven Violin Sonata 9 *Kreutzer* with Vladimir Ashkenazy (1973). The central variations movement is remarkably colorful. This is as good as the classic recording by Henryk Szeryng and Arthur Rubinstein.

DG: Berg and Stravinsky Concertos—Boston Symphony/ Ozawa (1978). Louis Krasner with the BBC Symphony under Anton Webern are definitive for the Berg, and Hillary Hahn with Neville Marriner play the Stravinsky according to the composer's metronome markings with an unmatched piquancy, but Perlman and the Bostonians play both with gorgeous sound and feeling.

Mozart Sinfonia Concertante with violist Pinchas Zukerman and the Israel Philharmonic (Mehta 1982). This has the same qualities as their recording of Mozart's Duos for Violin and Viola.

As you can see, most of Perlman's best recordings date to the 1960s and 1970s. A gradual decline set in beginning in the 1980s. I heard him several times in the 1980s and 1990s, and wonderful though he was, he was no longer the jaw-dropping phenomenon that he was in his 20s and early 30s. I suspect that the later, fully digital recordings (DDD) were only made to exploit the new market for CDs and to keep his sales up. Many of the older analog recordings sound better than the digital ones, especially now that they have been recently remastered.

Perlman is important because he has an extensive repertoire and recording catalog (like Heifetz). Also like Heifetz, none of his recordings are bad, which makes investing in a set like this a sensible thing to do if you love the violin. His catalog has been better preserved than other deserving artists like

Pinchas Zukerman, most of whose early Columbia recordings are not available.

This set comes with a booklet and reproductions of the original covers of the LPs and CDs.

MAGIL

Revolution

BACH: *Chaconne*; **PART:** *Fratres*; **GORSKI:** *Violin Suite*; **VITALI/CHARLIER:** *Chaconne*; **YSAYE:** *Violin Sonata 4*; **PIAZZOLLA:** *Many Years Before*

Julian Walder, v; Elias Praxmarer, organ
Capriccio 3013—73 minutes

The Bach is mostly played well. Sometimes the sound is a little forced, sometimes a little out of tune, but there is a degree of structural and stylistic integrity. The organ replaces the piano in the *Pärt*, and it is a brilliant decision. It matches the religiosity of the music better than the piano. The violinist's harmonics are inconsistent. Wladyslaw Gorski, an obscure composer in the late 19th Century, wrote this solo violin sonata in 5 movements, not a bad composition. Unfortunately poor sound quality infects I, and sometimes phrases are not carried through. Excessive liberties are taken with the rhythm, distorting what the composer wrote. In II, the gracefulness and rhythmic character of the minuet are abandoned. The wrong places are often emphasized, and the dance is lost in the kerfuffle. The tempo is too slow in III, and the phrasing and rubato detract from the music. In IV, the phrasing is like a grizzly bear in winter: it simply never appears. Sound problems stubbornly persist through the Vitali. The organ again replaces the piano, but unlike in the *Pärt*, the organ sounds worse than the piano. The violinist lacks sensitivity in his phrasing, and his accompaniment sounds artificially imposed, not responsive to the melody. The Ysaye is a decent performance, perhaps the strength of the recording. The disc deserves praise for introducing the organ in the *Pärt* and for its attention to Gorski.

KELLENBERGER

Strana Armonia d'amore

Les Cris de Paris/ Geoffroy Jourdain
HM 905383—75 minutes

"The Strange Harmonies of Love" is the most recent—and adventurous—release

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from *Les Cris de Paris*. The apt title encapsulates the central themes explored in the program: the expressions of passion that proliferated in the Renaissance in the form of the madrigal, which so often offered exaggerated (and indeed, strikingly dissonant) harmonies. To fully explore the phenomenon, Geoffroy Jourdain turns to the infamously thorny music of Gesualdo, as well as people he influenced: Scipione Lacorcia, Hettore Della Marra, Sigismondo d'India, and Pompeo Nenzo. These names may be less well known, but their music is no less chromatically expressive. (D'India's madrigal, 'Strana armonia d'amore', lends the album its title for a reason!)

These works are performed in various ensembles: a continuo-esque harp part is added to Della Marra's 'Miser oche faro', transforming the declamation "Amor" (love) into an operatic pronouncement. Elsewhere, instruments are substituted for voices or join to double them. The a cappella performances often enhance the harmonic discomfort inherent to these madrigals; in Gesualdo's 'Moro, lasso, al mio duolo', the singers wail on "Ahi", while the same word in Lacorcia's 'Ahi, tu piangi, mia vita/Mirami il volto pur', is given portamento treatment, as they painfully slide between pitches.

Also included are works by Nicola Vicentino, a composer, humanist, and theorist with a deep interest in the music of ancient Greece. Vicentino advocated for a return to the Greek enharmonic genus, which offered a microtone. In addition to publishing his theories, he also designed an instrument (the archicembalo) that could differentiate between sharps and flats, and composed microtonal music, putting his theories into practice. *Les Cris de Paris* courageously attempts to bring Vicentino's vision to life, retuning harps to create a polychromatic scale. His ideas also inspire a new work by Francesca Verunelli (b. 1979), exploring the harmonic colors and qualities made possible by Vicentino's system. Verunelli's works borrow texts from the theorist and other madrigals and are interwoven into the program, serving as a sort of modern-day commentary as the album unfolds. If one is prepared for this dialog (by reading, for instance, the composer's thorough explanation) this works well; if simply listening to the program, however, the juxtaposition is more curious than enlighten-

ing. This isn't due entirely to the shocking harmonic language (which after all, has been foreshadowed by the Renaissance composers), but rather the treatment of text—words are broken down entirely and turned into mere sounds rather than meaningful utterances. It is a stark difference from the marriage of music and text offered in the surrounding madrigals.

Overall, this is an album that celebrates, even relishes, dissonance. I suspect that its listeners will come to delight in it too. Liner notes and translations of texts are given in English and French.

WILKENING

Chromatic Renaissance

Lassus, Vicentino, Rore, Lusitano, Marenzio
Luzzaschi

Exaudi Vocal Ensemble/ James Weeks
Winter & Winter 293—59 minutes

"Chromaticism flowers only when conditions allow: when a harmonic theory exists which can accommodate it, and more important when composers desire to use it to increase the emotional expressiveness of their music", comments James Weeks, the director of Exaudi. One might say the same about programs exploring its pungent harmonic effects; there is clearly something in the air, as both Exaudi and *Les Cris de Paris* share not only this theme, but also the music of Nicola Vicentino. Unlike the latter's album (reviewed above) Exaudi performs Vicentino's microtonal experiments (as well as the other works) entirely a cappella. For me, this makes the wandering transformations of 'Musica prisca caput' (programmed by both ensembles) all the more astonishing; untethered from the grounding influence of instruments, the shifts feel surreal and the music weightless. This feeling of tonal disorientation permeates the album, yet the program is carefully designed to explore different manifestations of this musical technique in music from the middle to the end of the 15th Century. Orlando di Lasso's famous 'Carmina chromatica' (the prologue to *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*) musically and textually warns the listener of what is to come, yet only in hindsight does one realize just how much more later composers would do with these same tools. Both Lusitano's 'Heu me, Domine' and Marenzio's 'Solo e pensoso' have

ascending chromatic scales, for instance, but they feel strikingly different. Lusitano creates an almost unbearable feeling of tension by overlapping voices crawling slowly by semitone, while the solo ascent of Marenzio's soprano trudges plaintively uphill, its loneliness made starker by the other interweaving lines. It is wonderfully evocative music, and the singers handle the slippery lines with ease.

Liner notes in English and German; texts and translations available online. This is annoying, given that the texts (of the madrigals in particular) are essential to the listener's comprehension of why and how Renaissance composers integrated chromaticism.

WILKENING

Por los Montes de Coñares

Music and Eroticism in the Spanish Golden Age
Amystis/ La Chimera Consort/ José Duce Chenoll

Brilliant 97388—61 minutes

This program emerged from a research project, "The Musical Heritage of Modern Spain (17th-18th centuries)", led by Paulino Capdepon Verdu and Juan José Pastor Comin. It is presented in scholarly fashion: the introduction cites Huizinga (and reels off a list of relevant philologists), and each work is examined in detail. Manuscript information is consistently supplied, as is a textual analysis; the openly ribald lyrics, playful double entendres, and significant intertextual references are clearly explained. Though the investigation into the meaning of the songs is thorough, this material is nevertheless lacking in certain areas—genres (such as "seguidilla", "letrilla", and "cosaute") are frustratingly almost always left undefined, complete texts and translations are available only online, and the music is often left to speak for itself.

Fortunately, the vibrant performances do compensate for this lack of information! The tone of the singers is pure, ornamented only lightly with vibrato. This allows the text to be readily comprehensible and the interactions amongst voices (both vocal and instrumental) to come to the fore. In 'Cura qu'en la vecindad', for instance, the verses are performed homophonically. The harmonies between the voice and gambas are

lovely, and textual clarity is maintained, allowing the message—a detailed criticism of debauched priests—to come through. In the imitative counterpoint of the refrain, it is as if the central question ("Why do they call him a priest?") is reiterated by an entire neighborhood. The instrumental interludes are virtuosically ornamented; in 'Si Habra en este baldres', the repetitive, catchy tune becomes a dexterous display thanks to the divisions added by Lobke Sprengeling on recorder.

Liner notes in English.

WILKENING

If the Fates Allow

Purcell and Contemporaries

Helen Charlston, m/z; Sounds Baroque
BIS 2734—59 minutes

Suffice it to say that Helen Charlston's reputation in the Baroque music world continues to grow apace. Accolades pile up around her (in 2018, she won the Handel Singing Competition, and her 2022 album 'Battle Cry: She Speaks' earned a Gramophone Award for Best Concept Album) and her performances have been much lauded. This program, mostly music by Purcell (including some standards, such as 'O Solitude', as well as lesser-known works), makes it easy to see why. It isn't just that her voice is rich, with a burnished, full-bodied lower register, or that her diminutions are wonderfully agile, making ornaments seem entirely natural. These things help, of course, but it is her sensitivity to text that sets her interpretations apart. Each track is a miniature drama. The word "drop", for instance, is repeated 9 times in 'Music for a While'. Each repetition is a perfect encapsulation of the image itself: the rolled R conjures up the descent, while I hear the landing in her succinct P. Even the otherwise innocuous word, "but", is imbued with depth in 'I love and I must', where Charlston captures the hopeless pain of unrequited love. She is aided by the sensitive performances of Sounds Baroque; the ground basses, which sometimes can sit lifelessly owing to their inherent repetitiveness, become entrancing. In 'What a sad fate is mine', it swirls relentlessly around Charlston, an unyielding reminder of the narrator's destiny. The ensemble is further emphasized in 'The Division Viol' by

Christopher Simpson, where Jonathan Manson shows off the bass viol's capabilities with delicate, dancing divisions and artful phrasing.

In lieu of the standard liner notes, this album is accompanied by a transcription of a conversation between Helen Charlston and Dame Emma Kirkby, the reigning queen of the early music revival. They discuss Purcell (both the difficulties and the joys of his music!) and their dialog is certainly interesting for early music lovers—especially for those of us who continue to delight in Kirkby's work—even if it isn't particularly enlightening for this particular program. This transcription is supplied in English, French, and German. Texts are, of course, in English.

WILKENING

Baroque Arias for 2 Altos

Hugh Cutting, Carlo Vistoli, ct; Les Arts Florissants/ William Christie

Harmonia Mundi 8905347—68:31

This collection of duets and cantatas for two altos is given the title, "Nei giardini d'amore" (In the gardens of Love), since the texts and music describe aspects of love, from its pains to its joys. Hugh Cutting and Carlo Vistoli are well balanced in the duets, though perhaps too well matched, so that there is no clear difference in the timbre of their voices to distinguish them; only the changing initials in the booklet indicate who sings which part.

The selections are in chronological order, and begin with one of Claudio Monteverdi's *Scherzi Musicali* (1607), 'Damigella tutta bella', with dance-like hemiolas and a text that describes resignation to accept the pain of a "burning heat" (two verses are missing on this recording). Next is an aria, 'Aita, Fortuna' (Help me, Fortune), from the castrato Agostino Steffani's opera *La Lotta d'Ercole con Aceloo* (1689; The Struggle between Hercules and Achelous), where the two characters are both in love with Deianira. This is followed by Antonio Caldara's solo cantata, *Medea in Corinto* (sung by Vistoli), which may have originally been written for the contralto, Caterina Perrolli, Caldara's wife. The libretto is for a miniature *opera seria* which describes Medea's changing emotions as she deals with Jason's betrayal.

Like Caldara, who held posts at Mantua, Barcelona, Rome, and from 1716, at the Hapsburg court in Vienna, his contemporary, Giovanni Bononcini was also well traveled from Bologna, to Milan, Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Venice, London, Paris, Lisbon, and back to Vienna. His *Duetti da Camera* do not have specific characters (though the generic shepherdess "Chloris" is mentioned once) or plot-lines, but in 'Sempre piango', the two singers respond to each other with opposing passions (weeping/laughing, living/dying).

The text for Antonio Vivaldi's often recorded solo cantata (sung by Cutting), *Cessate, omai Cessate* (Cease, now cease), is more clearly in the pastoral genre, with the singer lamenting the fickle nature of "Dorilla", and ends with a vengeance aria. One unusual performance detail in Vivaldi's autograph is missing on this recording; in the aria, 'Ah, ch'infelice sempre', Vivaldi indicated that one violin should play pizzicato while the other violin would play the same part using a bow, and he marked the basso continuo line likewise, so that the cello is playing with a bow, but a "violone" (similar to a double bass, which is missing on the recording), was to perform the same part pizzicato; a sonic parallel to the conflicted emotions of the singer.

The last major work is from the chamber duets Handel was revising or composing in London around 1740. In 'Caro autor di mia doglia' (Blessed author of my grief), while the first Larghetto is like a puzzle of short melodic motives, both the following Andante and Allegro challenge the two singers with elaborate coloraturas. The "encore" is Vivaldi's short aria of marital bliss from his serenade, *La Gloria e Imeneo* (a complete recording is reviewed in this issue).

Both Cutting and Vistoli have more operatic-type voices with more vibrato, which sometimes obscures intricate details of the music. Fortunately, both have excellent diction. The instrumentalists, a quartet of strings with William Christie as "conductor" and accompanist, is always supportive. They supply 3 interludes, an Andante from Handel's Trio Sonata in C minor, Giovanni Battista Fontana's 'Sonata settima', and Caldara's 'Ciaccona' from his Opus 2 trio sonatas. Christie and Cyril Poulet supply the continuo, but I wish the cello would have articulated the basso continuo more clearly,

especially in the 'Ciaccona'. Sometimes the ambiance of the recording, made in a church, is too resonant; a dryer "chamber" acoustic would have helped clarify the details of these works. Texts and translations.

BREWER

London c1760

CF Abel, JC Bach, F Geminiani, TA Erskine, Rudolf Straube, Ann Ford
La Reveuse/ Florence Bolton & Benjamin Perrot

HM 905380—58 minutes

Florence Bolton begins her notes to this recording with a quotation from Charles Burney's *General History of Music* (1789) to the effect that the British musical public was content with the music of Corelli, Geminiani, and Handel until the arrival of Felice Giardini (1716-96), Johann Christian Bach (1735-82), and Carl Friedrich Abel (1723-87), who brought about "a total revolution in our musical taste". Certainly the deaths of Handel in 1759 and King George II in 1760 marked the end of an era in both music and politics. The concert scene in London acquired more of a free-market quality than concert life on the continent, and musician-entrepreneurs flocked to England to seek their fortunes in a volatile environment that Bolton describes so well in her notes. Professional musical performances were part of the entertainments offered by the London pleasure gardens and such extravagant venues as Carlisle House in Soho Square under the proprietorship of the Venetian singer, actress, and courtesan Teresa Cornelys. Her establishment was succeeded by the entertainments offered at the Pantheon in Oxford Street. It is worth noting that the musical performances in such places were not accorded the hushed and undivided attention we now take for granted. Concerts and operas were treated as a background to conversation, dining, and a setting for people to be seen and cut a dash in fashionable society.

The other side of this coin was the cultivation of music by amateurs at home. The royal family led the way. King George III played the flute and violin. Queen Charlotte played the harpsichord and sang. A popular instrument among amateurs was the English guitar, whose open tuning in C major

made it easier to learn than many other instruments. Instruction books appeared with collections of simple tunes. The present recording includes a pair of pieces by Geminiani published in an instruction book from Edinburgh in 1760 and a piece by the German lutenist Rudolf Straube (1717-85). Another popular instrument among amateurs was the musical glasses, tuned with water and played by stroking the rim with moistened fingers. This recording includes two pieces published in an instruction book by Ann Ford (1737-1824) in 1761. Ford was something of a sensation in her day and the subject of considerable juicy gossip.

On the musicological side, some of the music on this recording has required some reconstructive editing where instrumental parts are defective or missing, or where a piece survives in more than one source with differences in instrumentation. The character of the music could be better described as rococo than classical. It is charming and graceful rather than profound. The pieces are treated to stylish and animated playing at the highest technical standard by the members of the ensemble La Reveuse. The booklet lists 9 players on period instruments. Judging from the advertisement in the booklet for their other recordings, they seem to specialize in exploring odd but fascinating corners of the 17th and 18th-Century repertory.

This is just the thing for an hour of quiet relaxation, perhaps with a glass of wine.

GATENS

Early 18th Century German Chamber

Musicians of the Old Post Road
Old Post Road 1—57 minutes

Since 1978 the career of Jewish Polish-American conductor and editor Noah Greenberg (1919-66) has been commemorated by a \$2,000 award in his name from the American Musicological Society in New York. The first one went to Jewish Russian-American gambist, conductor, journalist, and musicologist Richard Taruskin (1945-2022), who wrote in 1994 "I have always considered it important for musicologists to put their expertise at the service of 'average consumers' and alert them to the possibility that they are being hoodwinked, not only by commercial interests, but by complaisant academics, biased critics, and pretentious performers." The award has been given

twice. It went in 1998 and 2023 to this ensemble and helped fund this recording.

Based since 1989 in the area of Boston and commemorating its terrestrial connections to New York beginning in 1673, the Musicians of the Old Post Road play instruments of the 18th Century. They are joined by young harpsichordist Benjamin Katz, who was with American Record Guide from 2008 to 2013, and who can also be heard in an album of Barbara Strozzi's songs from Centaur (Mar/Apr 2020). "Into the Light" is the name for this recording mostly of Graupner along with Fasch, Telemann, and Graupner's patron, francophile and lutenist Ernest Louis, Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt from 1678 to 1739. The program has 3 quartets, a trio sonata, sonata for a single instrument—which still means 3 players, concerto, and the opening movement of an orchestral suite written by 1718. With the program under an hour, why not have the rest of it? Is it wrong to feel deprived with a single movement of a multi-movement work?

The pastoral concerto evokes nature without anything as explicit as Vivaldi, but recalls his writing with super-fast octave-length runs and his brevity more generally. Graupner charms us with subtlety while the performers charm us with flexibility. The same factors appeal to the ear in the sonata for obligatory harpsichord, flute, and continuous bass, a genre with contributions from Telemann also. The Gallic chaconne by the landgrave creates a full sound despite only one player per part. Fasch uses two violas in his 4-part sonata, fabricating a richness of sound with an instrument uncommon then. He employs them as a duo, making a 4-part texture more like 3 parts, but one having twice the usual interest. Are words of praise needed to reaffirm Telemann's consistency? Aside his more famous contemporary, Graupner's star is rising, then, as the astrologers might put it. Elegance could be the best characterization of his style, perhaps suggesting general French influence adopted to appeal to the preference of his employer. If not Graupner, who was the most Gallic German composer of his time, apart from Bach in French mode?

Most of these selections involve flute. On that instrument Suzanne Stumpf excels, with fine execution and intonation. The string players sound excellent too, and the balance is good while making you aware of

the bass now and then. Particular attention seems directed at capturing the depth and richness of the cello when we have it. The sonata for obligatory harpsichord is Katz's opportunity to shine, which he always does while remaining a member of the ensemble, which raises the question whether someone like Esfahani might bring more interest to Graupner given the opportunity.

The tri-fold insert includes two photographs of the ensemble in color and plenty of text, though not too small.

GORMAN

A Blaze of Song

Edmund Connolly, Maxine Thevenot, org; Cathedral of St John, Albuquerque/ Maxine Thevenot

Raven 202—71 minutes

A varied program of a cappella and accompanied sacred choral pieces, sung by a very fine cathedral choir. These are typical liturgical fare by a variety of composers, both familiar and unfamiliar. They are mostly under 5 minutes, eminently singable, with unison and 2-part settings, all very useful for church choirs. Of particular note are the settings of *Tantum Ergo*, *O Lux Beatissima*, and *Ave verum corpus* by Jessica French, Howard Helvey, and David McGregor; the setting of Blake's poem *The Lamb* by Elizabeth Poston (a nice contrast to the popular one by John Tavener); *Ascension* by Stephanie Martin; the lovely *Lord's Prayer* by Edmund Connolly; and Cecilia MacDowell's magnificent setting of Christina Rossetti's poem *Ash Wednesday*. Additionally, Thevenot plays organ pieces by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Miriam Reveley, and Rachel Laurin.

Notes on the music with texts. Church musicians take note.

DELCAMP

Mantegna: Hymnody and Beyond

James Orford, org; Helen Ashby, s; Cara Curran, a; Tom Castle, t; Christopher Webb, b; Dulwich Choral Society, London Mozart Players/ William Vann

Albion 67—75 minutes

Mantegna is one of the 18 original hymn tunes that Vaughan Williams wrote for the 1906 *English Hymnal* and the 1925 *Songs of Praise*. Despite their continuing popularity

many of them, including *Mantegna*, are scarcely known. How many are familiar with the hymn tunes *White Gates* or *Magda*? This wonderful program, sponsored by the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society, presents a broad selection of hymns sung in their original form by the Dulwich Choral Society, with arrangements for solo organ and various instruments by Vaughan Williams, William Harris, Percy Whitlock, Henry Ley, David Briggs, Helen Glatz, and Malcolm Riley.

The major work on the program is Francis Jackson's *Homage to Vaughan Williams* (Variations on *Mantegna*) for orchestra. Commissioned in 1960, it roughly follows the events in the Garden of Gethsemane leading up to the arrest of Jesus. The score was only recently found amongst Jackson's papers in the York Minster Library after he died in 2022. It is a fine piece that should be better known. The program begins and ends with two popular settings: Vaughan Williams's arrangement of *Old Hundredth* and Henry Ley's arrangement of what may be his most famous hymn tune, *Sine Nomine*.

Excellent notes on the music. If you love Vaughan Williams you need to get this.

DEL CAMP

Songs of Ourselves

The Fourth Choir
Orchid 100389—48:52

This is one of those programs that alternates old music and new music. The old pieces are from the 1500s and 1600s; the new pieces are by living composers. The old pieces are brief and pleasant. The new ones are longer, mostly—5 to 8 minutes—and unpleasant, as you expect new music to be. And, of course, current culture is about “me”—myself, ourselves—so the poetry is empty too. It's all unaccompanied, and I don't even like great music unaccompanied (unless it's chant).

It is utterly unrewarding to listen to this, though today I heard new music that was far worse.

VROON

The single greatest crisis of the 20th Century was the loss of faith. Noise—and its acceptance as music—was the product of the resulting spiritual confusion.

—ROBERT REILLY *SURPRISED BY BEAUTY*

Motets Romantiques: French Sacred

SAINT-SAENS: *Quam Dilecta; Deus Abraham;*
GUILMANT: *O Salutaris;* **GRANDVAL:** *Kyrie;*
DUBOIS: *Ave Verum; Benedicat Vobis Dominus;*
BONIS: *Cantique de Jean Racine;*
DUPARC: *Benedicat Vobis Dominus;*
TOMBELLE: *Ave Maria; Gloria;* **BOELLMANN:** *Ave Maria;* **SOHY:** *Kyrie;* **DELIBES:** *Agnus Dei;* **FAURE:** *Tantum Ergo;* **CHAMINADE:** *Gloria*

Judith van Wanrou, s; Isabelle Druet, mz; Cyrille DuBois, t; Thomas Dolie, bar; Manon Galy, v; Victor Julien Laferrriere, vc; Yann DuBost, db; Anais Gaudemard, hp; Lucille Dollat, org; Choir of Radio France/ Christophe Grapperon

Alpha 1097—69 minutes

There was lovely sacred music written in France in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and we are accorded a generous helping of it here. It is elegant melodic fare that embraces sentiment warmly more often than not. So if you like your musical prayers sung sweetly and accompanied by lilting arpeggios on the harp and/or organ, vous etes au bon endroit.

I'll admit that except Fauré's 'Tantum Ergo', which I have been singing (badly) in the shower for years, I did not know this music. I came away pleased to have heard these solo and choral songs, individually and as a program. What I enjoy most are the changes of content and color as different combinations of voices and instruments keep the program fresh and a bit unpredictable. The mezzo and solo cello sound lovely together in the 'Ave Verum' of Theodore Dubois. Mezzo Isabelle Druet returns, this time with the organ, harp, and choir for the Saint-Saens 'Deus Abraham' written for the funeral of Admiral Courbet, a hero of French military expeditions in Asia. The violin joins the tenor and harp in the handsome 'Ave Maria' by Fernand de la Tombelle, and so on. If you listen without peeking at the notes, you never know who's going to show up, and the sense of surprise is part of the attraction. The instruments sound quite beautiful and I really like the choir. The solo soprano and mezzo are a notch up from the tenor, who can sound very bright and clenched, and the baritone, who's better when he lightens his voice to complement his colleagues than when he muscles up to sing alone. The notes place

the music in its cultural context, and the engineering flatters all. I really enjoyed this and suspect you will too.

GREENFIELD

Radiant Dawn: Men's Choral

ROTH: *Night Prayer*; **TALLIS:** *O Nata Lux; Dum Transisset Sabbatum*; **DALEY:** *Grandmother Moon*; **PRITCHARD:** *The Light Thereof*; **MACMILLAN:** *O Radiant Dawn; In Splendoribus Sanctorum*; **HILDEGARD:** *O Gloriosissimi*; **PANUFNIK:** *O Hearken*; **WHITE:** *Christe, Qui Lux es et Dies*; **BARNARD:** *Aura*; **BINGHAM:** *Enter Ghost*; **PARK:** *Sommernacht*; **RHEINBERGER:** *Abendlied*; **BURGON:** *Nunc Dimittis*

Matilda Lloyd, tpt; Gesualdo 6/ Owain Park
Hyperion 68465—71 minutes

Gesualdo 6 is (obviously) a vocal sextet. It consists of 2 countertenors, 2 tenors, a baritone, and a bass. This time around, the fellows have added Matilda Lloyd and her trumpet to their mix. While she offers some flashy bugling here and there, most of the time she is a 7th voice, with her plangent tone seamlessly joining the others.

The music explores light as it emanates from different sources around us. But unlike many of the anthologies we've been inundated with of a similar theme, this one does more than shimmer, glimmer, and overstay its welcome. The repertoire reaches back to the likes of Thomas Tallis and Robert White, who join the contemporary composers to envision the the Transfiguration, the Book of Revelation, the illumination of the tomb on that first Easter morning, incense wafting in the light of stained glass, the luminous apparition of King Hamlet's Ghost, and the Compline service's welcoming of the night. The spiritual content is profound, expressed in singing that is elegant and deeply felt. I've sung Tallis's 'O Nata Lux' 100 times and have never heard it sound this connected. In MacMillan's 'Radiant Dawn' the light, while powerful, doesn't hurt your "eyes". (I've heard it sound pretty strident elsewhere.) Matilda Lloyd's trumpet adds zing to Judith Bingham's appropriation of Shakespeare and a measure of brilliance to illuminate the saints in MacMillan's 'In Splendoribus'. But when it folds into the Light of Christ in White's 'Christe, Qui Lux' and joins the meditation circle in Deborah Pritchard's 'Light Thereof' you're hearing a

complementary voice, not an obbligato soloist. Spiritually and artistically, this is the real deal. As usual, Hyperion does everything right with its technical and literary support.

