

American Record Guide

independent critics reviewing classical recordings

Critics' Choice: Best of 2020
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January/February 2021



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American Record Guide

January/February 2021

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Here & There

Appointments, Awards, & News

Latvian conductor **Andris Nelsons**, 42, music director of the Boston Symphony since 2014, extended his BSO contract an additional three years until 2025. At the same time he also extended his contract as director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and the continuation of the Boston Symphony-Gewandhaus Orchestra Alliance through 2025—a unique partnership in the orchestra industry.



Rafael Payere, 39, music director of the San Diego Symphony since 2019, extended his contract another four years to 2026.

Bruce Lamott, director of the Philharmonia Chorale of San Francisco's Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, is retiring at the end of this season after 23 years. He departs at the same time that Music Director Nicholas McGegan turns the reins over to Richard Egarr.



Branwell Tovey, 67, artistic director of Calgary Opera since January 2019, resigned in October. He was just a few months into his contract when he was diagnosed with cancer. His

compromised immune system plus health and pandemic travel restrictions made travel between Calgary and Vancouver (where he lives and is being treated) difficult.



Thierry Fischer, 63, who said in May 2019 that he would leave as music director of the Utah Symphony at the end of his contract in 2022, announced in October 2020 that he will stay an additional year while the orchestra searches for his successor during difficulties caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Also, he began as music director of the Sao Paulo Symphony last March.



Donald Runnicles, 66, general music director of the German Opera in Berlin since 2009, renewed his contract for five more years to 2027. He is also music director of the Grand Teton Music Festival in Jackson, Wyoming, and principal guest conductor of the Atlanta Symphony.



English clarinetist and conductor **Michael Collins**, 58, signed a two-year contract to become artistic director-in-residence of the London Mozart Players starting in September. From 2010 to 2017 he was principal conductor of the City of London Sinfonia. As a clarinetist his recordings are legion.

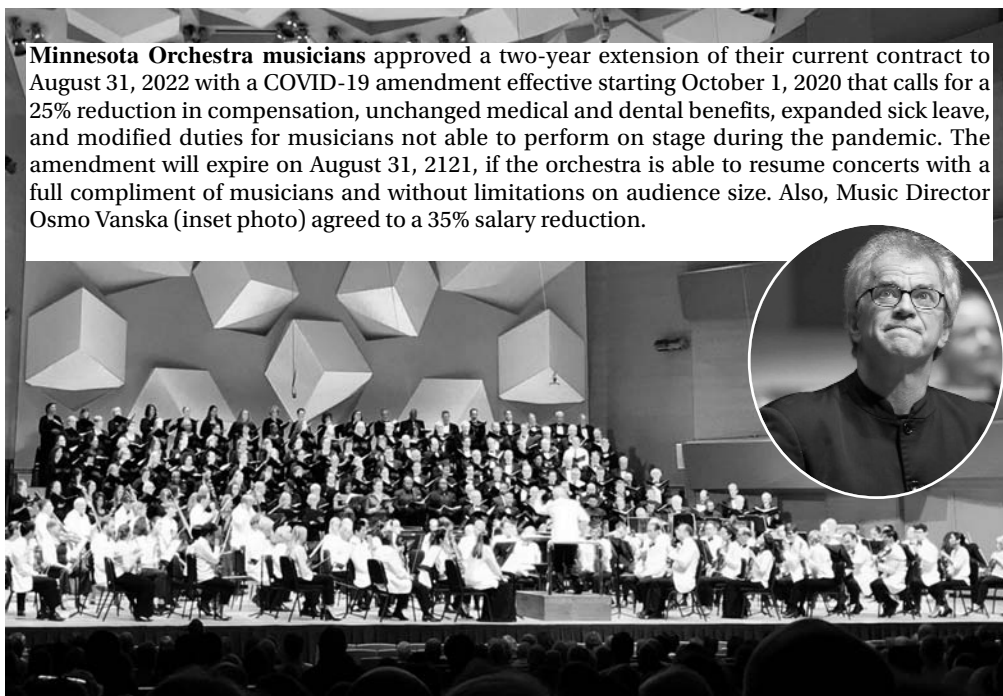
Conductor **Jun Märkl**, who turns 62 on February 11, will succeed Taiwanese conductor Shao-chia Lü as music advisor to the Taiwan Philharmonic in August. Lü, who turns 61 this year, was the orchestra's music director from 2010 to 2019. Märkl was chief conductor of the Basque National Orchestra (2014-2017), principal conductor of the MDR Symphony in Leipzig (2007-2012), and music director of the Lyon Orchestra (2005-2011). He becomes principal guest conductor of the Hague Philharmonic next summer. His father is German, his mother Japanese.