GREENFIELD

Begin the Song! A Purcell Academy

Purcell, Croft, Eccles, Blow, Clarke, Barrett
Paul-Antoine Bénos-Djian, ct; Le Consort
HM 902741—75 minutes

Countertenor Paul-Antoine Bénos-Djian traces the origins of this recording to a 2016 concert in Rouen of English vocal music. This was at the invitation of Vincent Dumestre with members of Le Consort. The music of Henry Purcell as well as his elder and younger contemporaries of the English Restoration period made a deep impression. It was, after all, a dazzlingly brilliant period in English musical history.

This recording brings together songs and airs for alto solo as well as a few purely instrumental movements and two duets: William Croft's 'Peace is the Song' for alto and baritone from his *Ode for the Peace of Utrecht* and Purcell's 'Sound the Trumpet' for two altos from the ode *Come, ye Sons of Art*. Two of Purcell's best-known airs figure on the program: 'Music for a While' from *Oedipus* and 'Fairest Isle' from *King Arthur*. Most of the music is extracted from longer works like odes, welcome songs, and theater pieces. Readers will have to decide for themselves whether such excerpts make for a satisfactory program. I would rather hear the complete pieces and thus hear the alto solos in context.

Bénos-Djian is a formidable vocal artist, but I find his tone a little more heady than I like. In the upper register this produces some unevenness. Many of today's male altos seem capable of infusing their tone with more chest resonance, and that sounds more vocally stable to me. Again, this is a matter of preference. Meanwhile, we can be grateful to get glimpses of the work of such composers as William Croft (1678-1727), John Eccles (c1668-1735), Jeremiah Clarke (1674-1707), and the mysterious "Mr Barrett" (c1676-1719).

GATENS

Elegy

RAVEL: *Kaddisch*; **CHAUSSON:** *Hebe*; **SCHUBERT:** *Nachtstück*; *Auflosung*; *Die Junge Nonne*; **PURCELL:** *An Evening Hymn*; **BRIDGE:** *Come to Me in My Dreams*; **FAURE:** *Après un Reve*; **SCHUMANN,C:** *Die Gute Nacht die ich dir Sage*; **BRAHMS:** *O Tod, wie Bitter Bist du*; **WALLEN:** *Peace on Earth*; **SCHUMANN,R:** *Requiem*; **LANDRY:** *Mort Quand tu me Viendras Prendre*; **VIARDOT:** *Lamento*; **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *Tired*; **GRIEG:** *Dereinst, Gedanke mein*; **BARBER:** *The Desire for Hermitage*; **MAHLER:** *Ich bin der Welt Abhanden Gekommen*; **STRAUSS:** *Morgen*

Mary Bevan, s; Joseph Middleton, p
Signum 939—68 minutes

This is a sublime program that explores, as soprano Mary Bevan states in her introduction, “the mystery of death and the many ways it has been perceived through music and poetry over the centuries”.

With her warm and supple voice, Bevan’s performances convey so many of the emotions we endure when confronted by mortality: vulnerability, sorrow, and even hope. Every selection is beautifully performed. Ravel’s ‘Kaddisch’ is sung simply, liberally using straight tone. Viardot’s ‘Lamento’, with its undulating piano accompaniment expertly performed by Middleton, rivals and even surpasses Fauré’s ‘Berceaux’. I found myself returning to the seventh selection, ‘Come to me in my dreams’ by Frank Bridge, for its sweeping piano accompaniment reminiscent of Roger Quilter, his contemporary, and the soaring melody that becomes suddenly delicate on the text, “And part my hair, and kiss my brow, and say, My love! Why suff’rest thou?”

The booklet includes notes by Bevan on each of the selections, brief bios, and original texts with translations.

For those seeking comfort from the realities of tragedy and loss, this program is a gift.

VALENTE

There is a cult of ignorance in the United States, and there always has been. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way thru our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that “my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge”.

—ISAAC ASIMOV IN 1980

The World Feels Dusty

CHAUSSON: *Poem de l’amour et de la Mer*; **BARBER:** *3 Songs, op 10*; **DEBUSSY:** *Chansons de Bilitis*; **COPLAND:** *The World Feels Dusty*; *I’ve Heard an Organ Talk Sometimes*; **WALLEN:** *Night Thoughts*

Sarah Connolly, mz; Joseph Middleton, p
Chandos 20285—58 minutes

With her warm and expressive mezzo voice, Dame Sarah Connolly spins out melodies with grace and ease, inviting listeners to delve into the passion and elegance of these French and English art songs. Joseph Middleton is a supportive and exciting collaborator, demonstrating both his virtuosity and subtlety.

While the orchestrated version of Chausson’s *Poem de l’amour et de la Mer* may be more familiar, this program begins with the original setting for voice and piano that he premiered with tenor Desire Demest in 1893. It is beautifully presented by Connolly and Middleton, the later performing the Interlude with passion and restraint.

The songs by Barber, Debussy, and Copland offer interesting interpretations and are enjoyable. But the most impressive selection is the premiere recording of Errollyn Wallen’s *Night Thoughts*, commissioned for and premiered by Connolly and Middleton in 2023. Wallen was inspired during her visit to visual artist Howard Hodgkin’s studio, and was particularly captivated with his painting *Night Thoughts*. 2 of the 4 poems are original works by Wallen, and they alternate with texts by Shakespeare and Dickinson. The second song, ‘Bright Lights’, is a jazz-influenced poem. As stated in the program notes written by Nigel Simeone, this song, “recalls an early performance in Harlem by the teenage Ella Fitzgerald—at it also serves as a reminder that at the start of her career, Dame Sarah Connolly was also an accomplished jazz singer.”

In the final song, ‘Night Thoughts’, we again hear jazz influences as Connolly bends notes and judiciously sings without vibrato while Middleton plays the coloristic flourishes and allows the sound to fade away, conveying the final stanza of the poem, “Universe of black and white, A single line, a single life. Paint in this heart tonight.” Liner notes in English. Texts with translations.

VALENTE

Letters from Scandinavia

GRIEG: *Til Norge; Mote; Foraarsregn; Pa Norges Nogne Fjelde; Ved Gjaetle-Bekken;* **STENHAMMAR:** *Jutta Kommer till Folkungarna; Jungfru Blond och Jungfru Brunett; Vid Fönstret;* **GRONDAHL:** *Sildig; Til mit Hjertes Dronning; Skaerer;* **NETZEL:** *Sag mig, du lilla fogel;* **MUNKTELL:** *Fjerran pa enslig stig;* **SIBELIUS:** *Norden; Kaiutar*

Joanna Harries, mz; Sholto Kynoch, p
CRD 3551—74 minutes

This is a beautifully designed and performed project, and, as described by its creator Harries, is “something between a song recital and a historical audio travel guide. A weaving together of music and text as it follows in the footsteps of women journeying to 19th Century Nordic countries for the first time.”

The descriptive and often humorous narrations written by Harries are “inspired by colourful and evocative 19th Century travel writing”. Underscores were composed by Peter Face, who seamlessly connects narrations with the songs, and even include sound effects, bringing the listener more fully into the drama.

Harries offers a complete performance of dramatic narrations and beautifully sung art songs that are mostly unknown. Her voice is clear, bright, and supple; and partnered with Skynoch, these selections come to life with finesse, grace, and passion.

The booklet is itself beautiful, printed on heavy stock paper and decorated with old fashioned travel stamps and photos. Short essays about the creation of the program and brief paragraphs about each song supply interesting and scholarly information. The inside cover of the case is a detailed map of the Scandinavian countries with the trail of the “explorers” clearly marked.

Texts and translations are available at the publisher’s website.

VALENTE

Aafje Heynis, contralto

with orchestras, organ, piano
Decca 4842104 [14CD] 14-1/2 hours

I grew up in an area of Dutch immigrants in New Jersey, very near New York. My father’s family immigrated early in the 20th Century, and he spoke Dutch with the butcher, the baker, the tailor, and the people who painted our house. People were still immigrating

in the 1940s; I remember a couple of Dutch children in my class at elementary school. The Dutch have always spoken English, but listening to them speak to each other—in their own rather homey tongue—was part of childhood.

In the Reformed churches—apart from Uncle Joe’s churches, which were almost all immigrants, because he preached in Dutch—some of the psalm tunes may have been from the old country; but I remember them as rather odd and not very melodic or attractive. I was much happier with Baptist songs; and since my parents were married in a Baptist church, I got plenty of that. (My parents were rather self-conscious about their immigrant families—my mother was from Scotland—and tried to adopt “American” culture, even religion.)

I don’t remember ever hearing Dutch folk music. I must have, but it’s not memorable stuff (like German, Swedish, or even Scottish). Here I had to listen to Aafje Heynis sing quite a bit of it—and it is terribly boring. The Dutch loved classical music (still do), but the native music was (and is) nothing special. Of the 14 discs in this box, 3 are Dutch songs—and they are not memorable or beautiful (one is sacred, one Christmas, the third folk). Hearing her lovely Dutch was nice—and her voice is simply wonderful—but those discs have very limited appeal.

She was a favorite at the Concertgebouw, and a few of these recordings are with the resident orchestra, conducted by Eduard Van Beinum and Bernard Haitink. We have Haitink’s *Rosamunde* and Mahler 2 complete—and Van Beinum’s Alto Rhapsody. Igor Markevitch conducts the Beethoven 9th. There are 2 or 3 discs of Handel, Bach arias and cantatas, the Brahms Serious Songs, and a whole disc of Gluck’s *Orfeo*.

These are mostly 1960s recordings, in excellent Philips sound; and her voice is hauntingly beautiful—impossible to forget. The cover notes mention her faith and modesty—of a flavor I knew well from childhood. I did not know her or her recordings, but I was glad to hear them now. The Dutch may not have written much great music, but they certainly produced some of the greatest performers of it. And it reminded me how much in awe we held musicians when I was a child. They were a superior race!

VROON

Dopo Notte

Arias by Handel & Hasse for Faustina Bordoni & Giovanni Carestini

Megan Kahts, mz; Vienna Academic Orchestra/ Jeremy Joseph

Solo Musica 493—52 minutes

In her notes for this release, Megan Kahts explains that, like Faustina Bordoni, she switched from soprano to mezzo. “Bordoni was the wife of the composer JA Hasse and was perhaps the very first opera diva in musical theater history...in a time when women weren’t allowed very much and, especially in opera, castrati were celebrated as the greatest singers of their time, Bordoni charted a highly effective career... In the Baroque period, singers (with their personal art of ornamentation) were actually co-creators of compositions, not merely interpreters. This album then is equally about the singers as about the composers.”

Most of the Handel arias here are from relatively familiar operas: *Ariodante*, *Alessandro*, *Tolomeo*, and *Alcina*. Of the Hasse operas I’ve only heard *Cleofide* in its entirety. Kahts is first-rate. Her warm, smoky timbre is perfectly suited to the characters. She has a formidable range that allows her to sink deep into the lower regions and then ascend to the stars with no audible difference in timbre. There’s little that she can’t do with the coloratura either; she could give Cecilia Bartoli a run for her money in that respect, and Kahts doesn’t aspirate as much as the famous Italian diva. On the other hand, Bartoli makes far more of the words than Kahts, who tends to be too reticent and generic in her enunciation. There are moments when these arias could be about almost anything.

She has an excellent colleague in Jeremy Joseph, who offers strong leadership, knowing when to push forward and when to relax and follow the singer. There is a pleasant balance between the orchestra and singer, the voice given some space around it so it emerges naturally.

Notes on the music, but no texts or translations.

REYNOLDS

Jonas Kaufmann Decca Recordings

various orchestras and conductors

Decca 4870033 [15CD] about 15 hours

One of the best known and widely promot-

ed tenors today, Jonas Kaufmann had the tremendous fortune to attract a major recording company (Decca) and sign an exclusive contract with them. After that contract expired Kaufmann moved over to Sony, where he remains to this day, singing all kinds of repertoire from two-disc Christmas albums to operetta and film songs. He has a loyal and passionate following. In some ways, he has become the Montserrat Caballé of his day in that one never knows if he’ll actually show up for his announced appearances. A number of opera-loving friends of mine have told me of their frustration in buying tickets to see him in recital, concert, or opera and then finding out (usually at the last minute) that he has canceled and they will be seeing someone else. It’s a gamble, but many people are willing to take it.

And Kaufmann IS a fine singer and actor. His musicianship is superb and he always conveys what he’s singing about. From lieder to Verdi’s *Otello* Kaufmann’s artistry is sincere. His voice has a warm, dark middle register that often suggests a baritone, and his top blooms, allowing for ringing climaxes. Of late his voice has become more leathery, the tone not as sweet as it was, the middle even darker, but that is not uncommon as singers get older.

This collection assembles the albums and complete operas Kaufmann recorded for Decca when his voice was at its purest.

Disc 1: *Sehnsucht*—arias by Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven, and Wagner, conducted by Abbado (J/A 2010—Kurt Moses). It presents an interesting selection of familiar and less familiar arias mostly from Wagner operas (*Lohengrin*, *Die Walkure*, *Parsifal*), but with Tamino’s big scenes from Mozart’s *Magic Flute* along with an aria from Schubert’s *Fierrabras* and Florestan’s aria from Beethoven’s *Fidelio*. Kaufmann’s voice is at its most beautiful and appealing here, and he doesn’t neglect the meaning of the texts either.

2. *Verismo Arias*—all Italian, with familiar arias from *Andrea Chenier*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, and *Adriana Lecouvreur* as well as rarities from *Giulietta e Romeo*, *L’arlesiana* and *I Lituani*. There are also arias from operas I wouldn’t classify as verismo (*Mefistofele*, *La Gioconda*). Kaufmann’s singing is very passionate, but he already had a habit of crooning the quiet moments and blasting the climaxes.

3. *Romantic Arias*. These are the tenor lollipops that everyone loves from *La Boheme*, *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Manon*, and *Rigoletto* among others. It's most persuasive; anyone who wants to find out why Kaufmann is so popular can listen to any track on this disc and quickly understand.

4. Wagner: arias and scenes from *Die Walkure*, *Siegfried*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Rienzi* with the Wesendonck Lieder thrown in for good measure. Kaufmann has been very careful about rationing his Wagner performances (he took on Tristan a few times several years ago, wisely waiting to see where his voice took him). A bonus disc gives us Kaufmann's thoughts on the characters and the composer in both English and German.

5. Schubert: *Die Schöne Müllerin* (reviewed by Robert Moore in J/A 2010). Kaufmann is very earnest and clearly loves the work. There are other recordings I'd choose before his (Wunderlich, Schreier, Bostridge, and Pregardien, to name only tenors and the first that come to mind). Kaufmann has also recorded *Winterreise* for Sony (J/A 2014).

6. Weber: *Oberon*. This was the first complete recording to present the opera in the original English rather than the more familiar German translation. Gardiner and his forces work magic with Weber's magical music. Kaufmann is superb, singing the heck out of his big aria 'From boyhood trained' with excellent coloratura and high Bs. Hillevi Martinpelto is a lovely Rezia, giving a first-rate account of 'Ocean, thou Mighty Monster'. Gardiner uses the distinguished actor Roger Allam as narrator; I would've preferred the complete dialog spoken by the singers (different accents don't bother me).

7. Beethoven: *Fidelio*. A complete account of Beethoven's only opera, conducted here by Claudio Abbado not long before he died. Nina Stemme is a strong, if unremarkable Leonore, and Kaufmann sings Florestan with intelligence and sensitivity.

8. Humperdinck's gorgeous and heart-breaking *Königskinder* was recorded in performance back in 2005 for the Accord label. I had the original release and still think Kaufmann is its main claim to fame, though the rest of the cast is excellent as well. Kaufmann also appeared in a video release of this opera recorded in Zurich with a completely different cast (released by Decca).

The production has been updated, but it tells essentially the same story and doesn't get in the way of the music.

9. Verdi's Requiem got the deluxe treatment from Decca in a recording made with La Scala forces in 2012. Daniel Barenboim leads Anja Harteros, Elina Garanca, Kaufmann, and Rene Pape in an exciting performance (reviewed by Mr Sininger J/F 2014). I have a few reservations about the soloists. Harteros seems a little overparted sometimes and is not always as secure as one could wish. But she does deliver a meltingly beautiful pianissimo high B-flat in the last movement.

Decca offers a booklet with attractive color photographs of Kaufmann and all the recording and track information that one needs. No texts are supplied—a real problem for unfamiliar works like *Königskinder*. Kaufmann's voice isn't recorded too close-up, so there's space around his voice and Decca's familiar warmth to the sound.

If you're a Kaufmann fan and you missed the original releases of some or most of these recordings, you'll love this set.

REYNOLDS

Samuel Marino: Lumina

Handel, Schubert, Monnot, Dvorak, Liszt, Strauss, Rachmaninoff, others
Jonathan Ware, p; Covent Garden Sinfonia/
Ben Palmer—Decca 4871220—53 minutes

Back in Sept/Oct 2020 I enthusiastically welcomed Samuel Marino's first CD devoted to the music of Handel and Gluck. As part of his contract with Decca he has appeared on another disc with music by Mozart, Gluck, Cimarosa, and Chevalier de Saint George. This second disc deliberately takes him away from the Baroque and classical periods (though not entirely) with music from much later on.

Marino's voice has a sweet, silvery sound. His accounts of two Ave Marias (Schubert's and the Bach-Gounod) are ravishing. His handling of the concluding Rachmaninoff 'Vocalise' is first-rate, his trills accurate, the legato line admirably sustained. He rises to the optional high C-sharp easily, making sure it emerges as a natural part of the vocal phrase. I really enjoyed his singing of Monnot's 'Hymne a l'amour', a song made popular by Edith Piaf. The aria from Dvorak's *Rusalka* is lovely too, but

here his voice doesn't have the power or the passion to convey the lovelorn wood-nymph's longing for her Prince. Marino's "pop" mannerism of scooping as he moves from phrase to phrase into a higher register is a little annoying after a while.

The arrangements here are all attractive and never call attention to themselves. Jonathan Ware is an excellent accompanist and the Covent Garden Sinfonia complements Marino's singing beautifully.

In the booklet notes Marino discusses his desire to break out of the Baroque and classical genres, lamenting that his being a male prevents him from playing female roles. Since there has always been a lot of crossgender casting in opera and increasingly in musical theater I hope he gets future opportunities to "test the waters" in the theater and try some of the roles he longs to play. I don't really see him as Maria in *West Side Story* or as the title role in *Rusalka*, mainly because his voice doesn't sound big enough for a large theater unless he is amplified. But heck: Stephanie Blythe sang Don Jose to Jamie Barton's Carmen just a few years ago, so who knows?

Good sound, no texts or translations.

REYNOLDS

Golden Age

Arias and duets by Donizetti, Rossini, Bizet, Delibes, Verdi

Erin Morley, s; Lawrence Brownlee, t; Munich Radio/ Ivan Repusic

Pentatone 5187400—63 minutes

By the time this appears in ARG the revival of Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment* at the Met starring Erin Morley and Lawrence Brownlee will be a happy memory. Both singers were widely acclaimed and a good time was had by all. Morley was charm personified while Brownlee showed he could still sing the heck out of Tonio 13 years after he last sang it at the Met. An album combining their talents in duets and arias was a terrific idea.

As can be gleaned from the title of the album, all the music is taken from the *bel canto* period, a time when the voice was the primary means of lyric expression in the theater. The duets from *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Le Comte Ory*, *Le Jolie Fille du Perth*, *Lakme* and *Don Pasquale* supply Morley and Brownlee ample opportunities to blend

together harmoniously and show us their vocal skill and personality. The melodic fecundity of these composers is incredible. Delibes's *Lakme* is best known for the Bell Song (one of Morley's solo arias), but it is one great tune after another. The duet between Adele and Ory from Rossini's farce is extremely well sung as is the duet from Bizet's *Jolie Fille du Perth*.

Both singers get two solos. Brownlee sings Nadir's stunning aria from *Pearl Fishers* with melting beauty complete with an interpolated high C in the final phrase. His second aria is from Donizetti's rarely heard 1835 opera *Marino Faliero*, one of the few *bel canto* operas that gives the title role to the bass. No, Brownlee doesn't take on the title character's music, but Fernando's in his farewell in Act I. Written for the high-flying Giovanni Battista Rubini, it is chockful of high Cs and Ds. Brownlee dispatches it handily enough; I was surprised he didn't ornament the repeat of the cabaletta and disappointed he didn't interpolate a high F at the end.

Morley treats us to a smashing account of the Bell Song. The opening vocalise rising to an optional high E is incredible for its breath control and spot-on pitch, the main aria ending with a lovely high B where Morley clearly articulates the word "nuit". The imitations of the bell are less hurried than usual, very precise in rhythm and pitch. The soprano one-ups herself by altering the cadenza after the first verse to touch a G-sharp above high C (she doesn't indulge in Mado Robin's trick of sustaining the note). She concludes the aria with a triumphant interpolated high E. Morley's second solo is Gilda's 'Caro nome' from *Rigoletto*, an opera that Morley has sung many times. She perfectly captures Gilda's fantasy of first love with incredibly accomplished singing, capped by a perfect trill.

As a sort of encore, the two singers offer the Norino-Ernesto duet from Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* 'Tornami a dir che m'ami', a moment that stands still in time as if we all want the singing to go on forever.

Ivan Repusic works very well with his singers, and the Munich Radio Orchestra offers lush accompaniment. Both voices are captured well in a transparent balance with the orchestra. Notes, texts, and translations.

REYNOLDS

Rot (Red)

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Missverständnis*;
STRAUSS: *Das Rosenband*; **REGER:** *Stellich-
ein*; **MOZART:** *An Chloe*; **WOLF:** *Wer tat
Deinem Fusslein Weh, Der Feuerreiter*;
SCHOENBERG: *Erwartung*; **RIHM:** *Hochrot*;
LOEWE: *Edward*; **SCHUBERT:** *Heidenroslein,
Der Jungling auf dem Hügel*; **DESSAU:** *Warum
Sind denn die Rosen so Blass; Den Mutigen
Achtzehn*; **WEILL:** *Epitaph: Die Rote Rosa*;
Nanna's Lied; *Hier Ruht die Jungfrau Johanna
Beck*; **MAHLER:** *Wer hat Dies Liedlein Erdacht*;
BRITTEN: *The Children*; **EISLER:** *Die
Heimkehr*; **WOLPE:** *Fantasie von Übermorgen*;
BIELFELDT: *Rinnsteinprinzessin*

Eva Resch, s; Eric Schneider, p
Genuin 25940—73 minutes

The sublime artistry of soprano Eva Resch is on full display in this intimate and complex program fixated on the color red: red lips, red roses, red blood, the red burning end of a cigarette. Her original free verse text (in the booklet) explores the many facets of the color red, preparing the listener for the turbulent journey ahead as she and Schneider perform repertoire that spans centuries.

Resch is an exceptional interpreter of modern music, freely using straight tone, bent notes, and spoken text, and offers a lilt- ing and seductive cabaret style, specifically in the selections by Weill. Her vibrant and powerful voice is on display especially when singing traditional lieder. Schneider is a ver- satile and supportive partner, making full use of the skills he learned from his inter- pre- tive and collaborative studies with, among others, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.

‘Hochrot’ (Deep Red) by Rihm is simply and hauntingly performed by the duo. With its sparse accompaniment, there is a sense that time stands still. Loewe’s ballad ‘Edward’ is riveting in its dramatic power, and the choice to follow it with Schubert’s ‘Heidenroslein’ urges the listener to explore the deeper meaning of Goethe’s text, that the little rose in the poem is a metaphor for a young woman. As Resch explained in an interview, “The starting point, the pivotal point of this album is quite simply ‘Heiden- roslein’. It shocked me deeply that I’d obviously never understood the lyrics. It’s essentially a scene of violence against a woman described there.” She continued, “little by little this common thread emerged, and for

me at least, it now tells a story with a sense of suspense.”

Resch is captivating, using her extensive dramatic skills, vocal range, and dynamic capabilities to thrill listeners as she sings songs of war, murder, loss, degradation, and love.

The booklet includes texts with English translations, brief bios, and stunning photos by Joerg Schwalfenberg. Listeners should note that lyrics and translations for tracks 13 and 16, both Weill selections from *Berlin Requiem*, are missing from the booklet, but Britten’s original English text is translated into German.

VALENTE

Alma: Ibero-American Songs

GUASTAVINO: *Milonga de dos Hermanos*;
GILARDI: *Cancion de Cuna India*; **GREVER:** *Alma mia, Te Quiero Dijiste*; **HENRIQUE:** *Uirapuru*; **OVALLE:** *Azulao*; **BRAGA:** *O Kin- imba, Engenho Novo*; **PABLOS:** *La Noria*; *Halffter: Ai que Linda Moca*; **LORCA:** *Las Morillas de Jaen*; **OBRADORS:** *El Vito*; **SAN- JUAN:** *Clavelitos*; **BOR:** *Cancion de Cuna para Dormir a Albertico*; *Rojo*; **FIGUEROA:** *Prome- sas para que Duermas*; **FERRO:** *Rima*; *La Campesina*; **PINA:** *4 Preguntas*; **COSTA:** *Os Salgueiros*; **FRAGOSO:** *Embalando o Menino*

Julieth Lozano Rolong, s; Joao Araujo, p
Somm 706—55 minutes

The rich musical heritage of 7 Latin Ameri- can countries is presented in this exciting program by Rolong and Araujo, who pres- ent songs in Spanish and Portuguese. The duo, who have been performing together for more than 10 years, are outstanding inter- pre- ters of this literature, most of which is unfamiliar. Rolong’s warm and flexible voice interprets the varied styles with excite- ment and grace; the lullabies are especially captivating. Araujo is an outstanding collab- orator. The introduction to Obradors’s ‘El vito’, with its powerful repeated notes that recall the forceful strumming of a guitar, is stunning.

The booklet includes informative and fascinating paragraphs on each of the com- posers and their repertoire by Robert Matthew-Walker, short bios of the perform- ers, and annotated texts with English trans- lations. This is a beautiful program that serves as a fine introduction to the music of the Iberian Peninsula.

VALENTE

Bridges of Voice & Soul

Arias from *Pagliacci*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Otello*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Tosca*, *Turandot*, and *L'Arlesiana*

Arsen Soghomonyan, t; Kaunsas City Symphony/ Constantine Orbelian

Delos 3614—45 minutes

Last May Armenian tenor Arsen Soghomonyan made a last minute Met debut in Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* when the two scheduled tenors canceled. He was unknown in New York and there was typical skepticism on the part of the audience. As it turned out Soghomonyan had a triumph and ended up singing all 5 performances of the opera.

It's an excellent voice: steady and warm from top to bottom with an elegiac quality that tears at one's heart. The very top is perhaps a little careful, though there's plenty of *squillo* up there too. His new disc for Delos shows him to great advantage singing a variety of arias from the lirico-spinto repertoire. His security in the lower and middle registers was undoubtedly helped by his beginning his career as a baritone. He also has a lot of color in his voice. Listen to the way he sings Canio's famous lament, how he builds the aria gradually from quiet desperation until letting loose when it arrives at the big tune. Turridu's farewell to his mother is also imaginatively handled. By refraining from the usual sobs he causes us to cry for him.

Soghomonyan is also an accomplished Verdian. He sings two selections from Othello's music, demonstrating again that slow and steady win the race. 'Dio mi potevi' easily passes what used to be called the A-flat test (the first half is mostly written on that note); by restraining himself the climax on the top B-flat at the very end is cathartic. Similarly, 'Niun mi tema' is more effective without the death throes histrionics. I hope to hear him in more Puccini too (he recorded *Le Villi* for Opera Rara). The Met should engage him often.

Constantine Orbelian knows this repertoire like the back of his hand and is an able partner along with the underrated Kaunsas City Symphony. Good sound; texts and translations.