Erica Muhl, 59, will become the next president of Boston's Berklee College of Music in July. The composer and conductor comes from the University of Southern California after a 30-year career as dean and founding executive director of the Academy for Arts, Technology, and the Business of Innovation. She will succeed Roger H Brown, who is leaving after 17 years. The college is best known for the study of jazz and modern American music from rock and hip-hop to heavy metal and bluegrass.



Minnesota Orchestra musicians approved a two-year extension of their current contract to August 31, 2022 with a COVID-19 amendment effective starting October 1, 2020 that calls for a 25% reduction in compensation, unchanged medical and dental benefits, expanded sick leave, and modified duties for musicians not able to perform on stage during the pandemic. The amendment will expire on August 31, 2021, if the orchestra is able to resume concerts with a full complement of musicians and without limitations on audience size. Also, Music Director Osmo Vanska (inset photo) agreed to a 35% salary reduction.



Obituaries



Canadian soprano **Erin Wall**, 44, died on October 8 at a hospital in Mississauga, Ontario, from breast cancer. A member of the young artist program at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, she first drew national attention in 2004 as a last-minute replacement there as Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Although she went on to starring roles at the Santa Fe Opera and the Metropolitan, she concentrated more recently on concert work, performing until the return of cancer and the COVID-19 pandemic shut down performances. Her most recent recording is as Massenet's *Thais* on Chandos.

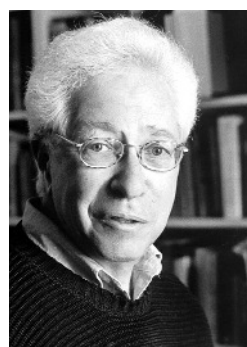


Saxophonist and composer **Jon Gibson**, 80, died on October 11 in Springfield MA from a brain tumor. He was well known as a member of the Philip Glass Ensemble from its start in 1968 until 2019. He also played in the world premieres of Terry Riley's *In C* and Steve Reich's *Drumming*.

Russian conductor **Alexander Vederkinov**, 56, died on October 29 of COVID-19 in Moscow. At the time of his death he was chief conductor of the Royal Danish Opera. From 2001 to 2009, as music director and chief conductor of the Bolshoi Theatre, he helped renew its artistic reputation. From 2009 to 2018 he was chief conductor of Denmark's Odense Symphony.



Coloratura soprano **Christiane Eda-Pierre**, one of France's first black opera stars, died at 88 of natural causes on September 6 at her home in Deux-Sevres. Born in Martinique, she made her professional debut in Nice in 1958, her American debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1966, her Carnegie Hall debut in 1974 with the Opera Orchestra of New York, and her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1980. She also was the original angel in Messiaen's *St Francis of Assisi* at the Paris Opera in 1983, before retiring in the mid-1980s.



Maynard Solomon, 90, who with his brother Seymour founded Vanguard Records in 1950, died on September 28 at his apartment in Manhattan from Lewy body dementia. Maynard was especially famous for his books and writings on Beethoven, Mozart,

and Schubert; they have been described as psychological biographies. Seymour, who died in 2002, was linked more to the Vanguard and Bach Guild labels. They issued Bach cantatas, Haydn masses, performances by Alfred Deller, and one of the first complete sets of Mahler symphonies with Maurice Abravanel and the Utah Symphony. They also released important albums of jazz, blues, and folk music. The brothers sold the label in 1986.