REYNOLDS

Horizons: French Melodies

BOULANGER: *Reflets, Attente*; **CANAL:** *La Flute de Jade*; **DEBUSSY:** *Chansons de Bilitis*; **POLIGNAC:** *Chant d'amour; Nuit d'hiver; Li-Si; K-Fong; La Rose Rouge*; **DUPARC:** *Au Pays ou se Fait la Guerre; La Vie Anterieure*; **STROHL:** *La Flute de Pan; La Chevelure; Roses dans la Nuit; La Nuit; La Momie*; **CHRETIEN:** *L'amoureuse des Vagues; Les Matelots; Dernier Reve*

Kitty Whately, mz; Edwige Herchenroder, p

Chandos 20324—78 minutes

This program of French melodies is exquisitely performed by Whately and Herchenroder and includes songs and cycles both familiar and rare, connected by the ideals and experimentation of early 20th Century French music. Listeners are treated to thoughtful performances, characterized by great attention to detail and inspired interpretations. Whately's diction is impeccable and we hear so many colors in her warm and rich voice. Herchenroder is an exceptional pianist and collaborator, both delicate and powerful.

The program is brimming with riveting performances. Polignac's 'La Rose rouge' is stunning; its repeating chords reminiscent of a funeral march, sometimes bold and sometimes subdued, alternate with a delicate declamatory melody. The operatic exclamation of hope is quickly replaced by the return of the somber chords and simple melody. Whately's rich and warm mezzo is nuanced as she sings of the heartbreaking loss and yearning of the dead warrior's wife.

Debussy's *Chansons de Bilitis* and Strohl's *Songs from Bilitis* offer differing interpretations of Louys's poetry, and present an interesting comparison between the two contemporaries.

The 4 premieres on the album are a fascinating introduction to the luscious and complex music of Marguerite Canal and Hedwige Chretien.

The thoughtful booklet includes photos of Canal, Chretien, and pages from Tous-saint's *Flute de jade*, with brief paragraphs in English about each of the composers and their selections. Texts and translations.

Admirers of French Melodie will want this recording for their collection.

VALENTE

The Newest Music

ESMAIL: *Exaltations*

Kaitlyn Grace Jackson, s; Matthew Newhouse, t; Aryssa Leigh Burrs, mz; Mark Hughes, hn; Daniel Taubenheim, Kristopher Westrich, tpt; Austin Westjohn, trb; Zach Bridges, tu; Cathedral Choral Society/ Steven Fox

Acis 78314—13 minutes

Here is a single work that connects Roman Catholic musical traditions (specifically, choir with brass) with elements of Indian classical raga. Performed at Washington National Cathedral in 2024, the 13-minute, 3-movement work pits—as composer Reena Esmael (b 1984) puts it—the “sparkling attack and timbre” of brass against “the sheer breadth and text” of the about 120-voice Cathedral Choral Society. Have no fear, these fine brass players can be heard. I (‘Hosanna’) has spectacular tuttis and busy choir-brass interaction. In II (‘Alleluia’), 3 fine vocal soloists join the festivities, and there are some mild dissonances. III (‘Gloria’) is quite contrapuntal and bobs along in mixed meters. As a brass player who has played many such works, I strongly recommend this. Kudos to the engineers for skillfully combining disparate music entities.

MASON: *Lux Aeterna; Quartet 3; City of Angels; When You Are Near*

Anna Schubert, s; Brno Philharmonic/ Pavel Snajdr; Ars Brunensis Choir/ Dan Kalousek; Zelter Quartet; Budapest Scoring Orchestra/ Peter Ilenyi, Zoltan Pad

Ulysses Arts 250070—58 minutes

Todd Mason (b 1957) is an LA-based composer who is renowned for his annual *Mason Home* chamber music series, and who is also an award-winning filmmaker for PBS. This album opens with the 22-minute, 6-movement *Lux Aeterna* (2023)—a most impressive work that is by turns big and intimate, lively and moving, dissonant and warm. The dissonant 15-minute *Quartet 3* (2022) is given an impassioned reading by the LA-based Zelter Quartet. The album ends with orchestral works: the 3-movement, 16-minute *City of Angels* (2024) and the touching little song ‘When You Are

Near’ (2020). Impressive playing and engineering.

SALVAGE: *Crossing Bell at Genga Stazione; Larici; Raffiche; Proust Moments 1+2; Latemar Dream; 1610 AM, Sailors Creek, Virginia; Barcarole; Momentary Raptures; 2 Draughts; Rientry*

David Salvage, p

New Focus 455—57 minute

“Dreams of Love and Travel” is the title of this collection of works composed and performed by pianist David Salvage (b 1978), whose many travels led to adopting Bologna, Italy as his home. The works have specific inspirations, and all are dissonant but not atonal. The polytonal, 5-minute ‘Crossing Bell at Genga Stazione’ is quite lively. ‘Larici’, very dissonant, was inspired by larches at Val d’Aosta. The rippling ‘Raffiche’ is about strong winds. The 7 movements of *Moments from Proust* have very specific inspirations. Fine playing by the composer of hard-to-decipher material.

SHADLE: *Oklahoma Choctaw Cycle; Chahta Aiasha*

Lontano Ensemble/ Odaline de la Martinez
Lorelt 149—59 minutes

Choctaw Places is the title of this collection by Charles Shadle, who teaches composition and theory at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and who is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. There are some 200,000 Choctaws today, descendants of the 20,000 unfortunates who were forcibly driven from ancestral homes in southeastern US to Oklahoma in the 1830s.

The 38-minute *Oklahoma Choctaw Cycle* opens with the mournful ‘Limestone Gap’ (2010), proceeds to a lively ‘Red Cedar’ (2014), and ends with the poignant ‘Old Place’ (2016). The 5-movement, 21-minute ‘Chahta Aiasha’ (*Choctaw Places*, 2022) is a COVID-era product.

Shadle’s musical language is lyrical and abstract, though not atonal. The program is performed beautifully by the London-based Lontano Ensemble, which consists of woodwind and string trios plus @Author:piano.

SIMON: *Be Still and Know; Lickety Split; The Best Cuisine; Nightfall; Dead Fires; Prayer; Caro Mio Ben; Between Worlds; Sleep Well*

Carl DuPont, b; Chiarina Chamber Players
Chiarina 71380—55 minutes

Carlos Simon has impressive career accomplishments: music professor at Georgetown University, composer-in-residence at the Kennedy Center and Boston Symphony, and commissions by several important orchestras. This album offers a mix of his vocal and instrumental works. The artwork—rainbow-colored liquids erupting from a cookpot—suggests a lighthearted program. Some of the music is indeed funny, such as *The Best Cuisine*, a suite where baritone Carl Dupont sings rhapsodically about dishes he and Simon prepared and consumed during the COVID pandemic. Dupont is assisted by the very fine members of Chiarina Chamber Players, a piano trio consisting of violinist Dominic Salemi, cellist Carrie Bean Stute, and pianist Eli Hackney. Dupont and Hackney also team up in several other selections.

The album opens with my favorite of the pieces, *Be Still and Know*, which sets dissonant counterpoint over beautiful harmonies. The rest of the program is performed by Chiarina subsets, including 3 solo pieces: *Between Worlds* (first on violin, then cello) and *Sleep Well* for piano.

BAN

Regan, Loggins-Hull, Buller, Barnes & Mouton, Sakhi, Miller, Eryilmaz

Apollo Chamber Players; George Takei, narr
Azica 71385—77 minutes

How do you suggest, in music, the notion of banning books? Well, you have a string quartet stop repeatedly in mid-phrase, and you interject loud thumps that represent the forcible closing of books. Frantic action helps, too. Those elements are heard (and mentioned in the notes) in Allison Loggins-Hull's *BAN* (2023). The album begins with Marty Regan's *Book of Names* (2024), where renowned Japanese-American actor George Takei narrates the sad story of concentration camps that held American citizens of Japanese descent during World War II. And so it goes through these "Stories of Censorship", a disturbing program that will not

make you feel better about the state of things in 21st-Century America.

In this Short Life

Landau, Boykin, Lang, Higdon, Beglarian, Liverman, Wenzelberg, Adamo
Devony Smith, mz; Danny Zelibor, p; Michael Nicolas, vc—Lexicon 2502—57 minutes

Beautiful, thought-provoking vocal music by 9 composers. Mezzo-soprano Devony Smith is the center of attention, and she sings challenging lines with authority. About half of the pieces are for her and sensitive pianist Danny Zelibor; the others also include the fine cellist Michael Nicolas.

KILPATRICK

Videos

Almost everything is available DVD and Blu-Ray. Numbers are never the same.

DONIZETTI: *Don Pasquale*

Roberto de Candia (Don Pasquale), Giulia Mazzola (Norina), Javier Camarena (Ernesto), Dario Sogos (Malatesta); Donizetti Opera Festival/ Ivan Lopez-Reynoso

Dynamic 38067 [DVD] 130 minutes

This production of *Don Pasquale* from the 2024 Donizetti Festival in Bergamo is a mix of (unearthed) old and (re-imagined) new. It is the first performance of the critical edition of the score. There are small variations like an extra few measures of music here and there that conductor Ivan Lopez-Reynoso still considers crucial. But of prime interest is the Malatesta-Pasquale duet ('Cheti, cheti, immantinente') as it was performed at the opera's premiere (Paris, 1843). Donizetti later revised it; and the original, longer variant has not been heard in nearly 200 years. This attention to historic accuracy is balanced by an updated staging that aims to capture the spirit of the original if not the letter. There's justification in this, as the libretto by Giovanni Ruffini is indeed set in roughly the time the opera was composed. *Don Pasquale* was never intended to be a period piece.

Director Amelie Niermeyer places the action in *our* present, and set and costume designer Maria-Alice Bahra has constructed a splendidly realistic depiction of Don

Pasquale's posh residence that rotates to afford a view of the street where Malatesta and Norina parked the car they apparently have been living in. At the start of Act II, the set rotates further to reveal the back of the house where the garbage containers are kept. Ernesto, in despair because he is unaware that Norina's pending marriage to Don Pasquale is only a ruse, can't decide whether or not to keep his love letters to her. In a clever touch, the beautiful obbligation to his lament ('Cerchero lontana terra') is played by the character of a street trumpeter. As a costume designer, Bahra is no less impressive in her dressing of the chorus and onstage musicians. There is the dazzling assembly of trendy and privileged young people who comment on Pasquale's predicament ('Quel nipotino guastamestieri') and the mariachi band of guitarists who accompany Ernesto's serenade ('Com'e gentil').

The depictions of squalor contrast to Pasquale's creature comforts. As the overture is played, we witness his morning routine, which includes aerobics and culinary delicacies prepared by the servants according to his exacting standards. He leads a contented single life, a signal that, from the start, his ambition to marry was misguided. But Dr Malatesta has ulterior motives for pushing Pasquale into marriage with Norina, who is passed off as the doctor's sister, fresh from the convent. In *commedia dell'arte* fashion, the moment the marriage contract is signed, Norina transforms into a demon and Pasquale is eventually happy to give her up and allow his nephew Ernesto to marry her, just as Malatesta had hoped.

The cast includes established opera stars and students of the Bottega Donizetti, a workshop for young singers. The established singers are Roberto de Candia, a first-rank Pasquale, and Javier Camarena, who for some reason is a notch below his estimable best as Ernesto. The two Bottega students are Giulia Mazola (Norina), a likeable soprano with a straightforward delivery, some vocal heft, but an unreliable trill; and Dario Sogos, a sexy and agile baritone with a modest but attractive tone production. Sogos also has crisp diction—an asset in the wildly boisterous patter section of the 'Cheti, cheti' duet, a high point of the performance. Everyone, including the actors who play the mute roles of the servants, is fully committed to the director's vision. The

jokes land well and the timing is always on target, whether in the comic business or in the poignant moments, such as when Norina's teasing of Don Pasquale goes too far. In a twist on the ending, Malatesta holds back Ernesto so Norina can drive away and live freely on her own. Perhaps she'll enjoy single life as much as Don Pasquale did before this whole debacle began. In any case, it's in line with contemporary thinking (for better or worse) that happy endings are not always contingent on love or marriage.

ALTMAN

PUCCINI: *Turandot*

Anna Netrebko (Turandot), Yusif Eyvazov (Calaf), Ferruccio Furlanetto (Timur), Maria Teresa Leva (Liu), Carlo Bosi (Altoum); Arena di Verona/ Marco Armiliato

C Major 769608 [DVD] 139 minutes

This 2022 performance of Zeffirelli's mammoth Arena di Verona *Turandot* is at least the second time the production has appeared on video. There was a 2010 performance led by Guleghina and Licitra that was issued as part of a Verona collection. I noted that while the director's 1987 Met staging could seem a bit gaudy in the theater, the enormity of the Arena gives his vision free reign. "The awesome realism of the sets (the facade of the Palace, for example, is not evoked so much as recreated), the elaborate costumes, the composition of crowds of chorus members and supernumeraries--it's all breathtakingly beautiful" (J/F 2020).

As with that previous video, I'm happily surprised by the level of intimacy this production achieves. Credit goes in part to the intelligence of Zeffirelli's positioning of the characters and in part to Maestro Marco Armiliato's beautifully gauged pacing. It's a pleasure to hear the score played at such majestic tempos. Nothing is rushed, the text comes through with clarity, and the singers have room to make their musical points.

The *raison d'etre* of this video is Anna Netrebko in the title role. For New Yorkers, the role has specific associations. Her performance of Act II of *Turandot* as part of a December 31, 2019 New Year's Eve Gala marked the last time she sang at the Metropolitan Opera. It was a triumph, as Netrebko's gift for imbuing her portrayals with humanity shed new light on the character. But before the soprano's scheduled Met

performances of the complete opera in Spring 2020, the company's general manager Peter Gelb canceled her contract. In the end, it was a moot point, as all Met performances after March 11 of that year were canceled because of Covid.

So here we have Netrebko's Turandot in full, opposite her husband, tenor Yusif Eyvazov (another exile from the Met). Some find the nasality of Eyvazov's tone production a little odd, but I've always appreciated his refined musicianship and dramatic flair, which are in evidence in this exciting and satisfying performance. He delights the audience with an encore of 'Nessun dorma!', which seems to be *de rigueur* at the Arena. Soprano Maria Teresa Leva sings Liu's music quite well. The tone is solid and attractive and remains consistent whether at forte or on a floating pianissimo. She doesn't put a personal stamp on the role, but there is certainly nothing to criticize. In a bit of luxury casting, veteran bass Ferruccio Furlanetto is a powerful Timur.

As for Netrebko, her singing is as secure as ever, and her understanding of Italian style remains unmatched in the current opera world. In her centerpiece aria 'In questa reggia', she takes a slower tempo and softer dynamic on the phrases about her ancestor Princess Lao-Ling. It's a beautiful effect that implies Turandot feels a personal connection to this woman who lived thousands of years before. The text is explicit: "Today you live again in me"; but Netrebko somehow illuminates it in a way that feels fresh. Netrebko also finds nuances in the Riddle Scene. After she poses the third and final question, note the confident tone and smug look on the line "E ti senti perduto!" (You know you are lost!). It's a brilliant contrast to the fear she expresses after the Unknown Prince comes up with the correct answer. Calaf, of course, proposes a compromise (basically, "discover my name and you're off the hook!") and Eyvazov sings the concluding phrase ("all'alba moriro!") with a lovely evenness of tone. The look she gives him in response is the first sign that she can feel love.

In Act III Netrebko is captivating as she reacts to Liu's final speech ('Tu che di gel') and suicide. There is wonderful direction in her singing of 'Il primo pianto', building to a climax when she admits her love for Calaf. In sum, she's a fascinating actress to watch; and her high notes, up to the many Cs, are

not just on pitch but sung with unforced beauty of tone.

ALTMAN

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Overtures*

Bavarian Ballet/ Mikhail Agrest
Bavarian Opera 96744 [Blu-Ray] 85 minutes

These performances from 2024 are ballets choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky. Ratmansky has taken Tchaikovsky's 3 concert overtures *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, and *Romeo and Juliet* and used them as the basis for the ballets. Any inferred narratives originally linked to the overtures are not used, nor do they have anything to do with the plays. Instead, there are groupings, solos, or duets by various dancers, without any narrative. This non-blending of music and narrative is not unusual in ballet, but in these ballets, it does raise some questions.

I usually like Ratmansky's choreography when it blends with the music, and the dancing follows and enhances it. A narrative structure is not required if the music and dance support one another. The interesting booklet identifies the ballets as abstract and semi-abstract, which is fine as long as the abstract dancing has some relationship to Tchaikovsky's non-abstract music. In the case of these three, I found very little to enjoy. The dancing could have been married to any music. Rarely was the music used to enhance or follow the choreography. Except for *Romeo and Juliet*, Tchaikovsky's overtures do not lend themselves to dance movements (at least the ones used by Ratmansky), and if you're not following a narrative, it's difficult to become engaged with the dancers. In general, I found Ratmansky's choreography interesting, but not involving. I could have turned this off at any point without feeling I'd missed anything.

The dancing overall is excellent, and the scenic design is simple, with color block screens moved up and down as background. An unusual aspect of the DVD is the ability to play it in 3D without a 3D television, as long as you have 3D or polarized glasses to view it properly. The effect is interesting and gives some depth to the stage and dancers. The orchestra plays well. The booklet is in German and English and includes color performance photographs.

FISCH

WAGNER: *Lohengrin*

David Butt Philip (Lohengrin), Malin Byström (Elsa), Anja Kampe (Ortrud), Martin Gantner (Telramund), Georg Zeppenfeld (King Heinrich); Vienna Opera/ Christian Thielemann

C Major 769408 [2DVD] 208 minutes

The political analyst Martin Gurri writes about how the surfeit of information and opinions on the Internet has eroded the concept of Truth. In *The Revolt of the Public* he sounds an alarm about the loss of faith in authority, a construct essential for any functioning society. In this *zeitgeist*, Jossi Wieler and Sergio Morabito, stage directors of this 2024 *Lohengrin* from the Vienna Opera, pose the question: just who are the heroes and villains in Wagner's epic fairy tale? In this telling, Elsa did exactly what she was accused of—she killed her brother Gottfried. Telramund and Ortrud, creepy and opportunistic as they may be, have a legitimate claim against her. Ortrud's cry for vengeance may be directed to "Entweite Götter" (defiled, or profane gods), but her cause is just.

The conceit, executed with integrity and riveting intensity, pays dividends. For example, in the Act II confrontations between Elsa and Ortrud, we now have *both* characters calculating and dissembling. As with Shakespearean text that supports even interpretations that contradict its plain meaning, Wagner's glorious score neither endorses nor refutes this approach, but rather adapts to the colors of the re-calibrated dramatic meanings.

In the realistic 20th Century setting, Lohengrin's entrance is preceded by an earthquake that establishes unequivocally for all present the supernatural aspect of his character. But, in a world where religion no longer reigns supreme, it is only reasonable for Telramund to challenge his motives. Is he really a guardian angel on an ill-advised mission to protect the guilty Elsa? Or some dark spirit in the guise of a blonde heart-throb with a goofy smile? The fully committed choristers make clear the community's shifts between admiration and fear of this otherworldly stranger.

This sense of mystery and even danger reaches its peak in the Act III chamber scene, where even Elsa is cowed by Lohengrin's alarmingly erratic behavior. It infuses

thrilling suspense into a duet that is typically placid.

The musical standards of the production are high. Christian Thielemann is an established authority on the music of Wagner. In addition to the gorgeous sound he elicits from the orchestra, he brings a refreshing intimacy to the work. Even the large ensembles and choral sections that many conductors let flow with unrestrained bombast are here full of nuance and dynamic variety. I've never heard the Herald, a minor character often consigned to shouting fortissimo, given space for so much dramatic expression (here, the excellent Attila Mokus). With Thielemann's sense of proportion, the ear is not inured to constant fortes, so the rousing horn fanfare that forms a kind of coda to Act II is exceptionally spine-tingling (and also sinister in the context of the staging).

Malin Byström fills out Elsa's vocal lines with gleaming tone, Anja Kampe sings Ortrud with power and accuracy, and baritone Martin Gantner brings a rhythmically incisive tenor-like sound to the baritone role of Telramund. All three delineate the complexities of their characters with captivating subtlety. Georg Zeppenfeld's smooth and powerful bass is ideal for King Heinrich's majestic declamations; and, like the others, he is a strong theatrical presence. David Butt Philip sings the title role with sturdy, even tone, just short on seductive charm. Under the scrutiny of the video cameras, his physical demeanor, by necessity or by design, lacks the control and precision of the other principals. But he makes all the dramatic points with fine clarity, especially in the crucial final scenes. With its chilling surprise ending, this gripping performance makes good on its promise of "a crime thriller with a twist".

ALTMAN

WAGNER: *Tristan & Isolde*

Andreas Schager (Tristan), Camilla Nylund (Isolde), Gunther Groissbock (Marke), Christa Mayer (Brangane), Olafur Sigurdarson (Kurvenal); Bayreuth Festival/ Semyon Bychkov

DG 0736685—248 minutes

After two recent mediocre productions of *Tristan und Isolde*, the Bayreuth Festival finally has a production by Thorleifer Orn Arnarsson that is imaginative and interesting while not indulging in bizarre and

impenetrable theories about the music or the libretto. In an interview in the booklet Arnarsson speaks at length about the conflicts and contradictions the protagonists feel towards each other and themselves. All of it is based on the libretto and the music.

Vytaurus Narbutas's stage design suggests a ship or the hull of a ship. In Act I we see ropes hanging down from above on either side of the stage while Isolde is placed center stage dressed in what might be the vast sails of the ship, surrounded by the same material that has some kind of writing on it (we're never shown what the writing says). Brangane guards her mistress from any man who might approach. The 3 men who have solo roles (the Young Sailor, Kurvenal, and Tristan) stroll restlessly around upstage while the chorus is confined to the nether regions offstage. As the director points out, there is very little action in this opera anyway so it all works. Because the characters aren't encumbered by props or weighed down by the setting, our attention is free to concentrate on what they're saying and how they're relating to each other. Arnarsson deals with the central relationship between the two protagonists as they duel for power and control. Camilla Nylund captures Isolde's barely controlled fury at her betrayal by Tristan with detail and specificity—a far cry from the generalized fury one so often sees in this opera. She also suggests the passion (lust?) Isolde feels for Tristan long before they drink the potion, which in this production is more suggested than shown. And Tristan's ambivalence towards her and the tug-of-war he feels in his loyalty to his uncle King Marke is delineated with clarity by Andreas Schager, veteran of at least two other productions of this opera on DVD. I have to hand it to Schager: he modifies his interpretation of Tristan skillfully depending on the director's ideas (some singers insist the other elements be altered around them).

Acts II and III take place in what looks to be other parts of the ship way below deck where curios, knick-knacks, old furniture, and photographs are carelessly stored, almost as if we're in the attics of the protagonists' minds. Much of the time the lighting is so dim it's difficult to fathom where we're supposed to be. Sometimes I was nervous the performers would trip on some of the clutter. Again, whatever action that takes place in the libretto is only suggested or

ignored. In the last act we are not shown any kind of physical altercation between Kurvenal and Melot; whether Kurvenal dies or not is unclear. Tristan does die (I think) while Isolde is consumed by the darkness that surrounds her. Arnarsson's staging doesn't really tell us anything new about the opera, but neither does it get in the way of the music.

Neither Schager nor Nyland is a model of tonal steadiness (forget Melchior and Flagstad), yet they have chemistry, and the long scenes between them sizzle in the right ways. Nyland's top notes are very confident and she phrases her long lines well. Schager makes Tristan's extended Act III monolog interesting with his specific choices; at no point was I ever bored watching him. Mayer's rich mezzo is balm to the ears, as is Gunther Groissbock's angry Marke. Olafur Sigurdarson perfectly captures Kurvenal's devotion to his master, his voice rather rough and ready. Matthew Newlin's shaven-headed young Sailor makes his mark in his brief appearances (he returns in Act III).

Semyon Bychkov leads a powerful performance that is well paced. It is not cut, but I never felt bored as I have with other productions of this wonderful, insane opera. I should also mention Sibylle Wallum's brilliant costumes and Sascha Zauner's moody lighting. Technically this is one of the best recordings I've seen of an opera performance. Spread over two blu-rays the picture is crisp and clear, especially impressive considering how dark the stage is much of the time. The sound (available in 3 formats) is terrific. Subtitles in 4 languages.

REYNOLDS

Why are almost all old sermons so dull and musty? Not because of the nature of sermons—for hundreds of years the liveliest entertainment of our ancestors—but because a sermon requires a virtuosic performance. The changes of pace and tone, the mimicry, the use of the body...are supplied by the preacher, not by the text—which is therefore not a self-sufficient literary form.

—FROM *THE SURVIVAL OF ENGLISH*,
BY IAN ROBINSON

I think this applies to music as well. Its effect depends on the performer.

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BEACH: Gaelic Sym; arias & songs (Bastian) SoloMo 488, S/O: Althouse
BEAMISH: PC 3 (Biss) Orch 339, M/A: see BEETHOVEN
BECK: Cello Concerto; The Highway (Denev) Neuma 215, M/J: new, Kilp
BEETHOVEN: Cello Sonatas 1+2; Variations (Schwabe) Naxos 574529, J/F: French
Cello Sonatas 3,4,5; Handel Variations (Schwabe) Naxos 574530, M/A: Althouse
For Harp (Perrucci) Dyn 8059, J/A: French
Missa Solemnis (Karajan 1958) Uran 121420, M/J: Greenfield
Missa Solemnis (Rhorer) Alpha 1111, M/J: Greenfield
P Sons, al (Honma) DivA 21001, J/F: Repp
P Sons (9) (Winkelmann) Berl 32559, J/F: Haskins
P Son 1+29 (Karis) Romeo 7344, S/O: Haskins
P Son 1-3 (Sivelov) AMC 18, J/F: Repp
P Son 3+29 (Hamelin) Hyp 68456, J/F: Haskins
P Son 3,21,26 (Kim) Hans 24017, J/A: Solo
P Son 12-15 (Cho) BlueG 685, N/D: Solo
P Son 21,22,23,28,29 (Korevaar) Prosp 111, S/O: Haskins
P Son 29 (Zhang) BIS 2781, S/O: Haskins
P Son 30-32 (Erica) Odrad 445, M/A: Haskins
P Son 30+31 (Hochman) Avie 2681, M/A: Haskins
P Son 30-32 (Ogasawara) Genui 24906, M/J: Haskins
P Son 30-32 (Sandrin) EvilP 68, M/J: Haskins
P Son 30-32 (Senfett) DaVin 948, J/A: Haskins
P Son 31 (Liu) Orch 359, J/A: Haskins
PC 1 (Biss) Orch 339, M/A: Faro
PC 2 (Biss) Orch 375, S/O: see ANDRES
PC 3+4 (Yang, fp) IBS 72024, M/J: Althouse
PC 5; P Qn (Leonskaya) Warnr 723536, S/O: Althouse
PCs (Lonquich) ECM 2753, M/J: Althouse
Piano Pieces (Murfeld) Genui 24904, M/J: Haskins
Qt 1-6 (Calidore Qt) Sign 883, M/A: French
Qt 7-10 (Narratio Qt) Chall 72981, M/A: French
Qt 12 (Alma Qt) Chall 72988, J/F: see SHOSTAKOVICH
Qts 1-6 (Ariel Qt) Orch 378, S/O: Magil
Qts 1=6 (Narratio Qt) Chall 72969, J/F: French
Qts 2 (Doric Qt) Chan 20300, M/A: French
Qts 7-11 (Calidore Qt) Sign 872, J/F: French
Septet (Manz+) Avi 4867306, S/O: Hanudel
Sym 5; Leonore 3 (Bernstein) BR 900228, M/J: Althouse
Sym 6,8,9 (Tennstedt in USA) Dorem 8253, S/O: Althouse
Trio 3; Sym 2 as trio (Aciri+) DaVin 1027, N/D: French
Trios 1+4 (Sitkovetsky Trio) BIS 2699, M/A: Kell
Trios; VCPC (Shaham-Erez-Wallfisch) Nimb 1709, J/A: Magil
V Son 10, arr qt; Qt 11 (Schuppanzigh Qt) CPO 555489, J/A: French
V Son 9+10 (Stepner) Cent 4118, M/J: Magil
V Sons (Oberborbeck) Hans 23083, M/A: Kellenberger
VC (Steinbacher) Penta 5187240, J/A: French
BEN HAIM: Orch & Chamber Pieces (Sirvend) CPO 555621, J/A: Faro
BENDA: Hpsi Concertos (Corti) Arcan 573, M/J: Lehman
BENDIX: Symphonies (Gustafsson) DaCap 8224742, J/F: O'Connor
BENJAMIN: Picture a Day Like This (Benjamin) Nimb 8116, J/F: Rey
Shadow Lines (Hochman) Avie 2681, M/A: see BEETHOVEN
V Son (Grinke) Albio 61, J/F: Kell
BERIO: Violin Duets (Milstein & Van Bellen) Chanl 47425, J/A: Faro
BERNSTEIN: Divertimento (Bernstein) BR 900226, M/J: see SCHUMANN
BERSA: Songs (Strazanac) Hans 24048, M/J: Moore,R
BIELBY: 7 Last Words+ (Selwyn College) Regen 594, M/J: Del-camp
BIZET: Djamilah; Vasco de Gama; cantatas (Lyon/Glassberg) BruZ 1059, N/D: Altman
BLISS: Brass Band Pieces (Black Dyke) Chan 5344, J/F: Kilp
Colour Sym; PC; Morning Heroes (Bliss) Somm 5039, N/D: O'Connor
BLOCH: Schelomo; Viola Suite (Karp) Sign 932, N/D: Chi
V Son (Um) Avie 2743, M/J: see STRAUSS
BLODEK: In the Well (Skvor) Sup 4341, J/A: Locke
BOCCHERINI: Cello Concertos & Sonatas (Isserlis) Hyp 68444, J/F: Wright
Violin Duets (Ruhadze & Gorban) Brill 97260, J/F: Kell
BOISMORTIER: 4 Seasons (Guillebon) Vers 144, J/A: Brewer
BONIS: P Qt (Farrenc Ens) CPO 555624, S/O: see FARRENC
BONIZZI: Viola Bastarda (Biodri) Dyn 8045, M/J: Moore,C
BORGSTROM: Tanken; Jesus in Gethsemane (Aadland) CPO 777491, M/A: O'Connor
BORTKIEWICZ: 1001 Nights (Hirose, p) DACO 985, S/O: see RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF
BOULEZ: Livre pour Quatuor (Diotima Qt) Penta 5187360, J/A: Sull
BOUTROS: Guitar Pieces (Ielo) DaVin 1035, N/D: McCutcheon
BOWEN: Preludes (Mukumji) Prosp 106, M/J: Repp
VaC (Mei) SWR 19158, M/A: see WALTON
BRAHMS: Alexandre Kantorow (Kantorow) BIS 2660, M/A: 144, Solomonic
Cello Sonatas (Weilerstein) Penta 5187215, M/A: Moore
Cello Sonatas (Gruber) Bridg 9609, M/A: Wright
Cello Sonatas (Bagratuni) BlueG 677, N/D: French
Chorale Preludes, arr piano; Sym mvmts (De Rosa) Music 59014, M/J: Repp
Clarinet Qn (Baroni) DaVin 968, S/O: Hanudel
Clarinet Sonatas (Ottensamer) Penta 5187425, N/D: Hanudel
Hungarian Dances (Abbado,R) BR 900360, S/O: Vroon
P Pieces (Williams) Sign 916, M/A: Solomonic
P Pieces, opp 76,79,116-119 (Shapiro) Cent 4141, N/D: Solo
P Qt 2+3 (Tetzlaff, Vogt) Ond 1448, M/A: Haskins
P Qt 3 (Trio Vitruvi) Orch 336, M/J: see SCHUBERT
P Qt 3 (Werther Qt) Genui 25923, S/O: see MENDELSSOHN
P Son 1; Schumann Var; Pieces, op 119 (Cecino) IBS 42025, S/O: Althouse
P Son 2; Ballades; Handel Var (Rinaldi) DaVin 900, M/A: Solo
P Son 3 (Liu) Orch 359, J/A: see BEETHOVEN
Qt 3 (Kaleidoscope) Chan 20329, N/D: see HERITTE-VIARDOT
Requiem (Suzuki) BIS 2751, S/O: Althouse
Schubert Songs & Serious Songs (Hampson) Hans 24021, S/O: Moore,R
Songs (Connolly) Linn 749, J/F: Moore,R
Songs (Boesch) Linn 751, N/D: Moore,R
String Quintets (Gringolts Qt) BIS 2727, J/F: Dutterer
Sym 3+4 (Nagano) BIS 2374, S/O: Vroon
Trios; Horn Trio (Gustav Trio) Brill 96746, S/O: Vroon
Trio 1 (Melikyan+) Rubi 1195, M/J: see SCHOENBERG
V Son 1+2 (Ehnes) Onyx 4256, M/J: Magil
V Sons (Van der Mersch) Ars 38663, M/A: Kellenberger
VC (Ferschtman) Rubi 1120, S/O: Althouse

Viola Sonatas; Horn Trio (Zemtsov) Chall 720019, N/D: Magil
BRAUNFELS: Joan of Arc (Honeck) Capr 5515, J/F: Altman
BRIAN: Choral Songs (Joyful Company) Tocc 395, N/D: O'Connor
 Sym 29-32 (3 conductors) Herit 130, J/A: O'Connor
 Sym 6+12; Agamemnon (Brabbins) Hyp 68464, J/A: O'Connor
BRIDGE: P Qn (Pinkas, Apple Hill Qt) MSR 1815, M/J: French
BRITTEN: Michelangelo Sonnet (Milhofer, Palazzi) Brill 97012,
 S/O: see SHOSTAKOVICH
 Prince of the Pagodas (Wong) Halle 7565, M/J: French
 Sinf da Requiem; Price of Pagodas; Winte (Gardner) LPO 134,
 N/D: Althouse
BRUCH: 8 Pieces (Messina+) Apart 332, S/O: Hanudel
 VC 1 (Aavik) Orch 380, S/O: see TUUR
 VC 1 (Baar) Chanl 46724, J/F: see SCHUMANN
BRUCKNER: Mass 1; Psalm 146 (St Florian) Bruck 6, M/J: Alt-
 house
 Motets (Sine Nomine Chorus) Gram 99335, M/J: Althouse
 Motets (Monteverdi Choir) Sign 736, J/A: 167, Greenf
 P Pieces (Kodama) Penta 5187224, M/A: Althouse
 Qt (Diotima Qt) Penta 5187217, J/F: Hansen
 Sym 0 (Bolton) Berl 303050, M/A: Hecht
 Sym 1+2 (Roth) Myrio 35, J/F: Althouse
 Sym 2 (Eschenbach) Accen 30652, M/A: Althouse
 Sym 3, 1877 (Schaller) Hans 24040, M/J: Hecht
 Sym 4 (Anima Eterna Brugge) HM 902721, J/F: Althouse
 Sym 5; Quintet (Dohnanyi; Konzerthaus Qt) Somm 5031, M/A:
 Althouse
 Sym 6+7; Te Deum (Dohnanyi, Karajan) Somm 5033, M/A: Alt-
 house
 Sym 8, organ (Schaller) Hans 25002, J/A: Althouse
 Sym 9 (Jarvi,P) Alpha 1068, J/F: Hecht
 Sym 9 (Steffens) Orch 371, S/O: Althouse
 Sym 9, compl Phillips (Wong) Halle 7566, S/O: Althouse
BRUGGE: Songs on American Poets (3 sopranos) Gram 99342,
 M/J: Valente
BRULL: V Sons (Buckstead) MSR 1797, S/O: Magil
BUCH: Maze of Infinite Forms (Composer) Cent 4128, J/A: new,
 Kilp
BULL: Hpsi Pieces (Skrzeczowski) Ricér 462, J/F: Lehman
BURGE: Mata Hari Songbook (O'Callaghan) Centr 34424, M/A:
 new, Kilp
BUSCH: Chamber Pieces (Piatti Qt) Lyrit 439, M/A: Kellenberger
 PC & pieces (Millet) CPO 555574, J/A: Althouse
BUSONI: Doktor Faust (Florence May Festival) Naxos 660531,
 M/A: Locke
 Indian Fantasy; P Concertino (Bellucci) DaVin 1000, N/D:
 Hansen
 P Pieces (Nicoara) Hans 23046, J/F: 123, Solomonick
 P Pieces (Donohoe) Chan 20342, M/J: Repp
 P Pieces 13 (Harden) Naxos 574613, J/A: Solomonick
 Piano Pieces (Sun) Bridg 9610, M/A: Solomonick
 V Sons (Dego) Chan 20304, M/A: Magil
BUXTEHUDE: Membra Jesu Nostrí (Gli Angeli Geneve) Apart
 355, M/J: Brewer
 Organ Pieces 3 (Flamme) CPO 555408, S/O: Gatens
 Trio Sonatas, op 1 (Filament) Bridg 9603, M/A: Wilkening
BYRD: Organ Fantasies (Chapkhana) Brill 97558, S/O: Gatens
 Organ Pieces (Belder) Brill 97125, J/F: Gatens
 Service & Anthems (Alamire) Inven 1015, M/A: Gatens
CACCINI: Madrigals (Scherzi Musicali) Ricér 463, J/F: Moore,C
CAGE: Chess Piece (Guembes-Buchanan) DelAg 30626, J/A:
 see SATIE
 Four6 (Armaroli+) DaVin 922, M/A: Haskins
 Solos (Theleme) Apart 330, M/J: Haskins
CALDARA: Pieces (Voktett Hannover) Audit 97833, N/D:
 Moore,C
CAMPKIN: Choral Pieces (Phoenix Consort) Conv 100, M/A:
 Greenfield
CANGIASI: Scherzi Forastieri (Del Sordo, hpsi) Brill 96822, N/D:
 Lehman
CAPPONI: Mandolin Sonatas (Torge) CPO 555039, J/A:
 McCutcheon

CARCASSI: Guitar Fantasies (Carpino) Brill 97120, M/A: McC
CARULLI: Guitar Pieces (Fantoni) Dyn 8062, N/D: McC
CASCIOLI: Etudes (Composer) Piano 10332, N/D: new, Kil-
 patrick
CASTALDI: Theorbo Caprices (Imbs) Alpha 1066, J/F: Brewer
CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: Divan of Moses Ibn-Ezra (Perez,
 Haasch) Genui 25927, N/D: McCutcheon
 Heine Lieder+ (Hertzberg, s) Dyn 8058, N/D: Valente
 Platero & I (Figoni) Tact 890301, J/A: McCutcheon
 Romancero Gitano (Spera) Dyn 8040, M/A: see MARGUTTI
CESTI: Cantatas & Arias (Romabarrocca) Brill 97222, N/D:
 Moore,C
CHAGRIN: PC (Callaghan) Lyrit 444, J/A: see ADDISON
CHAMINADE: P Pieces 2 (Polk) Stein 30239, J/F: Harrington
CHARPENTIER: Les Arts Florissants (Dallas Bach Society) Rubi
 1128, M/J: Brewer
CHAUSSON: Concert (Pine+) Ced 238, N/D: Vroon
CHEETHAM: Earth (Martin) MSO 3, S/O: see HOLST
CHOPIN: Ballades (Gilliov) Aulos 66032, M/J: Repp
 Ballades & Scherzos (Kasik) ArCoD 255, N/D: Repp
 Nocturnes (Gardels) MSR 1847, J/F: Wright
 Nocturnes (Ikeda) UA 240020, J/F: Wright
 Nocturnes (Francois) EvilP 70, N/D: Solomonick
 Nocturnes, all (Maltempo) Piano 10312, M/A: Wright
 P Pieces (Avdeeva) Penta 5187233, M/A: Repp
 P Pieces (Taylor) Alpha 1132, S/O: French
 P Son & Pieces (Nobauer) Gram 99343, J/A: Repp
 P Son 3 (Fournel) Alpha 1064, J/F: Solomonick
 PCs w quartet (Melda) Orch 374, S/O: Vroon
 Piano Pieces (Scholtes) Chall 72996, J/F: Solo
 Preludes+ (Andrejevaite) Chall 720020, N/D: Vroon
 Preludes (Azzuro) Naive 8449, M/A: see SCRIBIN
 Scherzos (Deljavan) Chall 720007, M/J: Wright
CHYRZYNSKI: Chamber Pieces (Lato,c) Dux 2001, S/O:
 Hanudel
CILEA: Concertante Suites (Virtuosi della Scala) Brill 96761, J/F:
 Magil
 P Pieces; Chamber Pieces 5CD (Various) Brill 97197, J/A:
 Reynolds
CLARKE: Viola Sonata, arr (Raymond) Leaf 295, J/F: Wright
CLERAMBAULT: Histoire; Te Deum (Namur Chorus) Vers 163,
 S/O: Gatens
COATES: 4 Centuries Suite; Meadow to Mayfair (Wilson) Chan
 20292, J/F: O'Connor
 Music (Coates) Lyrit 2146, N/D: O'Connor
COCCIA: Sacred Music (Cardiff University Chamber Ch) Tocc
 359, M/A: Delcamp
COELHO: Nights in the Streets of Mouraria (Santos) DaVin 1023,
 N/D: Wright
COLERIDGE-TAYLOR: Negro Melodies+ (Repper) Avie 2763,
 N/D: French
COLIN BLAMONT: Retour des Dieux (Kossenko) Vers 139, M/A:
 Wilk
COLONNA: Mass (Alarcon) Ricér 470, N/D: Gatens
 Psalms (S. Petronio Choir & Orch) Dyn 8044, M/J: Gatens
CONSTANTINIDES: Violin Pieces (Nikkanen) Cent 4101, M/J:
 Kell
CONTE: Sinfonietta (Liebeck) Orch 377, N/D: see BARBER
CONTI: Arias (Nuovo aspetto) CPO 555552, J/A: Moore,C
COOK: Braveship (Cook) Orch 319, M/J: Fisch
COPLAND: Appalachian Spring (Dallas Chamber Sym) Alb 1975,
 J/A: see THALKEN
CORELLI: Con Grossi, op 6:1-6 (Berlin Academy) Penta
 5187234, N/D: Brewer
 Flute Sonatas, op 5 (Biscevic) DaVin 952, J/A: Gorman
CORIGLIANO: Mr Tambourine Man (Land's End) Naxos 579160,
 J/F: Faro
 V Son (Lin) Azica 71378, S/O: Kellenberger
 V Son (Soulez-LaRiviere, v) Gram 99338, S/O: o, Kell
CORTE-REAL: Tuba Concertos (Redondo) SoloM 471, M/J: new,
 Kilp
COSTE: Guitar Pieces (Fierens) DaVin 1025, N/D: McCutcheon

- COUPERIN:** Fortepiano Sonatas (Pierini) Brill 97190, J/F: Lehman
Hpsi Pieces (Les Delices) Delic 0, M/J: see BACH
Hpsi Pieces (Rousset) MV 13, N/D: Lehman
Tenebrae Pieces (Les Surprises) Alpha 1129, S/O: Gatens
COWIE: P Sons (Chadwick) Met 77123, J/A: new, Kilpatrick
CRESTON: P Pieces (Silberstein) Tocc 674, M/J: Sullivan
CROSBY: Chamber Pieces (Crosby+) Navon 6598, J/F: new, Kilp
CSANYI-WILLS: Clarinet Sonata (Verity) Rubi 1189, J/A: see VAINBERG
CZERNY: Organ Pieces (Chiaie) Brill 96175, M/A: Delcamp
D'ALESSANDRO: Arias fr Adelaide (Devitto) Tact 710401, M/A: Reynolds
D'AMARIO: Guitar Pieces (Sebastiani) Brill 96951, S/O: McCutcheon
D'AMICO: Songs & Orch Pieces (Osella/Boccardo) Strad 37308, S/O: Faro
DALE: Night Seasons (Various) Sign 866, J/F: Greenfield
DALL'ABACO: Cello Trios (Ens Tiefsaits) DaVin 943, J/A: French
DAQUN: Impressions of Liyuan (Daye) Naxos 579176, S/O: Fisch
DAUGHERTY: Blue Electra; New World (Miller) Naxos 559955, S/O: Faro
DAVIDSON: Music (Composer+) David 0, M/J: Kilpatrick
DE GRIGNY: Organ Pieces (Bouvard) Vers 133, M/J: Delcamp
DE MARS: Hpsi Pieces (Pierini) Brill 96924, S/O: Lehman
DEBUSSY: Cello Pieces (Herlin) Orch 382, N/D: 120, Chi Cello Sonata (Kotova) Delos 3608, N/D: see SHOSTAKOVICH
Iberia (Silvestri) ICA 5182, M/J: see FALLA
Images; Suite Bergamasque+ (Vignon) Cypr 1687, S/O: Wright
La Mer (Neave Trio) Chan 20337, S/O: see SAINT-SAENS
Piano Duos (Genova & Dimitrov) Oehm's 1740, S/O: Wright
Preludes, all (Tsybuleva) Sign 911, M/A: Vroon
Sonatas; Quartet (Nash Ens) Hyp 68463, M/J: Gorman
Suite Bergamasque (Gardels) MSR 1847, J/F: see CHOPIN
DEL AGUILA: Flute Pieces (Clayton) Urtext 374, N/D: Gorman
DELAIR: V Sons (Levee) WQ 2501, S/O: Kellenberger
DELIUS: VC (Dautricourt) Chani 48725, J/A: see ELGAR
DELLA SUDDA: P Pieces (Ucbarasan) Grand 923, M/J: Solomonick
DEMANTIUS: St John Passion (Ens Polyharmonique) CPO 555583, S/O: Gatens
DESMAREST: Iphigenie en Tauride (Concert Spirituel) Alpha 1106, M/J: Locke
DETT: P Pieces (Welch) Welch 0, J/F: Harrington
DIBBLE: Preludes & Fugues (Kempf) DivA 21243, J/F: Repp
DOHNANYI: PQn (Giacometti+) EvilP 63, J/F: see BARTOK
V Son; String Trio (Weiss) CPO 555565, M/J: see STRAUSS
DONIZETTI: Aio nell'imbarazzo (Milletari) Naxos 660505, M/J: Altman
Alfredo il Grande (Bergamo) Naxos 660576, J/A: Reynolds
Baritone Arias (Alaimo) Dyn 8042, M/A: Reynolds
Chiara & Serafina (Quadri) Naxos 660552, M/A: Altman
Qt 17 (Pacific Qt) SoloM 466, J/A: Kellenberger
Songs (Brownlee & Alaimo) OpRar 254+5, J/F: Reynolds
Songs, vol 3+4 (Spyres & Lemieux) OpRar 256+7, J/A: Moore,R
DOOLEY: Masks & Machines (Rose) BMOP 1101, J/F: Faro
DORATI: PC (Triend/Heja) Hans 24035, M/A: French
DOTY: 50 years (Various) Micro 29, N/D: new, Kilp
DOWLAND: Lute Pieces (Maric) Carpe 16336, M/A: Wilkening
Songs (Theleme) Apart 330, M/J: see CAGE
DREYER: Oboe Sonatas (Bernardini) Brill 96738, M/A: Gorman
DRING: Oboe Pieces (Daniel) Chan 20344, S/O: Gorman
DRUSCHETZKY: Oboe Qts 2 (Grundmann Qt) CPO 555370, M/J: Gorman
DUARTE: G Qts (Santorsola) Brill 96443, J/F: McCutcheon
Song Arrangements (Correa, g) Deux 1215, N/D: McCutcheon
DUBOIS: Songs (Deschamps) MSR 1817, J/A: Valente
DUBRA: Organ Pieces (Reinis) Skani 168, S/O: Delcamp
DUPONT: Maison dans les Dunes (Taccogna) Piano 10234, M/J: Repp
Songs (Dubois) Apart 377, S/O: Moore,R
- DUPRE:** Organ Pieces (Dupre) AAAMD 305302, M/J: Delcamp
Piano & Chamber Pieces (Tocc 755, J/A: Delcamp
DURON: Music for the 40 Hours (La Grande Chapelle) Lauda 25, M/J: Gatens
DVORAK: CC (Krug) Capr 5534, M/A: Hansen
Cello Concerto & Pieces (Kloeckner) Berl 303412, M/A: Hansen
Legends; Slavonic Rhapsodies (Netopil) Penta 5187221, M/A: Vroon
P Pieces (Vitaud) Mirar 666, J/A: Repp
P Qn (Zhang; Haba Qt) Hans 24034, M/A: see GLINKA
Qt 1,7,11 (Vogler Qt) CPO 555672, J/A: O'Connor
Qt 12 (Gropius Qt) Hans 23076, M/A: see ALBRECHT
Qt 13 (Simply Qt) Genui 25897, J/A: see MENDELSSOHN
Romance; Romantic Pieces (Park) Orch 369, S/O: Kell
Serenade Strings (Kukal) Anim 129, J/A: French
Stabat Mater (Janowski) Penta 5187222, J/A: Greenf
Sym 5+6 (Martin) MSO 2, J/F: Vroon
Sym 6-9 (Davis, Rattle) LSO 571, J/F: Vroon
Sym 7,8,9: Overtures (Bychkov) Penta 5187216, J/F: Vroon
Sym 8; Wild Dove (Neumann) Audit 97832, J/F: Vroon
Trios 1+2 (Trio des Alpes) Dyn 8003, M/J: French
Violin Pieces (Vodicka) Sup 4340, M/J: Kellenberger
ECANAYAKA: Sri Lankan Isles (Composer) Naxos 76176, J/A: new, Vroon
EIDELMAN: The Tempest (Eidelman) Cliff 0, J/F: new, Kilpatrick
EISLER: P Pieces (Schliermacher) MDG 6132355, N/D: Faro
ELGAR: CC (Krug) Capr 5534, M/A: see DVORAK
Part Songs (Proteus Ens) Avie 2716, M/A: Moore,R
Qt (Eusebius Qt) Somm 703, S/O: Magil
Sym 2; In the South; conversation (Boult) Somm 5037, S/O: O'Connor
The Kingdom (Temple) Sign 896, S/O: Greenfield
VC (Dautricourt) Chani 48725, J/A: French
Violin Pieces (Wallin) BIS 2659, M/A: Kellenberger
ELMS: De Profundis; Visions of St Anne (Hannigan/Wordsworth) Sign 875, M/J: Hanudel
ENESCO: Octet (Bulayev) Champ 175, M/J: see YSAYE
Octet (Roctet) Chall 720001, M/J: see RESPIGHI
V Son 2 (Duval) Capr 3011, J/F: see FAURE
ERB: Organ II (Lehtola) Tocc 698, J/A: Delcamp
ERNST: V Etudes (Brilinsky) Hans 24054, J/A: Magil
ESCAICH: Tombeau pour Alienor (Amarillis) Evid 131, S/O: Brewer
ESENVALDS: Mass of the Eternal Flame (Christchurch Houston) Acis 53868, J/F: Greenfield
EWALD: Brass Quintets (Gomalan Qn) CPO 555680, J/F: 113, Kilp
FALLA: 3-Cornered Hat; Nights (Van Steen) Somm 694, M/J: Hansen
Nights in the Gardens of Spain (Santos) DaVin 1023, N/D: see COELHO
Nights; 3-Cornered Hat Suites (Silvestri) ICA 5182, M/J: Hecht
FARKAS: Sym; Sly Students (Takacs-Nagy) Tocc 722, N/D: Faro
FARRENC: Cello Sonata (Tarasova) Brill 97223, J/A: French
P Pieces 3 (Stratigou) Grand 942, J/F: Harrington
P Qn (Farrenc Ens) CPO 555624, S/O: Vroon
FASOLO: Masses & Hymns (Verona Gregorian Schola) Brill 96825, S/O: Moore,C
FAURE: Ballade (Descharmes) Naxos 574570, M/A: see POULENC
Barcarolles & Nocturnes (Piboule) HM 902510, J/F: 35, Wright
Nocturnes (Fouchenneret) LDV 125, J/F: 35, Wright
Nocturnes (Ikeda) UA 240020, J/F: see CHOPIN
Pelleas & Melisande (Jarvi,P) Alpha 1058, J/F: see SCHOENBERG
Pelleas; Prometheus; Shylock (Tingaud) Naxos 574619, M/J: French
Qt (Eusebius Qt) Somm 703, S/O: see ELGAR
Requiem & Choral Pieces (Namur Chamber Choir) Ricer 469, M/A: Delcamp
Requiem (Niquet) Alpha 1014, J/F: Greenfield
Songs (Lindsey) Alpha 1125, N/D: see SCHUMANN
Songs, inc Bonne Chanson (Spence) Hyp 68450, J/A: Moore,R