Critical Convictions

Critical Convictions: Pandemic & Rap

This is a mild disease that is apparently very contagious. The World Health Organization at the UN issued a statement in November that the worldwide death rate of people who have had the disease is 1%. That came a week after the New York City Health Department said the same thing: the entire number of deaths from Covid since last February amount to 1% of all who were infected. Death rates can only go down and have been (as I predicted in July/Aug). The death rate will eventually go below half a percent. If the US had tested from the beginning, the death rate would already be much, much lower and people would be less afraid.

We have come to the point in all this fear that people are terribly concerned about sheer survival—at the expense of their whole culture and economy. I repeat what I have already said: is it worth surviving when life is so miserable? Is it worth surviving without weddings and funerals, concerts, worship, restaurants, bars, travel, exercise, sports, libraries, even education? Quality of life matters more than quantity. The virus will continue to spread; it's a normal trajectory, and it is stupid to panic and demand that politicians do something—which they really can't. You can't stop Mother Nature. Lockdowns are foolish—they just make the whole situation more miserable. Taking "drastic action" may be impressive politically, but we are practically helpless.

The Boston Symphony has apparently joined the list of "politically correct" idiots. A November publicity release from the BSO announced a "partnership between the Boston hip-hop group STL GLD, Thomas Wilkins, and BSO musicians" to "explore the synergy between artists of different genres" in a "special six video online series". The same press release went on to mention a streamed concert that included music by James Lee III (who is black) and a radio broadcast that includes music by Unuk Chin (a Korean woman). It also speaks of "being open to music of all kinds".

I suppose "being open" is "cool". But do people attend the Boston Symphony for "music of all kinds"? Can't they get "all kinds" of music elsewhere—*except* classical? I have com-

plained before how stupid it is to teach pop music of any kind in schools. If it's popular it's everywhere already.

And the symphony orchestra is a European product. US composers have built on that foundation, as have a few South American ones and even fewer Asian ones. But the core repertory is European. Making a big deal out of the exceptions to show how "inclusive" we are is ridiculous. No matter what the orchestras do in their marketing, the audience will be mostly immigrants or children and grandchildren of immigrants. It is obvious since the 1970s (when all this diversity nonsense started) that orchestras are never going to attract many "people of color", except Asians—and they don't count, because the marketing and "initiatives" are aimed at blacks; and our orchestras already have lots of Asians on the stage—mostly string players. I suspect those string players are not thrilled at the idea of accompanying "hip-hop".

Some musicologists call it "racist" to despise rap music (hip-hop). Well, it is certainly easy to hate and hard to like if you are at all musical. Is it racist to hate the thought of our great orchestras wasting their talents on such junk? Boston is only the latest and the biggest name orchestra. Dallas Symphony has been doing this sort of thing for a long time. I had hoped that with no audiences in the halls they would all drop such nonsense—but the propaganda is strong, and the "politically correct" lobby is powerful. Every year or two you can read vicious attacks on our orchestras for playing the music of "dead white males". (I remember two such diatribes against the Cleveland Orchestra before Covid-time.) But that just happens to be the best orchestral music. What are they supposed to do? Ignore quality in favor of identity? Why?

I dearly wish those people would give up on our orchestras. The orchestral culture is dying, along with classical music. They are hastening its death. It may be years before we return to full concert halls—or we may never. But adding "hip-hop" to the mixture and playing composers because they are NOT white males is just suicide—and more than a little ridiculous.

Critics Choice 2020

We asked our writers to list the best 10 percent of what they reviewed in 2020 issues, maximum 10. This is “forced choice”—meaning that most of us would rather be allowed a few more top choices, so we have to cut down our preliminary lists. Some of us never list reissues; most of us only list music we really like, even if there were great recordings of music we like less.

Paul Althouse

BRAHMS: *Symphonies 1+3* (Gardner) Chandos 5236, M/A
MENDELSSOHN: *Early Violin Concerto; Double Concerto* (Kuchar) Brilliant 95733, M/J
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Symphonies 3+4; Helen* (Brabbins) Hyperion 68280, M/J
MOZART: *Piano Concertos 5, 15, 16* (McDermott) Bridge 9523, J/A
BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos* (I Musici) Urania 121386, S/O

Allan Altman

KARCHIN: *Jane Eyre* (Karchin) Opera Rara 59, J/F
Sephardic Songs (Malkin) Brilliant 95652, M/J: 180
PURCELL: *King Arthur* (Jacobs) Naxos 109, S/O, vid
RESPIGHI: *Sleeping Beauty* (Renzetti) Naxos 106, S/O, vid
ZEMLINSKY: *Der Zwerg* (Runnicles) Naxos 108, S/O, vid

Alan Becker

BEETHOVEN: *Bagatelles* (Lewis) Harmonia Mundi 902416, N/D
BEETHOVEN: *Piano Pieces* (Rosenbaum) Bridge 9517, J/F
BRIGHT, GIPPS: *Piano Concertos* (Ward/McLachlan) Somm 273, J/F
GERSHWIN: *Rhapsody in Blue* (Mahan) Steinway 30132, J/A
LISZT: *Piano Sonata* (Moog) Onyx 4195, M/A
Peggy Glanville-Hicks (Robinson) J/F: books

Stephanie Boyd

LEVY: *Unis Vers*—HM 902506, J/F: new
BOYLE, CONVERY: *Voyages*—Innova 28, J/F: new
Hush (Papagena) Somm 608, J/A: new

Charles Brewer

VICTORIA: *Gaudeamus Mass* (Rees) Signum 608, S/O
Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia (Lingas) Cappella Romana 420, M/A: 197
Sablonara Concionero (Ars Atlantica) IBS 12020, S/O: 146

Cantica Obsoleta (Acronym) Old Focus 917, N/D: 149

Robert Delcamp

BACH: *Organ Pieces* (Latry) La Dolce Vita 69, J/F
DURUFLE: *Requiem*; **DEBUSSY:** *Nocturnes* (Ticiatti) Linn 623, J/F
Like to the Lark (Phipps) Chandos 5255, M/J: 175
BAIRSTOW: *Anthems* (Bell) Regent 543, J/A
Nordic Journey 9 (Hicks) ProOrgano, S/O: 126
Jean-Baptiste Robin, organ—Brilliant 96134, S/O: 126

John Dutterer

WEBER, SCHOENBERG, ZEMLINSKY: *Quartets* (Arod Qt) Erato 542552, M/A: 168
ELSNER: *Chamber Pieces* (Vista Qt) Dux 15555, S/O
SINIGAGLIA: *Quartets* (Archos Qt) Naxos 574183, S/O
HUBER, GOETZ: *Trios* (Trio Fontaine) Solo Musica 336, S/O

Stephen Estep

BARTOK: *Piano Quintet*; **VERESS:** *String Trio* (Lonquich+) Alpha 458, J/F
DESCARRIES: *Chamber Pieces & Songs* (Rancourt, Charest-Beauchamp, Fournelle-Blain, Hochelaga Trio) ATMA 2799, S/O
Rapid Movement: Kapustin, Shostakovich, Tsfasman (Masleev) Melodiya 2624, J/A: 136
SHOSTAKOVICH: *Violin Concertos* (Ibragimova) Hyperion 68313, S/O
SORABJI: *Sequentia Cyclica on Dies Irae* (Powell) Piano Classics 10206, S/O

Nathan Faro

Silenced Voices: Kattenburg, Kuti, Krasa, Klein, Hermann, Frid (Black Oak Ensemble) Cedille 189, J/F: 159
LOPEZ: *Symphony 1; Bel Canto* (Harth-Bedoya) MSR 1737, J/F: new
DZUBAY: *Quartet 1; All Water Has a Perfect Memory; Producing for a While; 50 Delicious Silence; Lament; Volando; Lullaby; Double Black Diamond; Kukulkan II; Trumpet & Violin Concerto*—Innova 11 [2CD] M/A: new