V Pieces (Duval) Capr 3011, J/F: Kellenberger
V Son 2 (Zavaro) LDV 127, M/A: Kell
VC; Dolly+ (Tingaud) Naxos 574587, M/A: O'Connor
Violin Pieces (Lingenfelder) Tact 274, J/F: Kell
FEBEL: Hyperklavier (Martin) IBS 22025, S/O: see JANACEK
FERNANDEZ: P Pieces (Iruzun) Naxos 574593, N/D: Sull
FIELD: Nocturnes, all (Ott) DG 4866238, J/A: Solomonick
FINZI: Dies Natalis; Clar Concerto (Scogna) Brill 97341, J/A: Hanudel
FLURY: Qt 2+3 (Colla Parte Qt) Tocc 717, M/J: O'Connor
Sym 2 (Mann) Tocc 727, S/O: O'Connor
FORKEL: PCs (Koch) CPO 555563, M/J: Repp
FORTEA: Guitar Pieces 1 (Malmberg) OpCit 225, J/A: Mcc
Guitar Pieces 2 (Malmberg) OpCit 525, N/D: McCutcheon
FOSS: Cello Concerto; John Lennon Night Music (Rose) BMOP
1103, M/J: Faro
Jumping Frog (Rose) BMOP 1102, M/J: Faro
FRANCAIX: P Pieces (Jones) Nimb 7732, J/A: Wright
FRANCHETTI: Symphony (La Vecchia) Naxos 574271, J/F:
O'Connor
FRANCK: P Qn (Magyar & Korossy Qt) Hung 32913, N/D: see
SHOSTAKOVICH
P Qn (Pinkas, Apple Hill Qt) MSR 1815, M/J: see BRIDGE
V Son (Pocheikin) Hans 24061, N/D: see GRIEG
FRANCO: Guitar Pieces (Porqueddu) Brill 96481, J/F:
McCutcheon
FRIES: Songs (Gritskova) Gram 99319, S/O: Valente
FROHLICH: Johannes & Esther (Bostridge) Hans 23010, M/J:
Moore,R
FUCHS: Light Year; Trombone Concerto (Wilson) Chan 5326,
J/F: Faro
FURTWANGLER: Sym 2 (Jarvi) Chan 20373, N/D: Althouse
GAL: String Orchestra Pieces (Ostrobothnian Chamber Orch)
CPO 555623, M/A: O'Connor
GALUPPI: Hpsi Sonatas & Concertos (Radaelli) Arcan 579, S/O:
Lehman
GAMBARINI: P Pieces (Torretta) Piano 10286, M/A: Repp
GARDNER: Organ Pieces (Winpenny) Tocc 760, J/A: Delcamp
GARLAND: Plain Songs (Cooman) ColdB 70, S/O: Delcamp
GASPARINI: Atalia (Ens Hemiolia) Vers 147, S/O: Altman
GASSMANN: Uccellatori (Pagano) Dyn 8033, S/O: Altman
GAST: Songs (Galvan+) Tocc 706, J/A: Moore,R
GATTI: Oboe Qt (Moinet) Berl 303728, S/O: see MOZART
GEMINIANI: Cello Sonatas (Garcia) Chall 72991, M/A: Moore
GERHARD: Don Quixote (Mena) Chan 20268, M/A: Sullivan
GERNSHEIM: Zu Einem Drama; PC; CC (Baumer) CPO 555152,
J/A: O'Connor
GESUALDO: Motets (Monteverdi Choir) Sign 736, J/A: see
BRUCKNER
GETTY: Goodbye Mr Chips (Doubin) Penta 5187050, M/J:
Reynolds
GIACOBBI: Venice 1608 (Dramatodia) Tact 560702, S/O:
Moore,C
GIBBONS: Fantasies (Fretwork) Sign 897, S/O: Brewer
Hpsi Pieces (Farr) Reson 10355, J/A: Lehman
GILBERT+SULLIVAN: Utopia Limited (Scottish Opera) OpusA
9053, N/D: Fisch
GILLIE: Horn Sonata+ (Boldin) MSR 1861, M/J: Kilpatrick
GINASTERA: Qts (Miro Qt) Penta 5187412, N/D: Faro
P Son 1 (Chappell) Cent 4129, N/D: see BARBER
GIPPS: Oboe Pieces (Koch) Chan 20290, J/F: Hanudel
Sym 1; Orch Pieces (Gamba) Chan 20284, M/J: Hecht
Sym 5; VC (Gamba) Chan 20319, S/O: Hecht
GLASS: Aguas de Amazonia (3rd Coast Percussion) Rockw 0,
M/J: Haskins
GLINKA: Sextet (Zhang; Haba Qt) Hans 24034, M/A: Vroon
GLUCK: Iphigenie en Aulide (Chauvin) Alpha 1073, M/A: Altman
GODOWSKY: Triakontameron (Vaicekonis, p) Cent 4068, M/A:
Repp
GOUNOD: Mass, Clovis (Niquet) Alpha 1014, J/F: see FAURE
GRABBE: Madrigals I (Consort of Musicke) MDG 1022332, J/A:
Wilk
GRAINGER: Songs (Thwaites) Albio 66, N/D: see VAUGHAN
WILLIAMS
GRANADOS: Goyescas (Stojilkovic) CPO 555677, J/A: Repp
GRANDVAL: Stabat Mater (Vittoria Choir) Hort 244, J/A: Locke
GRAUPNER: Cantatas (Kirchheimer Bach Consort) CPO
555656, J/F: Gatens
GREENE: Jephtha (Early Opera Company) Chan 408, J/A:
Gatens
GRIEG: V Son (Pocheikin) Hans 24061, N/D: 138, Magil
GRILL: Against War (Stilec) Grill 3, J/F: Faro
GROSLOT: Clarinet Con; PC (Hendrikx) Antar 57, J/F: Hanudel
GROSZ: P Pieces (Wallisch) Grand 927, M/A: Repp
GRUNEWALD: Partitas (De Luca, hpsi) Brill 97290, J/F: Lehman
GRUODIS: P Sons & Variations (Kirilauskas) Tocc 737, M/A:
O'Connor
GUARNIERI: P Pieces (Jones) Nimb 8119, S/O: Repp
GUBAIDULINA: Songs (Rasker) Kairo 22023, M/A: Faro
V Son: Triple Concerto (Skride) Orfeo 230121, J/F: Sull
GUERRA-PEIXE: Symphonies 1+2; Nonet (Thomson) Naxos
573926, S/O: Faro
V Sons (Martins) Brill 97328, N/D: Kellenberger
GUILAIN: Organ Pieces for the Magnificat (Ospital) Vers 148,
S/O: Gatens
GUINJOAN: P Pieces 2 (Calderon de Castro) IBS 102024, J/F:
Repp
GULDA: Cello Concerto, arr violin (Schmid) Gram 99340, J/A:
Kell
GURNEY: Songs (Farnsworth) Naxos 574599, M/A: Moore,R
HAGEN: Everyone, Everywhere (Cecilia Chorus) Naxos 579180,
S/O: Faro
HAHN: Le Dieu Bleu (Corlay) B 74, J/A: Fisch
HAIR: Concert Studies (Jones) Lyrit 436, J/F: new, Kilpatrick
HANDEL: Arias (Caihuela) IBS 222024, M/J: Reynolds
Chandos Anthems (Arcangelo) Alpha 1153, N/D: Gatens
Dixit Dominus (Alarcon) Ricer 470, N/D: see COLONNA
German Arias (Palmer) Zenit 17380, M/A: Brewer
Hpsi Pieces 3 (De Luca) DaVin 977, S/O: Lehman
Hpsi Suites (Booth) Sound 224, M/A: Lehman
Hpsi Suites (Loreggian) DaVin 936, J/A: Lehman
Jephtha (Music of the Baroque) Ref 755, J/F: Gatens
Lotario (Cremonesi) Naxos 660570, M/J: Altman
Messiah (Dallas Bach Society) Onyx 4255, M/A: Vroon
Messiah choruses (The 16) Coro 16211, J/A: Delcamp
Messiah, Florence Version (Maghni Chorus) CPO 555590, M/J:
Vroon
Organ Pieces (Yearsley) FAR 3, M/A: Gatens
Resurrezione (Cremonesi) Naxos 574624, J/A: Gatens
Roman Pieces (Williams, Dunedin Consort) Linn 747, M/A:
Brewer
Violin Sonatas (Guerra) Arcan 578, S/O: Magil
HARANT: Mass; Motets (Cappella Mariana) Sup 4350, M/J:
Brewer
HARBACH: Sacred Pieces (Apollo Voices) MSR 1862, S/O:
Greenfield
Sym 12-14 (Angus) MSR 1816, M/A: Faro
HARRIS: Guitar Pieces (Di Filippo) Brill 96929, J/A: McCutcheon
HARRISON,P: Chamber Pieces (Royal Welsh Players) Reson
10351, M/A: Faro
HARTMANN: Concerto Funebre (Hartmann) Farao 108128, N/D:
French
VC; CC (Davies) Penta 5187076, J/F: French
HASSE: Serpentes Ignei in Deserto (Jaroussky, Les Accents)
Erato 239904, M/A: Brewer
HAYDN: 7 Last Words, arr (Przak Qt) Praga 250428, M/J: Alt-
house
Hoboken XVII (Gesualdo, p) DaVin 1007, N/D: Repp
Nelson Mass (Gielen) Orfeo 240111, J/A: Greenfield
P Pieces (Nosrati) Avi 4867555, N/D: Solomonick
Qts, op 2 (Leipzig Qt) MDG 3072349, J/A: French
Qts, op 33:2,4,6 (Leipzig Qt) MDG 3072333, M/J: French
Qts, op 33:4-6 (Chiaroscuro Qt) BIS 2608, N/D: French
Qts, op 77:1+2 (Maxwell Qt) Linn 741, M/J: Vroon
Sym 13,16,36; VC 1 (Antonini) Alpha 1146, S/O: Vroon

- Sym 43+49 (Tafelmusik) Tafel 1041, J/F: Althouse
 Sym 43,44,47 (Concerto Copenhagen) Berl 3410, M/A: Vroon
 Sym 99-101 (A Fischer) Naxos 574518, J/F: Althouse
 Trios vol 4 (Gaspard Trio) Chan 20330, S/O: Althouse
 Trumpet Concerto (Li) Brill 97342, S/O: Kilpatrick
- HAYDN,M:** Quartets (Constanza Qt) CPO 555409, J/F: Dutt
HEDBERG: Guitar Pieces (Composer) Elma 3, J/A: McCutcheon
HENNINGER: 5 Scenes (Berlin Players) NCH 1, N/D: Faro
HENSEL: Early Songs (Baechtel) Acis 53882, J/F: Moore,R
 Lobgesang (Doyle) HM 902742, N/D: see MENDELSSOHN
 The Year (Sokoli) Piano 10296, J/A: Repp
HENSELT: Piano Etudes (Tadokoro) Naxos 574704, N/D:
 Solomonick
- HERITTE-VIARDOT:** Qt 1 (Kaleidoscope) Chan 20329, N/D:
 O'Connor
- HERMANN:** Solo V Pieces (Karr) Tocc 738, J/F: Kellenberger
HERZ: P Son & Variations & Waltzes (St-Pierre) Genui 24863,
 M/A: Repp
HESKETH: Piano Pieces (Hammond) Palad 137, M/A: new, Kil-
 patrick
- HETU:** Sym 5 (Shelley) Anal 8890, M/A: Faro
HEUCKE: Piano Pieces & Concerto (Markovina) Hans 24005,
 M/A: Vroon
- HIGGINS:** Faerie Bride; Horn Concerto (Brabbins; Martin) Lyrit
 440, M/A: Faro
- HILDEGARD:** Music w electronics (Nimb 6457, S/O: Moore,C
HINDEMITH: 4 Temperaments (Samoylov) Uran 14120, M/J:
 Hecht
 5 Pieces (Munoz) IBS 62025, S/O: see BARTOK
 Viola Sonatas (Shetty) Dux 2074, M/A: Magil
- HO:** Gryphon Realms (Land's End) Naxos 579160, J/F: see
 CORIGLIANO
- HOFFMEISTER:** Horn C & Sym (Moesus) CPO 555417, J/A: Kil-
 patrick
 Violin-Viola Duos (Gruttner & Goosses) Music 56994, J/A: Magil
- HOH:** Organ Pieces (Dimmock) Raven 187, M/A: Delc
HOLMBOE: Qt 4,5,16 (Nightingale Qt) DaCap 8226214, J/F: Dut-
 terer
- HOLST:** Choral Sym; Beni Mora (Sargent) Somm 5040, J/A: Alt-
 house
 Planets (Martin) MSO 3, S/O: Hansen
 Planets: Perfect Fool, Rig Veda+ (Boult, Sargent+) Somm 5030,
 M/A: O'Connor
- HOSOKAWA:** Guitar Pieces (Kellermann) BIS 2745, M/A:
 McCutcheon
 Maiden from the Sea; Ceremony (Markl) Naxos 574656, N/D:
 Faro
- HOTTETERRE:** Flute Airs (Amorim) Chall 72429, S/O: Wilkening
HOUGH: PC; Partita (Hough) Hyp 68455, J/A: Sullivan
HOVHANESS: Organ Pieces (Winpenny) Tocc 763, N/D: Del-
 camp
- HOWELLS:** Psalms (Durham Cathedral) Regen 586, S/O: Del-
 camp
 Qt (London Chamber Ens) Somm 592, M/J: O'Connor
- HUBER:** P Qns (Triendl, Carmina Qt) CPO 555569, J/F: Hansen
HUBERT: Songs (Gauvin) ATMA 2827, M/J: 144, Valente
HUBERTI: Songs (Davos+) Antar 70, N/D: Moore,R
HUGO: Songs on Poems of Hugo (Various) Alpha 1086, M/A:
 Moore,R
- HULME:** Music (Met 77212, J/A: new, Kilpatrick
HUMMEL: P Qn (Ballot+) Gram 99332, S/O: see SCHUBERT
 Trumpet Concerto (Li) Brill 97342, S/O: see HAYDN
- IBERT:** Chevalier Errant (Szeps-Znaider) Chanl 45424, M/A: see
 STRAUSS
- INGEGNERI:** Sacred Pieces Church Year (Girton College Choir)
 Tocc 767, S/O: Moore,C
- IVANOVICH:** Guitar Pieces (Ivanovich) ??, N/D: McCutcheon
- IVES:** Concord Sonata (Bessette) ATMA 2902, M/A: French
 Concord Sonata (Dinnerstein) SR 73, M/J: French
 First Piano Sonata (Roberts) Alb 1981, M/J: Sullivan
 Short Orchestral Pieces (Sinclair) Naxos 559954, M/J: Hansen
- JANACEK:** Concertino; Capriccio (Martin) IBS 22025, S/O: Repp
 Jenufa (Rattle) LSO 897, S/O: Reynolds
- JONES:** Hpsi Suites (De Luca) DaVin 986, S/O: Lehman
 Qt 1; Wind Qt (Mid/Vest Ens) FHR 163, M/J: new, Kilp
- JOSQUIN:** In Poland (Jerycho Ens) Dux 2064, J/A: Wilkening
JOST: Pieces of a Dream (Flugelhorn) Berl 303322, J/F: Kilp
- JURECKA:** Quartet (Venuti Qt) Leaf 0, J/A: French
KABALEVSKY: Cello Concerto (Lyngstad) OUR 8226926, J/A:
 Wright
 Cello Concerto (Martin) SWR 19159, M/A: Moore
- KAFER:** Christmas Cantatas+ (Protezione della Musica) Arcan
 24056, N/D: Greenfield
- KALABIS:** Chamber Music for Strings (Kremerata Baltica) Hyp
 68474, S/O: Faro
- KARG-ELERT:** Caprices (Hekkema, sax) Penta 5187226, M/A:
 Hanudel
- KAUNZER:** Violin Pieces (Kaunzer) SoloM 483, S/O: new, Kilp
- KELLY:** St Francis (Selwyn College Choir) Regen 585, M/J:
 Greenf
- KEPITIS:** P Pieces 2 (Luse) Tocc 726, J/F: Repp
- KESSELMAN:** Chamber Pieces (Haven Trio) BlueG 675, M/A:
 new, Kilp
- KHACHATURIAN:** Sym 1; Dance Suite (Beermann) CPO
 777919, M/J: Hansen
 Violin Pieces (Haroutunian) FugaL 840, S/O: Magil
- KHARITONOV:** PC (Composer) Sound 1, N/D: Faro
- KIENZL:** Song Cycles (Muller) Tocc 736, J/F: Moore,R
- KLOSE:** Qt (Diotima Qt) Penta 5187217, J/F: see BRUCKNER
- KNAGGS:** Joyful Mysteries (Houston Chamber Choir) Acis
 53554, M/A: Greenfield
- KNUSSEN:** Variations (Soares) Rubi 1131, M/J: see TIPPETT
- KODALY:** Organ Pieces (Quinn) Naxos 574544, J/F: Delcamp
- KOECHLIN:** Sym 1; Au Loin (Matiakh) Capr 5533, S/O: French
- KOUYOUMDJIAN:** Witness (Kronos Qt) PR 2501, J/A: new, Kilp
- KOZELUCH:** Trios 4 (Trio 1790) CPO 555480, J/F: Wright
- KRAFT:** Cello Concerto (Queyras) HM 902392, J/F: Moore
- KREBS:** Hpsi Pieces (Devine) Reson 10344, M/A: Lehman
 Hpsi Suites (Devine) Reson 10357, N/D: Lehman
- KREK:** Autumn Songs (Danish Vocal Ens) OUR 8226924, M/J:
 Faro
- KREUTZER:** Septet (Manz+) Avi 4867306, S/O: see
 BEETHOVEN
- KROUSE:** Guitar Pieces (Trent) Naxos 559948, J/F: see PEARL
- KURTAG:** Flute Pieces (Bronnmann) Tacet 281, N/D: Gorman
 Jatekok (Aimard) Penta 5187030, S/O: Sullivan
 Kafka Fragments (Narucki) Avie 2760, S/O: Sull
- LA BARRE:** Airs (Les Epopees) Ramee 2302, S/O: Wilkening
- LABITZKY:** Waltzes+ (Simonis) CPO 555474, J/F: Fisch
- LALO:** Roi d'Ys (Vashegyi) BruZ 1060, S/O: Altman
 Sym Espagnole (Ehnes) Chan 20333, J/A: Althouse
 Sym Espagnole (Pietsch) Aria 20, S/O: see STRAUSS
- LANGLAIS:** Organ Pieces [5CD] (Various) Brill 96361, J/F: Delc
 Trumpet & Organ (Bernard) Brill 96956, S/O: Kilp
- LANSKY:** Patterns+ (Dease+) Bridg 9589, S/O: Faro
- LASSUS:** Motets (La Tempete) Alpha 1084, M/A: Wilkening
- LAU:** Infinite Reaches (Shelley) Anal 8891, M/J: O'Connor
- LAURIDSEN:** Lux Aeterna (Bavarian Radio) BR 900355, N/D:
 see RUNESTAD
- LAURIN:** Dedisti Domine (Christchurch Houston) Acis 53868,
 J/F: see ESENWALDS
- LE BEAU:** Chamber Pieces (Le Beau Ensemble) Oehms 1732,
 S/O: O'Connor
- LE BRET:** Hpsi Pieces (Pierini) Brill 96930, J/F: Lehman
- LEFKOWITZ:** Preludes & Fugues (Various) Bridg 9594, S/O:
 new, Kilp
- LEFRAK:** Guitar Concerto+ (Isbin) KLM 26, S/O: McCutcheon
- LEGRENZI:** Balletti & Correnti (Trattimento Armonico) Brill
 97496, N/D: Moore,C
- LEHAR:** Schon ist die Welt (Lehar Festival) CPO 555659, M/A:
 Fisch
- LEIGHTON:** Veris Gratia (Queen's College Choir) Sign 917, M/A:
 Greenf
- LEMBA:** Violin Sonatas (Ruubel) Tocc 753, N/D: Kellenberger
- LENTZ:** VC (Steinbacher) Penta 5187240, J/A: see
 BEETHOVEN

- LEONCAVALLO:** Pagliacci (Domingo, Cotrubas) Orfeo 240121, S/O: Reynolds
- LEVERING:** OceanRiverLake (Rose) NewF 417, J/F: new, Kilp
- LEVIN:** Trio+ (Cavatino Duo) Acis 53998, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
- LIEBERMANN:** Flute Sonata (Liu) Cent 4100, M/J: see UEBAYASHI
- LIECHTENAUER:** Masses (Cologne Academy) CPO 555696, M/J: Gatens
- LINDBERG:** Viola Concerto; Serenades (Power) Ond 1436, J/F: Faro
- LISZT:** Annees—all (Muraro) Alpha 1075, M/A: Solomonick
Christmas Tree (Brendel) APR 5655, N/D: Wright
Christmas Tree (Viner) Piano 10315, N/D: Wright
Christmas Tree (Waleczek) Naxos 574380, N/D: Wright
Fantasies (Gallo) Naxos 574565, M/J: Solo
Faust Sym (Madaras) BIS 2510, M/A: Hecht
Opera Transcriptions (Scherbakov) Naxos 574667, N/D: Solo
PCs; Totentanz (Levanon) Warnr 242397, M/A: Solomonick
P Pieces (Brownridge) Quart 2165, S/O: Haskins
P Sonata (Grimwood) DACO 986, J/A: see SCHUMANN
P Son & Pieces (Uinskas) Hans 24037, J/F: Repp
P Sonata (Zhang) BIS 2781, S/O: see BEETHOVEN
P Son; Don Juan (De la Salle) Naive 8602, J/A: Solo
Piano Favorites (Filipec) Naxos 574588, M/A: Vroon
Sym Poems 1+2, arr pianos (Weinreich) Genui 25916, N/D: Solo
Trans Etudes (Chen) Accen 30639, J/A: Solomonick
Transcendental Etudes (Sobczak) Dux 2068, S/O: Haskins
Via Crucis; Consolations (Andsnes) Sony 56672, J/A: Wright
- LLOBET:** 12 Catalan Folk Songs (Gasparo) DaVin 1029, N/D: see TARREGA
- LLOYD:** Brass Pieces (Black Dyke Mills Band) Lyrit 425, J/F: Kilp
Violin Pieces; The Serf (Little) Lyrit 424, J/F: Magil
- LLOYD WEBBER:** Requiem (Hahn) BR 900352, M/A: Greenfield
- LOCKLAIR:** Sacred Choral Pieces (Royal Holloway) Convi 94, M/A: Delcamp
- LOELLET:** Hpsi Suites (Bryla) Prel 7405, M/A: Lehman
- LOEWE:** Songs (Krimmel) Alpha 1088, J/F: 141, Moore,R
- LORTZING:** Overtures & concert pieces (Theis) CPO 555626, M/A: O'Connor
- LUKASZEWSKI:** Requiem (Lukaszewski) Dux 1845, S/O: Greenfield
- LULLY:** Alceste (Royal Opera) Vers 149, S/O: Brewer
- LUTOSLAWSKI:** Sym 3 (Sondergard) Linn 758, J/A: see SZY-MANOWSKI
- MACDOWELL:** New England Idylls (Bessette) ATMA 2902, M/A: see IVES
- MACHAUT:** Songs (Orlando Consort) Hyp 68430, M/J: Brewer
- MACKEY:** Memoir (Dover Qt) Bridg 9601, J/A: Faro
- MAGI:** Songs (Purga, mz) Tocc 741, M/J: Valente
- MAHLER:** Sym 2 (Young) DG 4876842, S/O: Hansen
Sym 3 (Bychkov) Penta 5187363, J/A: Vroon
Sym 4 arr (Ensemble Can't Tell It) Dyn 8043, J/A: Hecht
Sym 5 (Bertini) SWR 19164, J/A: Hecht
Sym 5 (Jarvi) Alpha 1127, S/O: Hecht
Sym 7 (Rattle) BR 900225, M/J: Hecht
- MAHLER, A:** Songs & by friends (Steffani) Chall 720015, N/D: 150, Moore,R
- MAINETTI:** Along Time—after film soundtracks (Pincini) DaVin 971, S/O: Fisch
- MALIPIERO:** P Pieces (Riccardi) Piano 10323, S/O: Repp
- MANGANI:** Clarinet Pieces (Lee) MusS 202408, M/A: Hanudel
- MARAIS:** Suites (Musiciens de Saint-Julien) Alpha 1126, S/O: Gorman
Viol Pieces Book II (La Reveuse) HM 905356, J/F: Moore
- MARCELLO:** Cello Sonatas (Criscuolo) Brill 97091, N/D: Chi
- MARCHITELLI:** Trio Sonatas (Labirinto Armonico) Dyn 8039, M/J: Brewer
- MARGUTTI:** Rivers (Spera) Dyn 8040, M/A: McCutcheon
- MARSALIS:** Blues Symphony (Bignamini) Penta 5187232, J/A: Faro
- MARSCHNER:** Overtures (Salvi) Naxos 574483, N/D: Althouse
- MARSEY:** Man with Limp Wrist (Ades) Halle 7567, N/D: see ADES
- MARTIN:** Flute Pieces (Ruggieri) Brill 97061, J/F: Gorman
Preludes (Don) Genui 24858, J/F: Sullivan
Trio (Areal Trio) Odrad 448, J/A: Kellenberger
- MARTIN, M:** Masses, Motets (Conville & Caius College) Linn 743, M/A: Grf
- MARTUCCI:** Violin Sonata (Falasca) Cent 4060, J/A: Kellenberg
- MASSENET:** Griselidis (Montpelier/Zeitouni) BruZ 1058, M/J: Altman
Herodiade (German Opera Berlin) Naxos 660540, J/A: Altman
PC (Kohn) Hans 24047, J/F: Hansen
- MAYER:** Sym 4+6 (Vriend) CPO 555615, N/D: Hecht
- MAYR:** Amor non hu Ritegno (Hauk) Naxos 660523, N/D: Reynolds
- MAZZAFERRATA:** Canzonettas & Cantatas (Colombo; Ghirlanda Musicale) Brill 96504, N/D: Moore,C
- MCDOWALL:** Cantatas (Royal Holloway) Reson 10359, N/D: Greenfield
- MCKAY:** Quartets (Formosa Qt) Orch 381, S/O: French
- MEALOR:** Light of Paradise (Zurich Chamber Singers) Berl 303415, M/A: Greenfield
- MEDTNER:** P Pieces 2 (Huang) Cent 4123, J/A: Repp
Sonata-Idyll; Sonata-Ballade; Forgotten (DeLucchi) DaVin 962, S/O: Wright
- Songs 5 (Levental) Brill 96072, S/O: Valente
- MEDELSSOHN:** Christus; Psalm 42 (Doyle) HM 902742, N/D: Greenfield
- Early Sym 11+12 (Gurewitsch) MDG 9122330, M/J: Vroon
Elijah (Pappano) LSO 898, J/F: Greenfield
Midsummer Night's Dream, with play (Savall) AliaV 9960, M/J: Larfro
- Midsummer Night's Dream—German (Heras-Casado) HM 903734, S/O: Vroon
- P Qt 3 (Werther Qt) Genui 25923, S/O: Vroon
Qt 6 (Simply Qt) Genui 25897, J/A: Magil
Sacred Choral (Latvian Radio) Ond 1459, J/A: Greenf
Songs without Words (Howell, p) DaVin 983, S/O: French
Sym 1; Early Sym 10; Cantata (Van der Linden) Chantl 46924, M/A: Vroon
- Sym 3; MND Suite (Comissiona) Vox 3046, M/A: Vroon
Sym 3; Calm Sea (Shani) Warnr 723253, J/A: Vroon
Transcriptions (Bostock) Cov 92408, M/J: Gorman
VC (Sant'Anna) Naxos 574659, J/A: French
- MERCADANTE:** Flute Qts (Carrotta+) Dyn 8061, S/O: Gorman
- MERLET:** Flute Pieces (Stroud) MSR 1849, M/A: new, Vroon
- MERTZ:** Guitar Pieces (Polackova) Bridg 9598, S/O: McCutcheon
- MESSIAEN:** 20 Regards, ex (Vaani) Strad 37304, M/J: Sullivan
Catalogue d'Oiseaux (Aimard) Penta 5187214, M/A: Sull
Catalogue d'Oiseaux (Gomez) Kairo 22302, N/D: Sullivan
Qt for End of Time (Bandieri+) Brill 95393, J/A: Hanudel
- MEYER:** Au-dela d'une absence (Eliot Qt) Genui 25919, S/O: see SHOSTAKOVICH
- MICHAEL:** Christ Vespers 1624 (Ens Polyharmonique) CPO 555698, N/D: 153, Wilkening
- MIGNONE:** Guitar Waltzes (Monarda) Brill 97369, M/J: McCutcheon
Violin Sonatas (Baldini) Naxos 574595, M/J: Magil
- MINUTOLO:** Variations & Waltzes (Cannizzaro,p) DaVin 975, S/O: Repp
- MIRANDA:** PCs (Monteiro) Naxos 574591, J/A: Faro
- MOLINO:** Guitar Sonatas (Giuliani) Brill 97092, M/A: McCutcheon
- MOLTER:** Good Friday Oratorio (Camerata Bachiensis) Brill 97487, N/D: Gatens
- MOMPOU:** Guitar Transcriptions (Ramelli) Brill 96709, J/F: McCutcheon
- MONTEVERDI:** Mass, Maria Salute (Capella Ducale) CPO 555561, S/O: Moore,C
Testamento Vespers 1643 (Poeme Harmonique) Vers 145, M/J: Moore,C
- MOOR:** Trios (Sorioni Trio) CPO 555629, S/O: Vroon
- MORANDI:** Organ Pieces 5 (Sartore) DaVin 980, S/O: Delcamp
- MOSCA:** Guitar Pieces (Basciera) DaVin 1037, N/D: McCutcheon

MOUSSORGSKY: Songs (Pepe) Uran 14121, S/O: Reynolds
 Sorochinsky Fair (Bollon) Naxos 660547, J/F: Reynolds