AVANESOV: *Quasi Harena Maris; Frenzied Flames*; **ZOHRABYAN:** *Novelette*; **PET-ROSSIAN:** *A Fiery Flame, A Flaming Fire*; **KARTALYAN, AR:** *Tekeyan Triptych*; **KARTALYAN, AS:** *Saxophone & Percussion Suite*—New Focus 244, M/J; new
HUGHES: *Cuckmere; Media Vita; Sinfonia* (Smith; Hughes) Metier 28597, J/A; new
MIHAJLOVIC: *Bagatelles; Melancholy; Fami(ly); Elegy; Memento* (Griffiths) CPO 555296, N/D

Elliot Fisch

BARBIERI: *Little Barber of Lavapies* (Robinson) Cameo 9115, M/A
HAYDN: *Canzonettas; Lieder* (Horak) Gramola 99212, J/A
LEHAR: *Merry Widow* (Mallwitz) Oehms 983, J/F
POULENC: *La Voix Humane; Babar* (Mazzucato) Brilliant 96030, 105

Gil French

VAINBERG, PENDERECKI, SCHNITTKE: *String Trios* **MOLIQUE:** *Quintet; Introduction, Andante, Polonaise; Duo Concertant; Quartet* (Parnassus Academy) MDG 3032132, J/F
BEETHOVEN, SIBELIUS: *Violin Concertos* (Tetzlaff) Ondine 1334, J/F
RAUTAVAARA: *Lost Landscapes; Nocturne*; **SCHUBERT:** *Violin Sonata; Fantasia* (Kamenarska) Urtext 299, M/J
KHACHATURIAN: *Violin Concerto; Concerto Rhapsody* (Weithaas) CPO 555093, J/A
 Czech Viola Concertos: Feld, Flosman, Bodorova (Hosprova) Supraphon 4276, S/O: 138
ARNOLD, C: *Piano Concerto; Sextet* (Torgersen) Simax 1344, S/O

William Gatens

PALESTRINA: *Lamentations 2* (Cinquecento) Hyperion 68284, J/F
BACH: *Magnificat in E-flat, Cantata 63* (Tournet) Versailles 9, M/A
HAYDN: *Mass 5* (Doyle) HM 902300, M/A
HANDEL: *Concerti Grossi, Op 6:7-12* (Forck) Pentatone 5186 738, M/J
BACH: *St Matthew Passion* (Suzuki) BIS 2500, J/A
The Call of Rome (Christophers) Coro 16178, S/O: 145

Allen Gimbel

PETTERSSON: *Vox Humana* (Hanssion) CPO 999 286, M/J
ROSNER: *Homme Arme Mass* (Campbell) Convivium 53, M/J

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LINDBERG: *Accused* (Lintu) Ondine 1345, S/O
LUKASZEWSKI: *Very Best*—Dux 1515, S/O
MACMILLAN: *Symphony 5* (Christophers) Coro 16179, S/O
SCHNITTKE: *Works* (Rozhdestvenky) Melodiya 2630, N/D

Todd Gorman

CASTEREDE: *Flute Pieces 1* (Cobus du Toit) Naxos 573949, M/A
MOZART: *Wind Trio Arrangements* (Roseau Trio) MDG 9032144, S/O
19th Century Salon Pieces (Surulo & Plawska) RecArt 27, M/A: 177
Emmanuel Pahud, fl: Busoni, Mozart, Pendernecki, Reinecke, Takemitsu—Warner 95392, M/A: 176
Flute Trios (Boyd-Doane-Snyder) Bridge 9539, N/D: 120
Follies and Fantasies (Cavatina Duo) Bridge 9541, N/D: 121

Philip Greenfield

BRAHMS: *Requiem* (Harding) HM 902635, J/F
BRUCKNER, STRAVINSKY: *Masses* (Leenars) Pentatone 5186774, N/D
DANIELPOUR: *Passion of Yeshua* (Falletta) Naxos 559885, J/A
KULJERIK: *Croatian Requiem* (Repusic) BR 900331, N/D
SMYTH: *Mass* (Oramo) Chandos 5240, M/A
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Liturgy; Vigil* (Klava) Ondine 1336, J/F; 1352, S/O

Patrick Hanudel

Piano & Winds (Hadland, Oslo Chamber Academy) LAWO 1187, M/J: 167
POULENC: *Wind Pieces* (Fernandes, Sournatcheva, Pires, Benoit, Pointet, Engeli) MDG 903 2152, M/J
DODGSON: *Music for Winds II* (Magnard Ensemble) Toccata 499, J/A
Bassoon Concertos (Plath) Genuin 20683, S/O: 118
BEETHOVEN: *Piano & Winds* (Becker, Maalot Quintet) Avi 8553110, N/D

James Harrington

ALKAN: *Sonata; 3 Pieces* (Viner) Piano Classics 10209, S/O
FARRENC: *Etudes & Variations* (Polk) Steinway 30133, J/A
KABALEVSKY: *Preludes* (Korstick) CPO 555272, N/D
MOZART: *2 Piano & 4-Hands* (Badura-Skoda & Demus) Gramola 99214, J/A

January/February 2021

RACHMANINOFF: *Concerto 2; Symphonic Dances* (Lim, Argerich) Warner 545551, J/F

RAVEL: *Miroirs; La Valse*; **STRAVINSKY:** *Petrouchka & Firebird Movements* (Rana) Warner 541109, M/A

SCRIABIN: *Piano Sonatas* (Maltempo) Piano Classics 10168 [2CD], J/A

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Piano Sonatas & Preludes* (Gugnin) Hyperion 68267, J/F

Rob Haskins

FELDER: *Jeu de Tarot* (Ensemble Signal) Coviello 91913, M/J

LERDAHL: *There and Back Again+ p*

JANACEK: *Piano Sonata+* (Ades) Signum 600, S/O

Recent Harpsichord (Esfahani) Hyperion 68287, S/O: 125

Roger Hecht

VEPRIK: *Ghetto Dances & Songs; Symphonic Songs; 4 Little Pieces;*

Pastorale; 2 Poems (Mueller) MDG 9012133, J/F

BERLIOZ: *Damnation of Faust* (Nelson) Erato 541735, M/A

MAGNARD: *Symphonies 1+2* (Bollon) Naxos 574083, M/J

LISZT: *Dante Symphony; Tasso; Kunstler-festzug zur Schillerfeier* (Karabits)

Audite 97760, J/A

STRAUSS: *Rosenkavalier Suite; Death and Transfiguration; Macbeth* (Shui)

BIS 2342, N/D

ZEMLINSKY: *Die Seejungfrau* (Albrecht) Pentatone 5186740, N/D

Sang Woo Kang

To a Camia: Romantic Manila (Pinkas) MSR 1645, J/F: 177

Versailles (Tharaud) Erato 538642, M/J: 160

MOSKOWSKI: *Piano Pieces* (Hirose) Dana-cord 866, S/O

Opera for Piano (Dichamp) Brilliant 96067, S/O: 127

SILVESTRI: *Piano Pieces*; **KURTAG:** *2 Piano Pieces*; **ENESCO:** *Concerto* (Borac) Profil 20028, N/D