MOZART: Concert Arias (Van Mechelen) Alpha 1114, J/A:
 Moore,R
 Divertimentos 10+15 (Czech Chamber Philharmonic) Brill
 97307, J/F: Hansen
 Don Giovanni (Siepi, Price/Leinsdorf 1956) Uran 121422, S/O:
 Altman
 Early Syms (Klumpff) Genui 25909, J/A: French
 First Commandment (Caravaggio Ensemble) Vers 137, M/A:
 Brewer
 Flute & Harp (Beaudiment & Gaudemard) Orch 351, M/J: Gor-
 man
 Flute Concertos (Lazarevitch) Alpha 1065, J/F: Gorman
 Gran Partita (Solisti della Scala) Brill 96463, N/D: Hanudel
 Horn Concertos (Frank-Gemmill) BIS 2635, M/J: Kilp
 Horn Qn (Baborak) Belv 8087, M/J: Kilpatrick
 Kegelstatt Trio (Messina+) Apart 332, S/O: see BRUCH
 Magic Flute (Wahlberg) Apart 367, S/O: Reynolds
 Mass, Credo; brief masses (Poppen) Naxos 574639, N/D: Alt-
 house
 Masses, vol 5 (Cologne Cathedral) Naxos 574638, J/A: Greenf
 Waisenhaus Mass (Gielen) Orfeo 240111, J/A: see HAYDN
 Oboe Qt (Moinet) Berl 303728, S/O: Hanudel
 PC 1-4 (Bavouzet) Chan 20323, M/A: French
 PC 3+14; VC 5 (Gheorghiu; Castro-Balbi) Alpha 1112, M/J:
 Wright
 PC 8,9,12,13 (Ciocarlie) Hans 24036, J/F: Solomonick
 PC 9+12; VC 2 (Griffiths) Alpha 1139, N/D: Vroon
 PC 9+21 (Lazic) Chall 72946, J/F: Vroon
 PC 17 (Melnikov) Alpha 1043, J/F: see BACH,CPE
 PC 19+23 (Bezuidenhout) HM 902334, M/A: Haskins
 PC 20+23 (Cho) Orch 329, M/A: Haskins
 PC 20+24 (Chen) SoloM 473, J/A: Vroon
 2-PC; Sym Conc Winds (Griffiths) Alpha 1087, M/A: Hanudel
 P Pieces (Feltsman) Nimb 6448, J/F: Repp
 P Son 3,6,8; Fantasia (Jia) Prosp 108, J/A: Solomonick
 P Son 5,14,18 (Muller) Hans 24027, M/J: Repp
 P Son 8+14; Fantasies (Giudice) DaVin 1028, N/D: Repp
 P Son, Trio, V Son, PQt 1 (Libeer+) HM 902699, J/A: Magil
 2 PC (Duo del Valle) IBS 212024, M/J: see POULENC
 Requiem (Karajan 1958) Uran 121420, M/J: see BEETHOVEN
 Posthorn Serenade (Goebel) Berl 303022, J/A: Vroon
 Serenades w Clarinet (Baldeyrou+) Alpha 1040, J/A: Hanudel
 Serenades: Haffner, Posthorn, EKN (Onofri) HM 905396, M/J:
 Althouse
 String Duos (Cosbey & Bandy) Leaf 297, M/J: Magil
 Sym 29+33; Clar Concerto (Berlin Academy) Penta 5187208,
 J/F: Vroon
 Sym 39; EKN; Divertimento K 136 (Turkovic) Gram 99322, M/A:
 Vroon
 VC 5 (Park) Orch 369, S/O: see DVORAK
 V Sons (Berkofsky) MSR 1858, N/D: Magil
 VC 1+2 (Vaginsky) Orch 325, M/J: Kellenberger
 VCs; Sinf Conc; Rondos (Chua) Penta 5187420, N/D: Kellen-
 berg

MOZART,FX: P Son & Variations (Markham) Grand 951, J/A:
 Repp
 Songs (Jin) DaVin 868, J/A: Valente

MUHLY: My Days (Fretwork) Sign 897, S/O: see GIBBONS

MUNDY: Sacred Pieces (New College Oxford) Linn 775, N/D:
 Delcamp

MUNTZER: German Protestant Mass (Amarcord) CPO 555700,
 N/D: Gatens

MURPHY: Curiosity, Genius... (Gimeno) HM 905384, J/A: see
 STRAVINSKY

MYERS: Requiem+ (Jack Qt) Innov 35, J/F: new, Kilpatrick

NICKEL: Mass; Te Deum (Mitchell) Avie 2748, J/A: Greenfield
 Piccolo Concerto (Jackson) Avie 2836, M/A: new, Kilp

NICODE: P Pieces (Wei) Tocc 746, M/J: Repp

NIELSEN: Aladdin, arr (MidtVest Ens) FHR 163, M/J: see JONES
 Symphonies (Royal Danish Orchestra) Naxos 574650, J/F:
 Hecht

Sym 5 (Horenstein) ICA 5184, N/D: see SHOSTAKOVICH

NODARI: P Pieces (Mossali) DaVin 1038, N/D: new, Kilp

NORMAN: P Qts (Wada) DB 217, J/A: Vroon

NOTKER: Liber Ymnorum (Chicago Schola Antiqua) Naxos
 579169, J/A: Wilk

ORFF: Carmina Burana (Jarvi,P) Alpha 1031, M/J: Greenfield

ORIFICE: P Pieces (DiFederico) Tact 840401, M/A: Vroon

OSGOOD: Chamber Pieces (Tippett Qt) Conv 96, M/A: Faro

PACHELBEL: Magnificats (Himlische Cantorey) CPO 555515,
 M/J: Gatens
 Organ Pieces 3 (Owens) Reson 10347, M/A: Gatens

PADE: Korsateer (Danish Vocal Ens) OUR 8226924, M/J: see
 KREK

PADEREWSKI: PC; Polish Fantasy (Shemchuk) Dux 2133, S/O:
 O'Connor
 Qt Variations (Meccore Qt) Prel 7406, M/J: see WIENIAWSKI

PAGANINI: 43 Guitar Pieces (Carletti) Brill 97417, S/O: Mcc
 Caprices (Cotik) Cent 4130, N/D: Kellenberger

PAISIELLO: Finta Amante (Parisse) Naxos 660563, M/A: Locke
 La Claudia Venedicata (Paisiello Festival) Bong 9614, N/D: Locke

PALESTRINA: Magnificat; Masses (Clare College Choir) HM
 905375, J/A: Moore,C

PAPANDOPULO: Quartets (Sebastian Qt) CPO 555469, M/J:
 Faro

PARADIS: Overture; Fantasy (Schirmer) Berl 303740, N/D:
 Wright

PARTE: Lente; Stabat Mater (Concerto Copenhagen) Berl 303739,
 N/D: Faro

PEARL: Guitar Pieces (Trent) Naxos 559948, J/F: McCutcheon

PERGAMENT: Music (Agora Music Collective) Tocc 728, M/A:
 French

PERGOLESI: Serva Padrona; Livietta & Tracollo (Boston Early
 music) CPO 555622, M/J: Reynolds

PERNA: Music (Various) 4Tay 4072, M/A: new, Kilpatrick

PESCA: Walk with Me, My Joy (Frisov, Rosenbaum+) NewF 443,
 N/D: new, Kilpatrick

PETRASSI: Concertos for Orchestra (La Vecchia) Naxos
 573702, J/A: Faro

PHIBBS: Qts (Piatto Qt) Nimb 6452, J/F: new, Kilpatrick

PHILIDOR: Ernelinde (Wahlberg) Vers 161, S/O: Locke

PHILIPPE: Armida Suite (Cappella Mediterranea) Vers 125, S/O:
 Brewer

PIAZZOLLA: Guitar Pieces (Liberzon) Naxos 574457, J/F:
 McCutcheon

PICCINI: Opera Excerpts (Feola/Florio) Penta 5187361, J/A:
 Moore,C

PIPKOV: P Pieces 2 (Tsenov) Tocc 744, M/A: Repp

PITFIELD: Sinfonietta; Concerto Lyrico+ (Mann) Tocc 765, N/D:
 O'Connor

PONCE: Piano Pieces 4 (Cendoya) Grand 916, N/D: Repp

PONCHIELLI: I Lituani (Pitrenas) Accn 80642, J/A: Reynolds

PORPORA: Salve Regina+ (Czech Ens Baroque) Gram 99341,
 J/A: Gatens

POTTER: Syms II (Griffiths) CPO 555500, M/J: O'Connor

POULENC: Gendarme Incompris; Clar & Bassoon Sonatas
 (Ensemble in Canto) Brill 96128, M/A: see STRAVINSKY
 2 PC (Duo del Valle) IBS 212024, M/J: Wright
 Aubade; PC (Descharmes) Naxos 574570, M/A: Vroon
 Gloria (Lehmann) Berl 303770, N/D: Althouse
 P Pieces (Poulenc) Somm 5041, N/D: Repp
 V Son (Huang) Naive 8617, M/A: 155, Magil

POWELL: Guitar Songbook (Monarda) Brill 96677, N/D:
 McCutcheon

PRICE: VCs; PC (Clamagirand) Naxos 559952, N/D: Hansen

PROKOFIEFF: Cello Sonata & Concerto (Poltera) BIS 2617,
 M/A: Hansen
 Music for Children (Kozhukhin, p) Penta 5187406, S/O: see
 TCHAIKOVSKY
 PC 2 (Abduraimov) Alpha 1124, J/A: see SHOR
 PC 2 (Chochieva) Naive 8448, J/F: see RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF
 PC 2+3; Son 7 (Goodyear) Orch 335, M/A: Wright
 PC 2 (Solaun) IBS 162024, M/A: see RACHMANINOFF
 P Son 6+7 (Redkin) Fugal 835, M/J: Solomonick

Qts; Visions Fugitives arr (Danel Qt) Acce 30640, S/O: Kell VC 1 (Feng) Chanl 45924, M/A: Hansen
Violin Pieces (Trotovsek) Somm 696, M/J: Kellenberger
V Sons (Oshima) Quart 2164, J/A: Kellenberger
V Son 1 (Huang) Naive 8617, M/A: see **POULENC**
PUCCHINI: Le Villi (Repusic) BR 900359, J/A: Altman
Mass (Repusic) BR 900354, M/A: Greenfield
PUCKETT: Short Stories; Trumpet Concerto (Young) Avie 2751, N/D: new, Kilp
PURCELL: Fairy Queen excerpts (Amarillis) Evid 131, S/O: see ESCAICH
Piano Suites (Sandrin) Somm 702, S/O: Lehman
RABI: Clarinet Qt (Ottensamer) Penta 5187425, N/D: see BRAHMES
RACHMANINOFF: Cello Sonata (Hecker) Alpha 827, N/D: see SHOSTAKOVICH
Cello Sonata (Raymond) Leaf 295, J/F: see CLARKE
PC 3+4 (Lugansky) Chall 72012, J/F: Vroon
PC 1; P Son 2; Corelli Var (Litvintseva) Piano 10244, S/O: Hansen
PC 3 (Solaun) IBS 162024, M/A: Wright
PC 3 (Lim) Decca 712861, N/D: Althouse
Sym 1; Sym Dances (Wilson) Chan 5351, S/O: Hecht
Sym 3 (Liss) FugaL 821, J/F: Althouse
Trios (Brahms Trio) Naxos 574687, S/O: Vroon
RAFF: Die Eifersuchtigen (Pitkanen) Naxos 660561, J/F: Locke
Samson—Suisa 91357, J/F: Locke
RAMEAU: Pigmalion (Caravaggio Ens) Vers 182, J/A: Altman
Platee (Tournet) Vers 153, S/O: Altman
RAMSEY: Gentle Shepherd (Makaris) OldeF 924, M/J: Reynolds
RAPHAEL: Organ Pieces (Urponen) Tocc 759, J/A: Delcamp
RAUTAVAARA: Choral Pieces (Helsinki Chamber Choir) BIS 2692, M/A: Faro
P Pieces (Grigaliunaite) Piano 10331, N/D: Faro
VC; Autumn Gardens (Wallin) CPO 555559, N/D: Faro
RAVEL: Daphnis & Chloe (Pappano) LSO 899, M/J: Hecht
Fragments & Tributes (Chamayou) Erato 601230, J/A: Repp
Mother Goose Suite (Kolesnikov & Tsoy) HM 902752, N/D: see STRAVINSKY
PC (Kohn) Hans 24047, J/F: see MASSENET
PCs (Son) Naive 8447, S/O: French
P Pieces, all (Bavouzet) Chan 20287, J/A: Solomonick
P Pieces, all (Cho) DG 4866814, M/J: Solo
Piano Pieces (Yavuz) TyxA 24192, S/O: Wright
Qt; Mother Goose (Debussy Qt) HM 905403, N/D: French
Quartet (Venuti Qt) Leaf 0, J/A: see JURECKA
Trios, all (Martineau) Sign 870, S/O: Moore,R
Trio (Pantoum Trio) LDV 145, S/O: Vroon
La Valse (Liss) FugaL 821, J/F: see RACHMANINOFF
REGER: Cello Suites (Erben) Genui 24882, J/A: Kellenberger
Clarinet Qn (Baroni) DaVin 968, S/O: see BRAHMES
P Miniatures (Palombi) Dyn 8037, M/J: Repp
Solo Cello Suites (Biondi) Brill 97063, J/A: Kell
REICHA: Horn Qn (Baborak) Belv 8087, M/J: see MOZART
Qt. Qn, Trio (Schweitzer Ens) CPO 555397, J/F: Hanudel
REINECKE: Fantasy (Howell, p) DaVin 983, S/O: see MENDELSSOHN
RESPIGHI: Double Qt (Rocet) Chall 720001, M/J: French
P Pieces (Beltrani) DaVin 995, N/D: Hansen
Il Tramonto & Songs (Visentin) Naxos 574160, M/A: French
REVUELTAS: Coronela (Trevino) Ond 1445, M/A: Sullivan
RICCI: Il Birraio di Preston (Agiman) Bong 2611, M/J: Reynolds
RICHAFORT: Masses (Cappella Mariana) MEW 2308, M/A: Wilkening
RICHTER: Remixed (Trio Fibonacci) Chall 72995, J/F: Faro
RIDDERSTOLPE: Songs (Hammarstrom) BIS 2675, M/A: Moore,R
RIDL: Garden of Pan; Pictures of a City (Van Steijn) Genui 24903, M/A: Faro
RIES: Fantasies & Sonata (Fragli, p) Piano 10269, J/F: Solomonick
Flute Qts (Petrucci) Brill 97150, J/A: Gorman
Sym 3+8 (Nisonen) Ond 1465, N/D: Hecht
Sym 4+5 (Nisonen) Ond 1454, M/A: Hecht
Trios (Egmont Trio) Naxos 551486, J/A: Kellenberger
RIETI: P Pieces 3 (Koukl) Grand 955, S/O: Sullivan
PCs (Marangoni) Naxos 574505, M/J: Sullivan
RIHM: Jacob Lenz (Mannheim) Oehms 981, M/A: Faro
RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: Capriccio Espagnole (Kochanovsky) HM 905392, J/A: see TCHAIKOVSKY
PC (Chochieva) Naive 8448, J/F: Solomonick
Scheherazade (Hirose, p) DACO 985, S/O: Hansen
RODE: Qt (Schuppanzigh Qt) CPO 555489, J/A: see BEETHOVEN
RODGERS: Carousell (Wilson) Chan 5342, M/A: Fisch
ROLLA: Viola Solo (Cardinali) Tact 780002, N/D: Magil
ROMAN: Assaggi (Luthmers, v) Rubi 1140, S/O: Magil
RONCALLI: Guitar Sonatas (Pansolin) DaVin 910, M/A: McC
RONTGEN: P Pieces 6 (Anderson) Nimb 8117, J/A: Repp
Viola Sonatas (Kefer) Nimb 8118, J/A: Magil
ROREM: Choral Pieces (St Martin's Voices) Reson 10356, N/D: Greenf
ROSENMULLER: Sacred Concertos (1684 Ens) CPO 555657, J/A: Wilkening
ROSNER: Concerto Grosso; Martin Var (Palmer) Tocc 710, M/J: Sullivan
Wind Band Pieces (Density 512) Tocc 756, J/A: Kilp
ROSSINI: Sonatas for Strings (3) (Solisti Della) DaVin 970, S/O: Vroon
ROSSLER: Sextet; PQn (Artis Qt+) CPO 555537, J/A: O'Connor
ROTA: V Son (Falasca) Cent 4060, J/A: see MARTUCCI
ROYER: Hpsi Pieces (DeLuca) DaVin 1033, N/D: Lehman
ROZSA: Sinfonia Concertante; Cello Rhapsody (Buhl) Capr 5535, J/A: Hecht
VC (Simovic) LSO 886, M/A: Hansen
RUIZ: Venus & Adonis (Davidson) Sign 876, J/F: Faro
RUNESTAD: Earth Symphony (Bavarian Radio) BR 900355, N/D: Greenfield
RUTTER: Brass at Christmas (Naxos 574564, N/D: Kilpatrick
Missa Breviss++ (York Minster) Regen 576, M/J: 141, Moore,R
RYELANDT: P Sons (Beenhouwer) Antar 66, S/O: Repp
SAARIAHO: Keyboard Pieces (Hakkila) Ond 1469, N/D: Sullivan
SAINT-SAENS: 2-Piano Pieces (Pizarro & Trancanetti) Somm 693, M/J: Solomonick
Trio 2 (Neave Trio) Chan 20337, S/O: Vroon
Violin Concertos & Pieces (Zhu) Berl 303539, J/A: Vroon
VC 3 (Ehnes) Chan 20333, J/A: see LALO
SALGADO: Chamber Pieces (Kansas Virtuosi) Naxos 579171, J/A: Faro
SALIERI: Hpsi Concertos (Pantieri) Dyn 8060, N/D: Lehman
PCs (Catena) Brill 97268, S/O: French
SAMARAS: Tigra; Songs of Victory (Fidetsis) Naxos 574358, J/F: O'Connor
SANTORO: P Sonatas (Santoro) Naxos 574486, M/A: Repp
Sym 4+6 (Thomson) Naxos 574572, J/F: Faro
SARTI: Flute Sonatas (Miszczyszyn) Brill 97332, J/A: Gorman
SATIE: P Pieces (Planes) HM 902749, J/A: Wright
P Pieces (Poulenc) Somm 5041, N/D: see **POULENC**
P Pieces (Bjorkloe) OUR 8226929, N/D: Repp
Vexations (Gombek-Buchanan) DelAg 30626, J/A: Haskins
SAXTON: Quartets 3+4 (Kreutzer Qt) Met 77138, S/O: Faro
SAY: VC 2; Sonata; Qt (Eichhorn) Naxos 574502, J/A: Faro
SCARLATTI: Sonatas (Thuriot, accordion) Chall 72994, J/F: Lehman
Sonatas (Corti, hpsi) Arcan 568, M/A: Lehman
Sonatas (Won, p) Onyx 4267, N/D: Lehman
Sonatas vol 29 (Ivanov) Naxos 574633, J/A: Lehman
SCARLATTI, F: Daniele (Armonico Consort) Sign 881, J/A: Altman
SCHARWENKA, P: Piano Pieces 2 (Pipa) Tocc 586, S/O: Repp
SCHARWENKA, P&X: Violin Pieces (Kim) Capr 3012, S/O: Magil
SCHARWENKA, X: PC 1; Sym in C minor (Powell/Borowicz)
CPO 555571, M/J: French
SCHAT: The Heavens (Chailly) Brill 97006, N/D: Faro
SCHELB: PC; Falken Suite (Siberski) Hans 25024, N/D: O'Connor

- SCHENCK:** Violin & Cello Pieces (Castor Ens) Chall 72999, S/O: Kellenberger
- SCHLEE:** Orchestral Pieces (Simonis) Hans 24038, M/J: Faro
- SCHMIDT:** Syms (Sinaisky) Naxos 504059, M/A: Hecht
- SCHMIKERER:** Partitas (L'arpa Festante) CPO 555636, M/A: Brewer
- SCHMITT,W:** Songs+ (Vondung) Tocc 752, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
- SCHMUGEL:** Friedens Cantate (Hamburg Baroque) CPO 555592, J/F: Brewer
- SCHNITTK:** Film Music 6 (Jurowski) Capr 5496, M/A: Fisch
- SCHOENBERG:** Pelleas & Melisande (Jarvi,P) Alpha 1058, J/F: French
Qts, all; Ode; Trans Night (Juilliard Qt) Sony 82720, J/F: Magil
Verklarte Nacht (Melikyan+) Rubi 1195, M/J: Wright
- SCHOENFELD:** Clarinet Trio (Barragan) Accen 30643, J/F: see BARTOK
- SCHROEDER:** Violin Pieces (Jones) Neuma 225, N/D: new, Kilpatrick
- SCHUBACK:** Brockes Passion (Fulda Cathedral) CPO 555705, S/O: Greenf
- SCHUBERT:** Arpeggione Sonata (Willwohl) Avi 4866385, J/F: Magil
Fantasies (Bushakevitz) Hans 24025, M/J: Haskins
Mass 5 (Lehmann) Berl 303770, N/D: see POULENC
Moments Musicaux; 3 Pieces (Damgaard) DACO 980, M/A: Haskins
P 4-Hands (Leone & Campanella) Odrad 469, N/D: Solomonick
P Son A minor, G (Ah-Tak) Stein 30235, M/A: Repp
P Son C minor; Impromptus D 935 (Kobayashi) Warnr 41693, M/J: Repp
P Son in A, A minor (Johansson) DB 219, N/D: Solomonick
P Son in A, A minor, D (Yano) IBS 12025, S/O: Althouse
P Sons, D 537+959 (Gaudet) Anal 954, M/A: Solomonick
Piano Dances (Cheli) Naxos 573089, M/A: Vroon
Qt 13+Early (Alinde Qt) Hans 24020, J/F: Vroon
Schone Mullerin (Pregardien,J) HM 902739, J/F: Moore,R
Schone Mullerin (Vogt; Ens 8) CPO 555549, M/J: Moore,R
Schwanengesang (Scarlatta) Bridg 9608, M/A: Moore,R
Schwanengesang (Strazanac) Hans 24049, N/D: Moore,R
Songs (Hasselhorn) HM 902747, J/A: Moore,R
Songs (Jaroussky) Erato 673768, M/A: Moore,R
Songs (Krimmel) Alpha 1088, J/F: see LOEWWE
Songs (Sampson, s) BIS 2703, S/O: Hanudel
Sym 5+8 (Emelyanychev) Linn 748, M/A: Vroon
Sym 9 (Bernstein) BR 900229, M/A: Hecht
Sym 9 (Cassuto) FHR 162, M/J: Althouse
Sym 9 & songs (Gardner) Chan 5354, J/A: Althouse
Trio 2 (Trio Bohemo) Sup 4344, M/J: see SMETANA
Trout Qn (Ballot+) Gram 99332, S/O: Hansen
Trout Qn (Trio Vitruvi) Orch 336, M/J: Althouse
Viola & Guitar (Gramaglia & Attademo) DaVin 911, M/A: McC
Winterreise (Fenlon) Orch 343, M/A: Moore,R
Winterreise (Jespersen) OUR 8226928, S/O: Moore,R
Winterreise (Kranzle) Hans 25011, N/D: Moore,R
Winterreise for bassoon (Kuuskmann) Berl 303720, J/A: Althouse
- SCHUMANN:** Carnival (Grimwood) DACO 986, J/A: Repp
Carnaval: Davidsbundlertanze (Oh-Havenith) Audit 20052, M/J: Solomonick
Carnaval; Kinderszenen (Stern) Orch 338, M/A: Repp
Carnaval; Papillons; Intermezzi (Owen) Avie 2647, M/A: Repp
Cello Concerto (L yngstad) OUR 8226926, J/A: see KABALEVSKY
Cello Pieces (Herlin) Orch 382, N/D: see DEBUSSY
Davidsbundlertanze (Goergen) Aulos 66011, M/J: Solo
Dichterliebe (Scarlatta) Bridg 9608, M/A: see SCHUBERT
Fairy Tale Pictures (Ehnes) Onyx 4256, M/J: see BRAHMS
Novellettes; Night Pieces (Catena) Piano 10305, J/A: Repp
P Pieces (Chan) Cent 4137, J/A: Repp
P Pieces 2 (Oppitz) Hans 24030, M/A: Repp
Songs (Lindsey) Alpha 1125, N/D: Valente
Sym 2 (Bernstein) BR 900226, M/J: Hansen
Sym 4 (Inbal) SWR 19151, M/J: Hecht
- Viola Arrangements (Rysanov) Onyx 4245, M/A: Magil
VC (Baar) Chnl 46724, J/F: French
V Sons (Brown) EvilP 77, N/D: Magil
V Sons (Ibragimova) Hyp 68354, M/J: Magil
- SCHUMANN,C:** P Pieces (Armengaud) Grand 930, M/J: Repp
- SCHUMANN,G:** Ruth (Weigle) CPO 555666, S/O: Greenfield
- SCHUMANN,S:** Clarinet Pieces (Bliss) Sign 888, J/A: Hanudel
Oboe Pieces (Daniel) Chan 20295, J/F: Hanudel
- SCHURMANN:** PC; Gaudiana (Wang/Gernon) Chan 20341, M/A: Faro
- SCHUTZ:** Christmas Story (Rilling) Cant 37614, N/D: Gatens
Christmas Story (Vox Luminis) Ricer 467, N/D: Gatens
- SCHUYLER:** P Pieces (Masterson) Cent 4102, M/J: Kilpatrick
- SCHUYT:** Madrigals (Weser-Renaissance) CPO 555545, M/J: Brewer
- SCOTT,D:** Sym 1+2 (Mann) Tocc 646, M/A: new, Kilpatrick
- SCRIABIN:** P Pieces (Lefebvre) LDV 141, J/A: Solomonick
P Pieces (Mody) Thor 2683, J/A: Solomonick
P Pieces (Sudbin) BIS 2538, S/O: Repp
P Sons, all (Chen) Accen 306391, M/J: Solo
P Son 6-10 (Rigacci) DaVin 919, M/A: Solo
Preludes (Azzuro) Naive 8449, M/A: Solomonick
Sym 3 (Ono) EvilP 74, S/O: Hecht
- SEIBER:** The Invitation (Triend/Heja) Hans 24035, M/A: see DORATI
- SEVERAC:** P Pieces (Valluzzi) Piano 10276, J/A: Repp
- SGAMBATI:** Nocturnes (Facchini) Piano 10319, J/A: Repp
- SHEEHAN:** Alathist (Choir of Trinity Wall St) BST 210, J/F: Faro
Ukrainian Requiem (Zaugg) CapR 432, J/A: Greenfield
- SHOR:** CC 1; VC 3; Phoenix Fantasy (Chaushian) Naxos 579142, N/D: Faro
Childhood Memories 3; Verdiana (Geniet) Naxos 579141, J/A: Faro
PC 1 (Abduraimov) Alpha 1124, J/A: Wright
- SHOSTAKOVICH:** The Bolt (Filatov) FugaL 831, J/A: see STEINBERG
Cello Sonata (Hecker) Alpha 827, N/D: Vroon
Cello Sonata (Kotova) Delos 3608, N/D: Vroon
Cello Sonata (Martin) SWR 19159, M/A: see KABALEVSKY
Discoveries (Various) DG 4867190, S/O: Vroon
Jazz Suites; Ballet Suites; PC 1; VC (Kitaenko+) Capr 7460, N/D: Hecht
Lady Macbeth (Vienna/Metzmacher) Orfeo 230172, N/D: Reynolds
Michelangelo Suite; October (Goerne/Franck) Alpha 1121, S/O: Moore,R
Michelangelo Suite (Milhofer, Palazzi) Brill 97012, S/O: Moore,R
PCs & Pieces (Wang) DG 4866956, S/O: Vroon
P Qn (Magyar & Korossy Qt) Hung 32913, N/D: Vroon
Preludes & Fugues (Avdeeva) Penta 5187480, N/D: Repp
Preludes (Don) Genui 24858, J/F: see MARTIN
Qts 1-6 (Asasello Qt) Genui 25908, J/A: Hansen
Qt 1-5 (Casals Qt) HM 902731, J/A: Hansen
Qts 1,13,14,15 (Nous Qt) Brill 96424, N/D: Hansen
Qt 2,4,6; P Qn (Nous Qt) Brill 96422, J/A: Hansen
Qt 3+8 (Eliot Qt) Genui 25919, S/O: Hansen
Qt 6-12 (Casals Qt) HM 902733, N/D: Hansen
Qt 11 (Alma Qt) Chall 72988, J/F: Hansen
Syms, all (Kitaenko) Capr 7435, J/A: Estep
Syms, all; VC; CC; PCs; Lady Macbeth (Nelsons) DG 4866649, J/A: Hansen
Sym 1 (Horenstein) ICA 5184, N/D: Hansen
Sym 6+9 (Rouvali) Phil 4, M/A: Hansen
Sym 10 (Rouvali) Phil 5, J/A: Hansen
Sym 11 (Noseda) LSO 888, J/A: Hansen
Sym 15 (Haitink) BR 900210, M/J: Vroon
Trio (Areal Trio) Odrad 448, J/A: see MARTIN
Viola Sonata+ (Taio) Brill 96874, N/D: Magil
Viola Sonata (Willwohl) Avi 4866385, J/F: see SCHUBERT
VC 1 (Feng) Chnl 45924, M/A: see PROKOFIEFF
- SIBELIUS:** Sym 1 (Inbal) SWR 19151, M/J: see SCHUMANN
Sym 5; Swanwhite Suite (Collon) Ond 1468, N/D: Hansen
VC (Capucini) Erato 058524, M/J: see BARBER

- VC & Pieces (Vecsey) Gram 99328, M/A: French
- SIERRA:** Chamber & Piano Pieces (Continuum) Naxos 559959, J/A: Faro
- SILVESTROV:** P Pieces (Kamieniak) Brill 96809, M/A: Sullivan Sym 8; VC (Lyndon-Gee) Naxos 574481, N/D: Hecht
- SIMON:** 4 Symphonic Works (Noseda) NSO 18, J/F: Faro
- SIMPSON:** Chamber Pieces (Tippett Qt) Tocc 701, M/J: Hanudel
- SINDING:** Trios (Hyperion Trio) CPO 555375, J/A: Vroon
- SMALDONE:** Orchestral Pieces (Various) NewF 425, M/J: Faro
- SMAREGLIA:** Nozze Istriane (Rijeka Opera) CPO 555686, J/A: Reynolds
- SMETANA:** Ma Vlast (Davis) LSO 571, J/F: see DVORAK
Ma Vlast (Popelka) Sup 4347, J/A: Hecht
Orch Pieces; Quartet 1 (Szell 1940s) Somm 5032, M/J: Hecht
Qts (Zemlinsky Qt) EvilP 69, M/J: French
Trio (Trio Bohemo) Sup 4344, M/J: Althouse
Trio (Trio Contrasti) Oehms 1735, M/J: Althouse
- SMIDBERGS:** Chamber Pieces (Geka+) Skani 170, S/O: new, Kilp
- SMITH:** Piano Sonata (Smith) Navon 6721, N/D: new, Kilpatrick
- SOHAL:** Quartets (Piatti Qt) Tocc 754, J/A: Faro
- SONDHEIM:** Pieces (Terwilliger+) Bridg 9605, S/O: Fisch
- SONNABEND:** Chamber Pieces (Muller+) DivA 21128, J/F: Sullivan
- SORABJI:** Vocal & Chamber Pieces (Kingsland+) BIS 2683, J/F: Estep
- SOROZABAL:** Choral Pieces (Kea Ens) IBS 92024, J/F: Faro
- SPOHR:** Passion Oratorio (Bernius) Carus 83540, S/O: Greenfield
- ST COLUMBE JR:** Viol Pieces (L'Acheron) Ricer 168, M/A: Moore
- STAMP:** Brass Band Pieces (Lake Wobegon Brass Band) Tocc 745, M/A: Kilp
- STANFORD:** Choral Pieces (The 16) Coro 16207, J/F: Delcamp
Songs with orchestra (Carty & Pearce) Reson 10345, J/F: Moore,R
- STEINBERG:** Sym 3 (Filatov) FugaL 831, J/A: Hansen
- STEVENS:** Violin Pieces (Townsend) DivA 21121, M/J: new, Kilp
- STEVENSON:** P Pieces (Jablonski) Ond 1453, M/A: Faro
P Pieces 7 (Guild) Tocc 748, M/J: Wright
- STILL:** Songs (Zhong, Rollinson) CPO 555627, M/J: Moore,R
- STOCKHAUSEN:** Clarinet Pieces (Marelli) Kairo 22055, N/D: Hanudel
- STOHR:** Sym 2; 2 Roads to Victory (Hobson) Tocc 743, M/A: O'Connor
- STOYANOVICH:** Chamber Pieces (Stoyanovich, Wolfe, Wang) Bridg 9593, J/F: Faro
- STRADELLA:** Orrigoni Songbook (Mare Nostrum Ens) Arcan 571, M/J: Moore,C
- STRAUSS:** Don Juan; Death & Trans (Shelley) Anal 8891, M/J: see LAU
Don Quixote (Szeps-Znaider) Chanl 45424, M/A: Althouse
Elektra (Krieger/Salemkour) SoloM 484, S/O: Reynolds
Heldenleben; Don Juan (Ballot) Gram 99346, J/A: Althouse
Heldenleben; Don Juan (Ono) EvilP 67, J/F: Vroon
Horn Concertos+ (Ess) Naxos 551473, M/A: Kilpatrick
Salome (Byström/Gardner) Chan 5356, S/O: Reynolds
Songs (Knezikova) Sup 4346, M/A: Althouse
VC (Pietsch) Aria 20, S/O: Kellenberger
V Son (Lin) Azica 71378, S/O: see CORIGLIANO
V Son (Um) Avie 2743, M/J: Kellenberger
V Son (Weiss) CPO 555565, M/J: Kell
- STRAVINSKY:** Chamber Pieces (Hannigan+) Linn 722, M/A: Hanudel
Pulcinella; Divertimento (Gimeno) HM 905384, J/A: French
Rite of Spring (Kolesnikov & Tsoy) HM 902752, N/D: Repp
Le Rossignol (Les Siecles) Erato 624049, M/J: Altman
Septet; Histoire (Ensemble in Canto) Brill 96128, M/A: Hanudel
Suite Italienne (Taio) Brill 96874, N/D: see SHOSTAKOVICH
Sym Winds; Sym in C; Agon (Metzmacher) SWR 19156, J/F: Hecht
Sym in C; Sym in 3 (Slobodeniouk) BIS 2441, J/F: Hecht
- STROHL:** Songs (Various) BruZ 405, N/D: Valente
- STRZELECKI:** Works (Various) Dux 2062, M/A: new, Kilpatrick
- SUBISSATI:** V Sons (Morska-Osinska) Dux 1959, M/A: Magil
- SUK:** Fantasy (Ferschtman) Rubi 1120, S/O: see BRAHMS
Serenade Strings (Kukal) Anim 129, J/A: see DVORAK
- SUMERA:** Sym 1+6 (Elts) Ond 1449, S/O: Faro
- SUMMERS:** Guitar Pieces (Summers) BlueC 100332, M/A: new, Kilp
- SUTTON:** VC; Warhorse Suite (Humphreys/Seal) Chan 20349, M/A: Faro
- SWEELINCK:** Psalms (Netherlands Chamber Choir) Brill 96928, S/O: Gatens
- SZYMANOWSKI:** King Roger Fantasy (Sondergard) Linn 758, J/A: Hecht
Myths (Soulez-LaRiviere, v) Gram 99338, S/O: see CORIGLIANO
Variations (Fournel) Alpha 1064, J/F: see CHOPIN
V Son+ (Zavaro) LDV 127, M/A: see FAURE
- TAILLEFERRE:** Quartet (Pine+) Ced 238, N/D: see CHAUSSON
- TAKEMITSU:** Rain Tree Sketches (Vaarni) Strad 37304, M/J: see MESSIAEN
- TANEYEV:** Qt 1+4 (Rasumowsky Qt) Brill 97494, M/A: Wright
V Son; Pqn (Spectrum Concerts) Naxos 574566, J/F: Dutterer
- TANSMAN:** Violin Pieces (Maja) Dux 2082, S/O: Magil
- TARREGA:** Guitar Pieces (Brancaccio) DaVin 1006, N/D: McCutcheon
Guitar Preludes (Gasparo) DaVin 1029, N/D: 127, McC
- TARTINI:** Organ Transcriptions (Scandali) Brill 96673, J/A: Gatens
- TCHAIKOVSKY:** Children's Album (Kozhukhin, p) Penta 5187406, S/O: 149, Wright
Nutcracker (Jurowski) Penta 5187347, M/A: Vroon
Qt 1+2 (Dudok Qt) Rubi 1103, S/O: Vroon
Seasons (Liu) DG 4866050, M/A: Hansen
Seasons (Wagner) LDV 126, M/A: Hansen
Suite 2; The Storm; Marche Slave; Onegin (Chauhan) Chan 5352, S/O: Vroon
Suite 3 (Kochanowski) HM 905392, J/A: Althouse
Swan Lake (Jurowski) Penta 5187349, J/F: Hansen
Swan Lake Suite; Suite 4 (Ahronovitch) SWR 19160, J/A: Althouse
VC (Sant'Anna) Naxos 574659, J/A: see MENDELSSOHN
- TCHEREPNINS:** Violin Pieces (Koukl) Grand 937, M/A: Kellenberger
- TEIKE:** Marches 2 (Swedish Navy Band) Naxos 574318, N/D: Kilp
- TELEMANN:** Bass Viol Sonatas (Ruiz) Chall 720034, N/D: Brewer
Cantatas 8.23,51,62,68 (Schlick+) Cant 38003, N/D: Gatens
Cantatas vol 4 (Gutenberg Soloists) CPO 555439, J/A: Brewer
Ino (Forsythe) CPO 555658, M/J: Altman
Paris Qts (London Handel Players) Somm 698, S/O: Brewer
Qts (Camerata Koin) CPO 555427, M/J: Brewer
Recorder Pieces (Bosgraaf) Brill 97411, N/D: Gorman
St Luke Passion (Heinrich) Cant 37623, N/D: Gatens
St Luke Passion (Thiel) Carus 83542, N/D: Gatens
- TESSARINI:** Violin Alletamenti (Cappella Musicale) Brill 96847, J/F: Moore,C
- THALKEN:** Chasing Home (Dallas Chamber Sym) Alb 1975, J/A: Hansen
- THEODORAKIS:** Piano Concerto+ (Dorken) Berl 303725, N/D: Faro
- THIERIOT:** P Qt 3+4 (Amadeus Chamber Musicians) Tocc 739, M/A: O'Connor
- TIPPETT:** PC; Sym 2 (Osborne/Gardner) LPO 129, M/J: Sullivan
P Son 2+4 (Soares) Rubi 1131, M/J: Faro
- TODD:** All Will be Well (Todd+) Sign 891, S/O: Moore,R
- TORELLI:** 2-Violin Concertos (Rosso Verona Baroque) Chall 75989, J/F: Brewer
- TORTILLER:** Danses de Ravel (Debussy Qt) HM 905403, N/D: see RAVEL
- TOURNIER:** Images (Ceysson & Gens) Alpha 1133, S/O: French
- TRAETTA:** King Solomon (Rousset) CPO 555654, N/D: Brewer

- TRIGOS:** Guitar Pieces (Hennings) Naxos 574664, J/A: McCutcheon
- TUMA:** Vespers; Sacred Pieces (Valek) Sup 4352, M/J: Gatens
- TURINA:** P Pieces (Piquero) Piano 10215, M/A: Repp
- TURNER:** Hpsi Lessons (Leuzzi) Brill 97319, J/A: Lehman
- TURRIN:** Crimson Roses (Musica Viva) Naxos 559944, J/F: Greenf
- TUUR:** VC 2 (Aavik) Orch 380, S/O: Kellenberger
- UEBAYASHI:** Flute Sonata (Liu) Cent 4100, M/J: Gorman
- VAINBERG:** Clarinet Pieces (Verity) Rubi 1189, J/A: Hanudel
Qt 3,9,14 (Arcadia Qt) Chan 20328, J/A: Sullivan
Qt 6,13,15 (Arcadia Qt) Chan 20281, J/F: Hansen
- VAN OVERMERE:** Choral Pieces (Skylark Ens) Kram 4, N/D: 158, Kilp
- VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** Carols (Royal Hospital Chelsea) Albio 64, N/D: Greenfield
Oxford Elegy (Queen's College Choir) Sign 917, M/A: see LEIGHTON
Quartets (Verdi Qt) CPO 555345, M/A: Althouse
Shakespeare Songs & Suites (Albion Singers+) Albio 62, J/F: O'Connor
Songs of Travel (Thwaites) Albio 66, N/D: Moore,R
V Son; VC (Grinke) Albio 61, J/F: see BENJAMIN
- VEGA:** Galdosiana+ (Marin) IBS 192024, N/D: Faro
- VERA:** Spanish Suites; Trumpet Concerto (Composer) IBS 52025, S/O: Faro
- VERACINI:** V Sons (Saladin) Chall 720005, N/D: Magil
- VERAS:** Hpsi Pieces (Pierini) Brill 96879, N/D: Lehman
- VERDI:** Ballets fr Operas (Repusic) BR 900341, M/A: Hansen
Qt (Pacific Qt) SoloM 466, J/A: see DONIZETTI
Scenes (Castronovo) Delos 3605, J/F: Reynolds
Simon Boccanegra (Elder) OpRar 65, J/A: Altman
- VIANA:** P Pieces (Rayo) Tocc 771, N/D: new, Kilpatrick
- VICENS:** Mural (Nu Quintet+) Strad 37293, M/A: Haskins
- VIGELAND:** P Pieces (Yang) NewF 435, J/A: Faro
- VIGIL:** Violin & Piano (Hartunian) NewF 440, N/D: new, Kilp
- VILLA-LOBOS:** Guitar Pieces, all (Ballare) DaVin 1033, N/D: McCutcheon
Guitar Pieces (Halasz) BIS 2735, J/A: McCutcheon
- VIOTTI:** Violin Duos (Melis & Falasca) Brill 96629, M/A: Magil
- VISEE:** Theorbo Pieces (Roussel) Vers 127, M/A: Brewer
- VIVALDI:** 4 Seasons (Hemsing) Berl 303416, M/A: Magil
4 Seasons; VCs (Gli Incogniti) Alpha 1047, M/A: Magil
4 Seasons, violin & guitar (Roth & Ceku) EvilP 65, M/A: McC
4 Seasons; VCs (Swarte) HM 902757, M/J: Magil
Arsilda (Marcon) Naive 8576, S/O: Altman
Bassoon Concertos (Carlini) Tact 672262, M/A: Vroon
Double Concertos (La Serenissima) Sign 908, J/F: Brewer
La Fida Ninfa (Cattani) CPO 555645, J/A: Altman
Sacred Choral (Ghislieri Chorus) Naive 8564, M/J: Moore,C
Stabat Mater; Nisi Dominus (Berlin Academy) HM 902383, M/J: Brewer
VCs, Pisen del (Guglielmo) CPO 555379, S/O: Kellenberger
Various Concertos (Hoor Barock) Propr 2102, N/D: Brewer
- VON SAUER:** PC (Triendl) Capr 5511, J/A: O'Connor
- VRANITSKY:** Symphonies in C and D (Stilec) Naxos 574562, J/F: Hansen
Symphonies C minor, D, E-flat (Stilec) Naxos 574616, J/A: Hecht
- VYSOTSKY:** Guitar Pieces (Timofeyev) Prima 67, N/D: McCutcheon
- WAGNER:** Bayreuth Box 25CD—Decca 4847580, N/D: Altman
Flying Dutchman (Finley, Davidsen/Gardner) Decca 4870052, S/O: Reynolds
Ring Introduction (Solti, Cooke) Decca 4846918, J/F: Altman
Ring Odyssey, arr (Swenson) Alpha 1072, M/A: Reynolds
Transcriptions for Organ (De Man) Globe 5287, M/A: Delcamp
- WAINWRIGHT:** Dream Requiem (Franck) Warnr 500601, M/J: Greenfield
- WALKER:** Address (Trevino) Ond 1445, M/A: see REVUELITAS
PC & pieces (Dossin) Naxos 559942, J/F: Faro
- WALLEN:** Orchestral Pieces (Andrews) Reson 10358, N/D: Faro
- WALTHER:** Toccata; Short Story (Elliott Trio) Walth 0, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
- WALTON:** VaC (Mei) SWR 19158, M/A: Hansen
VC; Troilus & Cressida (Lowell-Jones/Wilson) Chan 5360, J/A: Hecht
- WARLOCK:** Songs (Partridge+) Conv 98, M/A: Moore,R
- WARSHAW:** Sirens; Responses (Rose) BMOP 1104, S/O: Faro
- WEBBER:** Mandolin Sonatas (Ferella) DaVin 985, S/O: McCutcheon
- WEBENAU:** P Qt; Cello Sonata; V Pieces (Triendl+) Hans 24008, M/J: French
- WEIDNER:** Organ Pieces (Weidner) Raven 199, N/D: Delcamp
- WEIGL:** Oboe Trios (Heerden) CPO 555455, J/A: Gorman
Sym 3 (Bruns) Capr 5489, M/J: O'Connor
- WEILL:** 7 Deadly Sins (Rattle) LSO 880, M/J: Fisch
Violin & Winds Concerto (Schmid) Gram 99340, J/A: see GULLDA
- WEISS:** Guitar Suite (LaRocca & Lazari) Brill 97139, J/F: McC
Lute Pieces (Mascardi) Arcan 569, M/A: McCutcheon
- WELDON:** Judgement of Paris (Academy of Ancient Music) AAM 46, J/A: Brewer
- WERNER:** Pieces (Voktett Hannover) Audit 97833, N/D: see CALDARA
- WESTON:** Chamber Music (Ecce Ensemble) NewF 437, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
- WHITACRE:** Choral Pieces (Wawel Cathedral) Dux 1727, S/O: Greenfield
- WHITE,M:** Songs (Paglia) DaVin 1001, N/D: Valente
- WIDOR:** Songs (Pfrimmer) Affet 2501, S/O: Delcamp
- WIENIAWSKI:** Modern School (Brilinsky) Hans 24054, J/A: see ERNST
Qt (Meccore Qt) Prel 7406, M/J: O'Connor
- WILLIAMS:** Orch Pieces (Andrews) Reson 10349, J/A: O'Connor
The Parlour (Welsh Opera) Lyrnt 1147, S/O: Hecht
- WILLIAMS,G:** Cambridge Mass (Partington) Lyrnt 442, J/A: Delcamp
- WILLIAMSON,M:** Chamber Music for winds & piano (Gray) DivA 21120, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
- WILMS:** Overtures; Sym (Repusic) CPO 555472, M/J: O'Connor
- WINKLER:** Trio (Brahms Trio) Naxos 574688, N/D: see ALOIZ
- WINTERBERG:** Chamber Pieces 2 (Various) EDA 53, J/A: Hanudel
- WOLF:** Songs (Boesch) Linn 751, N/D: see BRAHMS
- WOLF-FERRARI:** Chamber Symphony (La Vecchia) Naxos 574271, J/F: see FRANCHETTI
Secret of Susannah (Krieger) Oehms 992, M/J: Reynolds
Trios, P Qn, Stg Qn (Leopold Qt) MDG 1022344, M/J: Vroon
- WOLFF:** Songs 2 (Aldrian) Naxos 574557, M/A: Moore,R
Songs 3 (Begemann) Naxos 574558, M/A: Moore,R
- WOLOSOFF:** Rising Sun Variations (Composer) Avie 2730, M/A: new, Kilp
- WOODHALL:** Damascus Road+ (Cantores Lucis) DivA 21127, N/D: Delcamp
- WOODS:** Qt (London Chamber Ens) Somm 592, M/J: see HOW-ELLS
- WOOLF:** Jacqueline (Breckenridge) Penta 5187341, M/A: new, Kilp
- YE:** Songs of Farewell without Words (Yang) Naxos 579151, M/A: Faro
- YOUNG:** Nosferatu (Strobel) Warnr 245792, M/A: Fisch
Arrangements (Tan) Cent 4109, J/F: Magil
Poeme Elegiaique (Bulayev) Champ 175, M/J: Magil
Solo V Sons (Ganiyev) SoloM 479, M/J: Kellenberger
Violin & Orchestra (Roussev) MEW 2409, M/J: Magil
- ZADOR:** Accordion Concerto; P Qn; Brass Suite (Various) Naxos 574448, M/A: Vroon
- ZEBELJAN:** Violin & Chamber Pieces (Rowland+) Chall 72993, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
- ZEISL:** Songs 2 (De Young) Naxos 551464, M/A: Vroon
- ZELENKA:** Lamentations+ (Selc) Sup 4353, S/O: Gatens
Mass, Gratias Agimus Tibi (Bernius) Carus 83515, J/A: Greenf
Sacred Choral (Various) Hans 24063, J/A: Greenfield
- ZIANI:** Damira Placata (Enea Barock) Dyn 8070, N/D: Altman
- ZORN:** Quartets (Jack Quartet) Tzad 9318, M/J: Faro

COLLECTIONS

ORCHESTRAL

Ancel Concert Recordings 7CD: Sup 4349, S/O: 119, Hecht
Antal Dorati Philharmonia Hungarica: Merc 4845517, J/A: 129, Hecht
Carlo Maria Giulini 60CD: Warnr 441218, N/D: 108, Renfrow
Colin Davis in Amsterdam [18CD]: Haydn, Dvorak, Berlioz, Stravinsky Decca 4845277, M/A: 122, Renfro
Dimitri Mitropoulos [69 CD]: Sony 88252, J/F: 101, Renfro
Dorati in London I: Merc 4847015, S/O: 120, Renfro
Dorati in London II: Merc 4847106, S/O: 123, Renfro
Dutch Overtures: Wagenaar, Van Bree, Verhulst (Steen) Brill 96998, J/F: 96, O'Connor
Early Piano Concertos: Mozart, Beethoven, Clementi (Khomichko) Genui 25925, J/A: 148, Wright
French Opera Overtures: Auber, Planquette, Lecocq (Jarvi) Chan 20318, J/F: 109, Hansen
Georges Pretre Collection [8CD]: SWR 19155, J/F: Renfro
Hommages: Tabakova, Stravinsky, Mustonen, Golijov (Azkoul) BIS 2739, J/A: 132, Faro
Inspired by Art: Saint-S; Rach; Liszt; Popp (Golan) Cent 4121, M/J: 110, French
Jewish Vienna: Mahler, Korngold, Zemlinsky (Grossmann) Onyx 4253, S/O: 129, Hecht
Karel Ancel: Mahler 9, Sibelius 1, Janacek Taras B Uran 121421, J/A: 125, Vroon
Karl Bohm in Dresden: Brahms, Reger, Bizet, Schubert Hans 20056, M/A: 123, Althouse
Klaus Tennstedt: Beethoven, Haydn, Mahler 1—mostly USA Dorem 8241+3, J/F: 107, Hecht
Light and Shadow: (Swan Orchestra) Sign 915, N/D: 118, Fisch
Malcolm Sargent box: Decca 4845636, N/D: 114, O'Connor
Michael Tilson Thomas [16CD]: DG 4846836, M/A: 124, Renfro
Mozart to Schoenberg: (Atherton) Decca 4847297, J/A: 125, Renfro
Otto Gerdes—11CD: DG 4844445, N/D: 116, Hecht
Paris: Milhaud, Chabrier, Ravel, Bizet (Levy) FugaL 813, J/F: 110, O'Connor
Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos [11CD]: Decca 4844628, S/O: 126, Wright
Romances for Strings: Sibelius, Barber, Britten, Part (Fama) Brill 97057, J/F: 109, Hansen
Stokowski BBC recordings: ICA 5180, J/F: 104, Stumpf
Svetlanov: Tchai, Deb, Rach, Prok ICA 5181, M/J: 109, Hansen
Symphonie Gaspesienne: Bartok, Chaminade (Trudel) ATMA 2867, M/J: 110, Hansen
Tennstedt in USA: Beethoven, Bruckner, Blacher, Strauss Dorem 8245-8, M/A: 27, Hecht
Thomas Beecham—35CD: Warnr 408914, J/A: 128, Vroon
Walter Weller [20CD]: Rachmaninoff, Prokofieff, Bartok Decca 4843410, S/O: 130, Hansen

CHAMBER

Baltia String Trio: Vasks, Kenins, Smite—Skani 171, S/O: 132, Faro
Boulanger Trio: Hensel, Strossi, Boulanger—Berl 303298, M/A: 127, French
Chamber Music of James Joyce (Solstice Ens) Sign 864, J/F: 137, Greenfield
Classical String Trio 4: Haydn, Boccherini, JC Bach—MSR 1624, J/F: 113, Wright
Colorado Trio: Poulenc, Bernstein, Jamison—Cent 4105, J/A: 133, French
Concertos: Hoffmann, Steffan, Vanhal (Letzbor) Chall 72984, M/J: 134, Lehman
Danzas: taboo to triumph (La Ninfea) PN 2404, J/F: 111, Fisch
Divinerisch (Divinerinnen) Gram 99345, M/J: 114, Vroon
Dutch Chamber Pieces: Van Bree, Rontgen, Coenen (Viotta Ens) Brill 97003, M/A: 128, Wright

Early Italian Quartets: Pugnani, Boccherini (Butter Qt) Brill 97407, J/F: 110, Wright
French Trios: Deb. Ravel, Francaix, Boulanger (Trio Gaon) Hans 23045, M/A: 128, Wright
French Trios: flute, harp, piano (Beau Soir Trio) MDG 9032319, J/F: 116, Gorman
Guarneri Quartet [49CD] Sony 88600, S/O: 133, Magil
Made of Stories: Dvorak, Komitas, Snowden (Kontras Qt) MSR 1859, M/J: 114, French
Neave Trio: Smetana, Suk, Martin, Coleridge-Taylor—Chan 20272, J/F: 111, Dutt
Parisian Impressions (Van Kuijk Qt) Alpha 1067, J/F: 112, French
Piano & Winds Trios: Poulenc, Francaix, Previn (Ausias March) IBS 82025, S/O: 157, Gorman
Polish Chamber Music: Gorecki, Penderecki, Bacewicz (Dafo Qt) Dux 2040, M/J: 112, Faro
Polish Music Competition (Various) Dux 2011, M/J: 113, Kilp
Prayer for Ukraine (Vivere Qt) Pheno 2402, J/F: 113, Dutterer
Toomai Qt—short pieces: Tocan 0, M/J: new, Kilpatrick
Trio Arrangements (Waldmuller Trio) Gram 99317, M/J: 114, Vroon
Trios: Roslavets, Shostakovich, Schoenberg (Brackman Trio) Chall 720009, M/J: 111, Hansen
Vienna 1784: Haydn, Vanhal, Mozart (Bennewitz Qt) Sup 4345, M/J: 111, French
Women's Voices: (Corvus Consort) Chan 5350, J/F: 137, Delcamp

BRASS (Kilpatrick)

Christmas in Austrian Alps (Murau Brass) Capr 3030, N/D: 152
Euphonium & Brass Band (Childs) Naxos 574683, J/A: 152
German Brass Overtures: Berl 303409, M/A: 129
Joyfully (Bloch) Genui 24884, N/D: 156
Open (Stockholm Chamber Brass) Genui 24891, M/J: 116
Sonatas from Imperial Vienna (Tubicinatores Gedanenses) CPO 555520, M/J: 132
Transatlantic (Onyx Brass) Chan 20399, N/D: 118
Trumpet Consort: Berl 303529, M/J: 132

CELLO

Alle Menschen werden Schwestern (Hack) Berl 303414, M/A: 129, Vroon
Baroque Cello Concertos (Salzenstein) Mirar 760, S/O: 136, Brewer
British Cello 3: Hurlstone, Bridge, Swinstead (Handy) Lyrit 441, M/A: 129, Moore
British Female Composers (Wilmers) DivA 21134, N/D: 121, Chi
Cello Sonatas: Cras, Ferroud, Soulage (Siranossian) Alpha 1085, M/A: 130, Moore
Fantasies: Janacek, Servais, Estrin (Fung) Sign 882, J/A: 134, Fisch
Female Composers (Guschlbauer) Avi 4867773, N/D: 119, Chi
Feste Champetre: Marais, Barriere (2 Violes) Antes 319331, S/O: 159, Brewer
Im Volkston: Schumann, Falla, Say (Sosnowska) Genui 25922, N/D: 120, Chi
In the Mirror: female composers (Misumi & Tuach) DivA 21123, J/A: 134, French
Italian Cello (Burattini) Strad 37282, J/F: 114, Moore
Lucile Boulanger: gamba: Alpha 1070, J/F: 114, Moore
Edgar Moreau: Tchai, Chopin+ Erato 243062, M/A: 130, Moore
Pas de Deux: Ravel, Xenakis+ (Guo-Lipstein Duo) Oehms 1736, N/D: 120, Chi
Schumann Tribute (La Marca) Naive 7364, J/F: 115, Moore
Giovanni Sollima: folk & baroque—Dyn 8035, J/F: 114, Moore
Srikandi (Duo Saraswati) Chall 72986, J/F: 115, Moore