Barry Kilpatrick

GREGSON: *Brass Pieces* (London Brass) Chandos 20127, S/O

HOLST: *Planets; Perfect Fool* (Stern) Reference 146, M/A

Preludes, Rags, and Cakewalks (London Symphonic Brass) MPR 5, J/A: 138

Mystery of the Natural Trumpet (Kovats) CPO 555 144, N/D: 138

Constellations (Canadian National Brass Project) Analekta 8924, J/A: 137

Bradley Lehman

BACH: *Art of Fugue; 4 Duets; Ricercars* (Belder) Brilliant 96035, J/F

BACH: *Harpsichord Concertos 1, 2, 4, 7* (Corti) Pentatone 5186837, J/A

Organic Creatures (Vicens) Consouling Sounds 139, J/A: 147

2 Lutes With Grace (Lewon & Kieffer) Naxos 573854, J/A: 162

Filippo Dalla Casa Collection (Zapico) Winter & Winter 910258, S/O: 123

Fitzwilliam Virginal Book 7 (Belder) Brilliant 95648, S/O: 124

Ralph Locke

HANDEL: *Agrippina* (Emelyanchyev) Warner 533658, J/A

GRETRY: *Raoul Barbe-Bleue* Aparte 214, M/A

ALWYN: *Miss Julie* (Oramo) Chandos 5253, N/D

SPONTINI: *L'Olimpie* (Rhorer) Bru Zane 1035, M/J

Peter Loewen

LYMBURGIA: *Gaude Felix Padua* (Miroir de Musique) Ricercar 402, J/F

BUXTEHUDE: *Solo Cantatas* (La Reveuse) Mirare 442, J/A

Spiritual Songs from Finland (Utopia Chamber Choir) Alia Vox 9932, J/A: 163

Art of the Diminution (Leonor de Lera) Challenge 72843, J/A: 164

KAPSBERGER: *Villanellas* (Les Kapsbergirls) Muso 37, S/O

Double Concertos (Giuliano Carmignola, v; Mario Brunello, vc) Arcana 472, S/O: 148

HOMILIUS: *Advent & Christmas Cantatas* (Cologne Academy) CPO 555278, N/D

Joseph Magil

BRAHMS: *Viola Sonatas* (Zhang) Centaur 3686, M/A

BRAHMS: *Viola Sonatas* (Berthaud) B 23, M/J

BEETHOVEN: *Violin Sonata 9* (St John) Ancalagon 144, J/A

SZYMANOWSKI: *Quartets; Violin Sonata* (Carmina Quartet; Kim) MDG 6502167, S/O

French Violin Sonatas (Pietsch) Audite 97.751, S/O: 140

SCHUBERT: *Violin Sonatas* (Skaerved) Athene 23208, N/D

Jim McCutcheon

Friedemann Wuttke, g—N/D: 126

BACH: *Lute Suites (Halasz, g)* N/D

Catherine Moore

RORE: *Madrigals (Blue Heron)* Blue Heron 1009, J/F

Sephardic Italian: Early Jewish-Italian Spiritual Music (Ensemble Bet Hagat) Stradivarius 37124, S/O: 144

David Moore

BEETHOVEN: *Cello Pieces (Berger)* Solo Musica 338, N/D

BEN-HAIM: *Cello Concerto (Wallfisch)* CPO 555 273, M/J

BOISMORTIER: *Gamba Sonatas (Noeldeke)* Antes 219305, J/A

GUNNING: *Cello Concerto, VC; Birdflight—Harwood/Gunning—Signum* 621, N/D
Sheku—Decca 31491, J/A: 139

Haydn & Friends (Eckert, gamba) Hanssler 17064, N/D: 119

HOVHANESS: *Across the Ages (Gullans, vc)* Albany 1805, J/A

Robert Moore

SCHUBERT: *Schwanengesang; BRAHMS: 4 Serious Songs (Finley)* Hyperion 68288, J/F
Saga (Krimmel) Alpha 549, J/F: 193

LINDROTH: *Wilfred Owen Songs (Eleby)* Sterling 3005, M/A

SCHUMANN: *Songs 2 (Gerhaher)* Sony 94536, M/A

BOULANGER, L & N: *Songs (Phan)* Avie 2414, M/J

SCHUBERT: *Songs (Richter)* Pentatone 5186839, J/A

Songs and Ballads (Degout) Harmonia Mundi 902367, J/A: 171

Solitude (Gilchrist) Chandos 20145, N/D: 155

Don O'Connor

BRIAN: *Vision of Cleopatra (Brabbins)* Dutton 7348, N/D

ELGAR: *Falstaff; CHADWICK: Tam O'Shanter* (Constantine) Orchid 100 103, J/F

JOHANSEN: *Pan; Piano Concerto (Aadland)* CPO 555 246, N/D

KORNGOLD: *Symphony; Variations (Wilson)* Chandos 5220, J/F

LITTA: *Concert Trilogy (Then-Bergh, Schafer)* Genuin 20690, S/O

RUBBRA, BLISS: *Piano Concertos (Botstein)* Hyperion 68297, S/O

STRAUSS: *Alpine Symphony; LANG-*

American Record Guide

GAARD: *Antikrist Prelude (Dausgaard)* Seattle Symphony 1023, J/F

Bruno Repp

BUXTEHUDE: *Stradal Transcriptions (Ai)* Toccata 534, M/J

SCHUBERT: *Piano Sonata in B-flat; Impromptus, D 899 (Vanden Eynden)* Palais 9, M/J