CLARINET (Hanudel unless noted)

20th Century Italian Clarinet: Sinigaglia, Nacamuli, Finzi (Casali) Tact 870004, S/O: 136
Clarinet & Accordion (Paulova & Lukes) ArcoD 252, N/D: 123
Michael Collins: Arnold, Finzi, Stanford—BIS 2097, M/A: 131
Concertos: Molter, Francaix, Barlow (Jordan) Orch 376, N/D: 122

Concertos: Hidas, Milton, Maslanka, Yagisawa (Cigerlis) Somm 705, N/D: 122
 Female Composers (DuToit) Chanl 47024, M/A: 132
 Gaia Gaibazzi: Reger, Brahms, Schumann—DaVin 963, J/A: 135
 Pierre Genisson songbook: Erato 243313, M/A: 132
 Korean Clarinet (Kim) MSR 1779, M/A: 133
 Locally Sourced—Ohio (Gaffice) Neuma 210, M/J: 117
 Ludus: Prok, Brotans, Sanchez (Molina) Odrad 452, M/A: 134
 New Clarinet Trio Pieces: Larsen, Liebermann, Jalbert (Guise-Langlois) MSR 1838, J/F: 116
 Project Encore: (McAllister, sax) Neuma 235, N/D: 123
 Saxophone Pieces—5 composers: (Leaman) Sound 1143, M/J: 117
 Saxophone Transcriptions: Faure, Grieg, Prokofieff (Laterza) Brill 97262, J/F: 116
 Oleg Shebeta-Dragon: Nielsen, Francaix, Busoni—Orch 358, M/J: 118
 Kenneth Tse, sax: Bach, Villa-Lobos, Piazzolla—Crys 784, M/J: 119
 Zinergi: Kodaly, Weiner, Hartmann (Barragan) Accen 30637, M/A: 130
 Zodiac Trio: Schickele, Gershwin+ BlueG 679, N/D: 123

FLUTE (Gorman unless noted)

19th Century French Women (Baldo) DaVin 1003, N/D: 124
 Act One: Rosenblum, Chase, Church (Axelrod) Freed 3, N/D: new, Kilp
 American Flute (Friend) Chan 20327, N/D: 125
 Badinerie: flute & harp (Beaudiment) Orch 314, J/F: 117
 Big Sky: flute trios: (Hat Trick) Bridg 9595, J/F: 111
 Cobus du Toit: Neuma 202, M/J: 119
 Crossing Borders: baroque concertos—Telemann, Durante, Vivaldi (Bircher) Sign 918, N/D: 125
 East German Flute Concertos (Stein) Naxos 574537, M/A: 134
 Encores (Wolf) Gram 99323, M/A: 135
 Flute & Guitar (Schiaffino & Procopio) Dyn 8046, J/A: 137
 Folio: from the Master (Debuss) TyxA 24191, S/O: 136
 French Flute (Elles) Alpha 1061, J/F: 117
 French Flute & Harp (Leung & Lo) DaVin 978, S/O: 137
 Linda Marianello: Gaubert, Martinu, Mansker—MSR 1814, N/D: 125
 New Flute Pieces by Broadway Composers (Axelrod) FRR 3, N/D: 124, Fisch
 On a Ground (Petri) OUR 8226927, N/D: 126
 The Other 20th Century (Petrucci) Brill 97489, S/O: 137
 Recorder & Harp (Temmingh & Koell) Accen 24408, M/A: 135
 Recorder Concertos: Quantz, Graun, CPE Bach (Makhdoomi) Prosp 112, S/O: 137
 Recorder Pieces (Neo) Globe 5288, M/J: 120
 Max Volbers, recorder: Berl 303407, M/A: 135

GUITAR (McCutcheon unless noted)

Colors of the 20th Century (Guerrero) DaVin 960, J/A: 138
 Cross Atlantic Trio: Falla, Albeniz+ Orlan 56, J/F: 117
 Crossings: viola & guitar (McCarty & Zito) Ashm 1224, M/J: 121
 Carlotta Dalia: Berl 303725, S/O: 138
 Duarte Homages (Rossi) Brill 97470, N/D: 128
 Early 20th Century Guitar: V-L, Tansman, Torroba (Giunta) DaVin 987, S/O: 138
 Fairy Guitar Quartet: Piazzolla plus—Strad 37289, J/A: 136
 Guitar & Harp: Ravel, Debussy, Falla (Guitarp Duo) SoloM 462, M/A: 136
 Guitar Groups (Kavanagh+) Naxos 551485, M/A: 136
 Guitar Trio arrangements: Ravel, Grieg, Bernstein (Volterra Project) Naxos 579172, S/O: 141
 Georg Gulyas: Jose, Turina, Falla—Propr 2101, N/D: 127
 Tatiana Kurenchakova: Brouwer, Barrios, Dyens—Antar 76, N/D: 127
 Latin American Guitar: Assad, Barrios, Miranda (Mitsalas) DaVin 931, M/A: 137
 Latin Landscapes (Guitalian Q) Dyn 8049, M/J: 120
 Sebastian Llinares: Alpha 1063, J/F: 118
 Milosz Maczynski: Dowland, Sor, Schubert—Dux 2037, M/A: 137

Andrea Orsi: Italian Guitar—Tact 960090, S/O: 139
 Peaceful Guitar—Spanish (Various) Brill 97523, J/A: 139
 Roberto Perez: Grand Finale—Spanish—Ref 759, S/O: 140
 Konrad Ragosnig recital: Spanish—Sup 4358, S/O: 140
 Roman Lute (Vallerotonda) Arcan 581, S/O: 141
 Russian Guitar (Falk) DB 216, J/F: 118
 Segovia, Vol 16: Spain 1928-55: Dorem 8150, M/J: 122
 Spanish Album (Meisinger) Chan 20382, J/A: 138
 Spanish Night (Meisinger) Dux 2138, S/O: 139
 Vienna Mandolin: Krahmer, Pasiello, Sarial (Sarial) Penta 5187364, S/O: 140
 What I Saw in the Water (Chroma Duo) Naxos 574578, M/A: 136

HARPSICHORD (Lehman)

Bach-Centricity: 2 Harpsichords (Ponsford & Hill) Nimb 6454, M/A: 138
 Bottom of My Heart (Funaro) Alien 99893, J/A: 139
 Bill Christie & Friends: HM 8905379, M/J: 122
 German Baroque (Moulin) Ricer 475, S/O: 142
 Time of Louis XIV (Yates) Chan 830, M/J: 123
 Sun King's Harpsichordists (Jovanovic) Thor 2684, M/A: 138

HARP

Cello & Harp (Whitson) Brill 97516, N/D: 119, French Maximilian Ehrhardt: Carpe 16338, M/J: 123, Lehman
 Harp & Piano Duos (Praxedis Duo) Tocc 711, M/J: 124, Kilp
 Liebestraum (Von Marschall) Prosp 105, J/A: 139, Haskins
 War & Peace (Boldachev) DaVin 933, M/J: 123, Fisch

MISCELLANEOUS

Around Gershwin (Galliano, accordion) Penta 5187229, M/J: 124, McC
 Felicien Brut, accordion: Erato 620477, S/O: 142, Fisch
 Harmonica & Guitar: Fall, Chopin, Piazzolla (Leo & Buscemi) DotG 2317, M/A: 139, McCutcheon
 Hollywood (Knauer/Newman) Warnr 426406, M/A: 127, Fisch
 Percussion Trios: Reich, Xenakis, Hurel (Ferriere+) B 70, S/O: 142, Haskins

OBOE & BASSOON

Bassoon Concertos: Crusell, DuPuy, Berwald (Luoma) Ond 1481, M/J: 116, Gorman
 Bassoon Solo Fantasies: JS & CPE Bach; Kuhlau (Roy) MDG 9032323, J/F: 114, Hanudel
 Honey-Coloured Cow (Perkins, bn) Hyp 68441, S/O: 135, Hanudel
 Romantic Bassoon: Reicha, Moscheles, Schreck (Carlini) Brill 97503, S/O: 135, Hanudel
 Sing to Me Again (Broms-Jacobs, ob) Leaf 286, J/A: 140, Gorman

ORGAN

Bach—Buxtehude—Bruhns (Mernier) Cypres 1686, J/A: 141, Gatens
 Female Students of Dupre (Spritzer) Raven 196, N/D: 129, Delc
 Flemish Organ (Michiels) Passa 1119, S/O: 144, Delcamp
 Flugelhorn & Organ (Ennis & Conte) Raven 193, S/O: 143, Delc
 Klosterneuburg Abbey (Zeinler) Gram 99326, M/A: 141, Gatens
 Lemare Transcriptions (Gabba) Brill 95698, M/A: 141, Delcamp
 Leuven Organ: Bach, Kuhnau, Mozart (De Man) Globe 5286, M/A: 140, Gatens
 Earl Miller: Bartholomay organs—Raven 194, N/D: 128, Delcamp
 New England Organ (Murphy-Mancini) Acis 3781, S/O: 144, Delcamp
 Nordic Journey 16 (Hicks) ProOr 7310, J/F: 119, Delcamp
 Nordic Journey 17 (Hicks) ProOr 7316, M/A: 141, Delcamp
 Nordic Journey 18 (Hicks) ProOr 7319, S/O: 143, Delcamp
 Organ & Orchestra: Gigout, Guilman, Dupre (Conti) Raven 195, J/A: 141, Delcamp
 Organ Concertos: Parker, Rouse, Oquin (Jacobs) Naxos 559936, J/F: 119, Delcamp
 Organ Transcriptions (Emilius) TyxA 19125, M/A: 140, Delcamp

Siegfried Reda: Reda, David, Popping, Hindemith—Cant 37631, N/D: 129, Delcamp
St Alban's (Winpenny) Willo 90, J/F: 120, Delcamp

PIANO

2 Pianos: Liszt, Dukas, Falla, Moussorgsky (Jatekok Duo) Alpha 1083, M/A: 143, Harrington
American Century: Gershwin, Copland, Rzewski (Mitchell) Cent 4120, J/A: 149, Sullivan
American Excursions: Tanaka, Barbe, Hersch (Crosett) Cent 4063, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
American Preludes: Villa-Lobos, Coultard, Ginastera (Manhas) DaVin 991, S/O: 151, Repp
Arc III: Talma, Schubert, Deb, Dohnanyi (Weiss) FHR 129, M/J: 127, Solomonick
Armenian: Babadjanian, Komitas, Khachaturian (Gasparian) Naive 8444, J/F: 121, Wright
Audio Arrau Ambassador Auditorium: FHR 172, N/D: 133, Solo
Art of Transcription (Rozsa) Acis 53561, J/F: 124, Solomonick
Mariam Batsashvili: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Liszt—Warnr 535177, S/O: 145, French
Isil Bengi Recital: Inso 3, M/A: 142, Repp
C-Sisters: Rachmaninoff, Liszt, Piazzolla—Antar 63, M/J: 124, Repp
Character Pieces (Blocker) Nimb 6453, J/F: new, Kilp
Shura Cherkassky in Pasadena 5CD: FHR 99, J/A: 143, Solomonick
Dmytro Choni Recital: Silvestrov, Liszt, Liebermann—Naive 8671, J/A: 143, Repp
Christmas Fantasies (Fischer) Genui 23849, N/D: 155, Wright
Contemporary Female Composers (Dobarro) Grand 944, M/A: new, Kilp
Darkness Visible: Ravel, Debussy, Britten (Barnatan) Penta 5187235, N/D: 133, Wright
Dualities (Invenca Duo) DivA 21122, S/O: 149, Repp
Early French Piano Recordings: APR 7318, M/J: 127, Repp
Iris Elezi Recital: Iesou 99878, J/A: 144, Haskins
Ellis Island: Kurtag, Bartok, Ligeti (Hamos) Naive 8674, S/O: 148, Sullivan
Emotions—2 pianos: Ravel, Poulenc, Piazzolla (Niewiedziat) Dux 2069, S/O: 153, Repp
Europolis (Lettberg) Oehms 1738, S/O: 151, Vroon
Fantasies: Moz, Beet, Chopin, Schumann (Santi) Hans 24043, M/A: 148, Solomonick
Anna Federova: Scriabin, Ravel, Falla, Moussorgsky—Chanl 47124, J/F: 120, Solo
Female Composers: Schumann, Boulanger, Beach (Liu) KNS 108, J/A: 149, Solomonick
Folk Trails (Alexeyev) Tocc 39, J/A: 142, Repp
Forgotten Dances: Bach, Bartok, Albeniz, Ravel (Bax) Sign 910, J/F: 120, Haskins
Foxtrots 7 (Wallisch) Grand 950, N/D: 136, Fisch
French Piano: Debussy, Hahn, Girard (Morini & Gardiole) DaVin 947, S/O: 152, Repp
Georgian Piano (Tsintsabadze) Ars 38375, J/A: 151, Sullivan
Graceful Ghost—rags (Davidson) River 3138, M/J: 125, Vroon
Lilit Grigoryan: Facile—Hahn, Goetz, Ravel—Berl 303647, J/A: 145, Wright
Hallelujah Junction: Gershwin, Adams, Stravinsky (Geniusas & Geniushene) Alpha 1122, S/O: 147, French
Herstory (Kotte) Genui 25898, J/A: 148, Repp
Impromptus: Schubert, Scriabin, Chopin (Cakmur) BIS 2710, M/J: 125, Haskins
Is Spring Right—American (Lifchitz) N/S 1071, M/A: new, Kilp
Alexandre Kantorow: Brahms, Schubert, Liszt—BIS 2660, M/A: 144, Solomonick
Tomono Kawamura Recital: DivA 21116, M/A: 145, Vroon
Dejan Lasic Recital: Onyx 4248, M/A: 146, Repp
Lullabies (Redaelli) DaVin 1008, N/D: 135, Fisch
Made in USA: Gershwin, Beach, Barber, Wild (Huangci) Alpha 1071, J/F: 121, French
Metopes: Myths & Legends: Szymanowski, Liszt, Debussy (Con-taldo) DaVin 998, N/D: 134, Wright

My American Story (Trifonov) DG 4865756, M/A: 150, Faro
Nariya Nogi: Haydn, Liszt, Debussy—Cent 4125, S/O: 152, Repp
Andrew von Oeyen: Angels & Demons—Warnr 238078, M/A: 152, Haskins
John Ogdon Argo Recordings: Decca 4846430, N/D: 130, French
Opera Transcriptions (Miceli) Grand 943, N/D: 135, Fisch
Organ on Piano: Mozart, Franck, Reger (Lanyi) Linn 774, S/O: 150, Repp
Organized Delirium: Boulez, Eisler, Bartok (Stefanovich) Penta 5187358, J/A: 150, Sullivan
Piano Library 22CD—pre-digital: DG 4843089, M/J: 129, Wright
Piano Library—American Decca & Westminster: DG 4843829, J/F: 125, Renfro
Piano Pieces from Malta (Farrugia) Grand 949, J/A: 145, Repp
Piano Poems: Ravel, Liszt, Kontz, Prokofieff (Krier) Genui 24881, M/A: 145, Repp
Polish Piano 20th Century: Vainberg, Magin, Lukaszewski (Wachowski) Dux 2020, S/O: 153, French
Rare Italian Piano Concertos: Fano, Dallapiccola, Cabrana (Prosseda) Hyp 68458, M/J: 126, Wright
Ravel's Salon (Baranova) Berl 303672, J/A: 143, Wright
Gabiz Reichert: Bach, Schumann, Rachmaninoff—Ars 38367, N/D: 136, Wright
Reimagining Sondheim (De Mare) Avie 2694, J/A: 144, Fisch
Reverie Duo—Polish: Dux 2045, S/O: 153, Repp
Ross Salvo: Chopin Etudes, Stravinsky+ MSR 1857, J/F: 124, Solomonick
Several Pianos: Mend, Schub, Moscheles (Multipiano Ens) Hyp 68459, J/F: 122, Harrington
South Slavic songs arranged with Liszt (Subotic) BlueG 673, M/A: 149, Repp
Tango (Martinova) Rubi 1121, J/F: 122, Fisch
Transcriptions 4 Hands: Ravel, Wagner, Liszt—Piano 10311, M/A: 148, Harrington
Aliya Turatayeva: Bach, Schubert, Schumann—SoloM 470, M/A: 151, Repp
Ukrainian Piano (Fingerhut) Somm 701, J/A: 145, Solomonick
Ukrainian Piano III (Holt) TNC 1571, J/A: 146, Wright
Ukrainian Preludes (Nemtsov) Hans 24044, M/A: 147, Repp
Variations on Brahms (Imorde) Berl 303419, J/A: 147, Repp
Virtus: Mozart, Brahms, Liszt (Dalberto) LDV 148, S/O: 146, Repp
Vladimir Feltsman: Tchai, Grieg, Chopin, Rach—Nimb 6461, S/O: 146, French
Nikita Volov: Grieg, Korngold, Schumann—Genui 24879, M/A: 151, Repp
Waltzes: Chopin, Ravel, Schumann (Donohoe) Somm 690, M/J: 126, Solomonick
Women of Legend (Arghamanyan) Hans 25026, N/D: 132, French
Yuletide Treats: Liszt, Strauss, Handel, Tchaikovsky (Duo Pleyel) Linn 757, N/D: 155, Repp

TRUMPET & BRASS SOLOS

(Kilpatrick, unless stated)

Baroque Horn Concertos: Fasch, Heinichen, Graupner (L'arpa Festante) CPO 555667, J/F: 127
Golden Age of the Horn (Muzyk) Naxos 574646, M/A: 154
Hall-Tighe: Bach, Albeniz, Sammartini—Rezu 121, J/F: 127
Hansjorg Angerer, horn [9CD] Gram 99286, M/J: 131
Horn & Strings: Brahms, Mozart, Schumann, Ligeti (Owen) Chan 20280, J/F: 128
Horn Trios: Mozart to Piazzolla (Wall) Affet 2403, J/F: 128
Horn Universe: Telemann, Mozart, Britten (Joulain) TxA 24195, M/A: 153, Hecht
Italian Baroque Trumpet (Reiner) Naxos 551467, M/A: 154
Peter Moore, trb: Chan 5366, J/A: 152
New Trumpet Sonatas: Cooman, Ewazen, Piunno (Rudy) Cent 4135, J/A: 152
Northern Colours: Grieg, Sibelius, Atterberg (Kieser, horn) Berl 303248, S/O: 155

Resonance—Trumpet Concertos: Schoenberger, Vainberg+ (Lloyd) Chan 5339, M/A: 153
 Jack Sutte: Peeters, Antheil, Stevens—Sutte 0, M/J: 133
 Timequake (Gekker) Tons 16, J/A: 151
 Trombone Pleasure Garden (Nisini) Genui 25924, S/O: 155
 Trumpet Sonatas (Friedrich) SoloM 442, S/O: 155
 Trumpet Transcriptions: Brahms, Schubert, Schumann (Balio) Delos 3607, J/A: 151
 Vienna to Dresden: Pilss, Geier, Friese (Fuchs) Thor 2685, M/J: 133
 Virginia Composers for Trumpet (Crafton) BlueG 687, N/D: 137
 Oscar Whight: Carpenter, Turnage, Mitcham—Willo 93, J/F: 128
 Winter Gardens (Vary) Wamr 241838, M/A: 154

VIOLIN

Baroque Violin: Bach, Tartini, Sor, Vitali (Kostecki) Dux 1931, M/J: 133, Magil
 Baroque Violin Concertos: Bach, Telemann, Vivbaldo (Goebel) Hans 24052, J/A: 162, Moore, C
 Joshua Bell 14CD: Decca 4847221, J/A: 153, Renfro
 Beyond Horizons: Smyth, Maier, Grieg (Migdal) Hans 24015, N/D: 138, Kellenberger
 Brazilian Violin (Anderegg) Rezu 122, J/F: 128, Kellenberger
 Caprices: Paganini+ (Duenas) DG 4865708, S/O: 156, Magil
 Carpathian Tales: Enesco, Bughici, Cristea (Cristea) SoloM 420, S/O: 156, Kellenberger
 Catalan Violin: Granados, Mompou+ (Gandelman) Naxos 579096, J/F: 129, Magil
 Johan Dalene: Short pieces—BIS 2770, M/A: 155, Kellenberger
 Dances (Wang, Ens Epoch) Accen 30619, M/A: 156, Magil
 English Pastoral: Finzi, Gurney, Venables (Yang) Somm 700, J/A: 156, Magil
 Exile: Various composers (Kopatchinskaya) Alpha 1110, M/J: 115, O'Connor
 French Violin Sonatas (Irmberger) Gram 99336, J/A: 155, Magil
 Daphne Gerling, va: Clarke, Fox, Soulage—Acis 53974, M/A: 154, Magil
 Holst & contemporaries (Roper, v) Albio 65, J/F: 129, Magil
 Leo & Lukas Ispir: Mozart, Ravel, Say—Erato 769862, N/D: 137, Kellenberger
 Fabiola Kim: Paraphrases—Ernst, Corigliano, Paganini: Music 447, N/D: 138, Magil
 Love's Joy—violin (Balcerek) Dux 2134, S/O: 157, Vroon
 Morning Mist (Kirsanova) Skani 167, M/A: 156, Kellenberger
 Viktoria Mullova: Stravinsky, Ravel, Schubert, C Schumann—Sign 884, M/J: 134, Magil
 Partita Party—collaborative (Composers) SBOV 224, J/F: new, Kilpatrick
 Phoenix Rising (Wang) Leaf 299, S/O: new, Kilpatrick
 Pisenel's Library (Rado) Chall 720023, N/D: 139, Magil
 Queen Elisabeth Competition 2009-12 (violinists) QEC 24, J/F: 130, Magil
 Patrick Rafter: Lekeu, Ysaye, Ravel, Boulanger—Rubi 1126, M/J: 135, Magil
 Recent Concertos: Auerbach, Wallen, Kvint (Quint) Penta 5187408, J/A: 155, Kellenberger
 Fedor Rudin: Beethoven, Schubert, Ernst—Fugal 838, M/J: 135, Kellenberger
 Solo Viola: Telemann, Bach, Britten (Ridout) HM 902750, J/A: 156, Magil
 Solo Violin: Ysaye, Prokofieff, Azevedo (Damas) Dux 562, J/F: 129, Kellenberger
 Coco Tomita: Prok, Janacek, Deb, Enesco—Orch 331, J/F: 130, Kellenberger
 Ukrainian Christmas (Ivakhiv) Naxos 574677, N/D: 156, Kellenberger
 Unexpected America: Schoenfield, Bolcom, Copland (Bohorquez) Genui 25917, J/A: 154, Faro
 Violin Concertos fr the Caucasus: Machavariani, Rzayev, Gadjev (Pollick) Tocc 38, N/D: 139, Kellenberger
 Rachel Yonan: Part, Schumann, Macmillan—SoloL 92283, S/O: 155, Kellenberger

WINDS

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Word Police Festival

On a Montessori School bulletin board: “Have a fun summer.”

Verbs becoming nouns: “fails” instead of errors or mistakes. We commonly read about “builds”, too.

Nouns become verbs: politicians say they want to “sunset” a law. We know what they mean, but that has to take place when the law is passed—it may be passed with a “sunset” provision—an expiration date. Once it’s passed it can only be terminated. “Sunset” is not a verb.

In August Amazon announced “a simplified seller feedback submission experience”! Every time I read “experience” I groan, but that one takes the cake. We are told by our bank that “your accounts have been migrated to the new Online Banking Experience”. Aren’t people fed up with “experiences”? And can they “migrate” the account? (Maybe. In the computer world anything is possible, and words take on expanded meaning quite often.)

We saw the verb “prevaricate” where the writer obviously meant “procrastinate”. To prevaricate is to be evasive, not to state the truth. Politicians prevaricate daily. It’s not quite the same thing as lying, but close.

An article talked about “college degrees that do not pencil revenue in the job market”. What does that mean? No dictionary can explain or sanction it. Language is becoming

ing chaos. Another example in the same field is the word “upskilling”.

“Zero” is certainly trendy: zero evidence, zero tolerance, etc. (see May/June 2019). Why? “No” is correct.

“We can make sure we don’t repeat it again” says a magazine I subscribe to. Repeat it again?

In August a major magazine wrote, “The priest provides spiritual guidance to whomever seeks it...” (should be “whoever”). The next paragraph in that article uses the F word 8 times. Yes, it’s quoting someone (that priest?), but editors used to clean up quotes like that and should still. Such words are usually fallen back on when the speaker can’t think of the right word. Editors can help.

Quite a few articles are discussing “smart-phone usage”. They mean use of those phones or “using smartphones”. “Usage” refers to language. A sign in the YMCA refers to “locker usage”.

Another magazine refers to “fostering a sense of fatalism”. They mean “fostering fatalism”, which is a sense that we can’t avoid disasters. As usual, people don’t know how to use words; and yet they write articles for major magazines.

I like book reviews, but in a favorite magazine 2 of them in a row ended with “read” as a noun (which of course it is not): “an engaging and illuminating read” and “a powerful read”. Should we call a recording “a powerful listen”?

It is fairly common now to read “hopefulness” for hope and “thankfulness” for gratitude. And “presently” is everywhere used to mean “now” or “currently” (it means “in a little while”).

An article referred to “symbolology” (symbolism, I think). Similar: “methodology” when they mean “method(s)”.

Slang like “vibes” and “merch” are taking over for correct English in books and magazines. In fact, the frightening news is that slang is taking over almost everywhere. Economist magazine routinely uses the word “gilt”. From the context it seems to have to do with bonds. The dictionary calls it “slang” for “money”. Another slang term

used in every issue of that magazine is “kit” to mean equipment or machinery—even weapons of war. That one isn’t even in American dictionaries.

“Bankroll” is also slang, but it is turning up as a verb in respectable magazines. What is wrong with “finance”, “support”, or “underwrite”? Or even “pay for”?

The 1970 American Heritage Dictionary did not allow “spotlight” or “benchmark” as verbs. Recent dictionaries accept “spotlight” (to pay special attention to) but still not “benchmark”.

A catalog sent by a major company thinks the plural of “pair” is “pair”. They suggest we order “6 pair” of gloves. A reader tells us that he reads “a couple” where it should be “a couple of”. He has seen that in more than a couple of magazines.

Americans don’t seem to know the difference between “its” and “it’s”—they often get it wrong. Elementary grammar.

The English, as we know, have given up the subjunctive—no English journalists seem to know it. In a recent Economist article we read: “Another possibility is that the tariffs of 50% which [should be “that”] the American government placed [should be “imposed”] on Brazilian goods in July are [are?] increased...” Piteful writing. In another article: “Schools increasingly demand that phones are kept in lockers...” If they “are” kept in lockers, why demand it? “Demand” requires the subjunctive (“be”), and that tells us that they are not kept in lockers. They also often avoid the conditional, replacing it with the present tense—which causes an educated reader to stop and ask himself what they are getting at. Economist proves in every issue that the language is not doing well in England either.

Today’s mail had a folder all about “pre-planning”! Actually, to “plan” is often replaced by “curate” these days—fancy nonsense that also substitutes for gather, put together, select, and choose.

We came across the ridiculous “anytime soon” in a major magazine (again) as we were writing this. And also “partially” to mean “partly”. Cliches live on.

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