SCHUMANN, C: *Piano Pieces (Codispoti)* Piano Classics 10193, M/A

BRAHMS: *Late Piano Pieces (B Berman)* Palais 18, M/J

FEINBERG: *Piano Sonatas 1-6 (Hamelin)* Hyperion 68233, M/J

Nordic Light (Sobon-Wakarecy) Accord 267, S/O: 131

David Reynolds

Fritz Wunderlich: 20th Century—SWR 19075, J/F: 195

GOUNOD: *Faust (Rousset)* BruZane 37, J/F

Ruby Hughes: Mahler, Berg, Samuel—BIS 2408, M/J: 179

Bavarian State Opera—Naxos 2110660, S/O: vid

ADAM: *Postillon de Lonjumeau (Rouland)* Naxos 112, N/D: vid

MASSNET: *Thais (Davis)* Chandos 5258, N/D

Jack Sullivan

IVES: *Songs & Chamber Pieces (Wagner)* MDG 6132178, N/D

FAURE: *Piano Quintets (Mozart)* MDG 943 2162, N/D

PRADO: *Piano Concertos (Machetti)* Naxos 574225, S/O

LUTOSLAWSKI: *Symphonies 2+3 (Lintu)* Ondine 1332, J/A

Michelle Thomson

HAYDN: *Quartets opp 20:5, 33:5, 50:6, 54:2, 76:2, 77:2 (Hanson)* Aparte 213, M/J

HAYDN: *Quartets op 76:1-3 (Chiaroscuro)* BIS 2348, S/O

MACMILLAN: *Viola Concerto; Symphony 4 (Power)* Hyperion 68317, S/O

SCHOENBERG: *Violin Concerto; Transfigured Night (Faust/Harding)* HM 902341, M/J

Pas de Deux (Rowland & Bogdanovich) Challenge 72833, N/D: 143

Donald Vroon

BACH: *arrangements for strings—Chelsea Festival, J/F*

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony 3 (Herbig)* Berlin 301492, J/A

BRUCKNER: *Symphony 2* (Ballot) Gram 99291, J/A

CHOPIN: *Piano Concertos* (Yundi) Warner 532018, M/J

FRANCK: *Redemption* (Fournet) Brilliant 96002, N/D

KREISLER: *Violin Pieces* (Park) Centaur 3816, N/D

MOZART: *Piano Concertos 5+13* (McDermott) Bridge 9518, J/F

POULENC: *Sinfonietta; Piano Concerto* (Rosner) Odradek 364, M/J

PROKOFIEFF: *Alexander Nevsky* (Fischer) Reference 735, J/F

RACHMANINOFF: *Moments Musicaux; Piano Pieces* (Soldano) Divine Art 25155, M/J

Guide to Records

ADAMS, JL: *Lines Made by Walking; Untouched*

Jack Quartet—Cold Blue 58—55 minutes

Two related pieces for string quartet by John Luther Adams.

Lines Made by Walking (2019) is a spectralist tone poem built on overtones emanating from a low C on the cello and transformed into midrange pitches progressing in tempo canons to create a moving web of hallucinogenic texture. The result was imagined from walks in the Mexican desert, mountain ridges in Chile, and hills and canyons in Montana. These canons are in slow motion and create the visions experienced with psychedelic drugs where time and reality congeal into a cosmic stasis. The piece is in three parts (Up the Mountain, Along the Ranges, and Down the Mountain), the segments proceeding from the opening register and gradually climbing back down to its original state.

Untouched (2016) began with the composer holding a small Aeolian harp on top of his head and allowing it to vibrate with the wind. Like the earlier piece, the three sections (Rising, Crossing, Falling) are played with open strings only (the fingers not touching the instruments), hence the title. The location here is the tundra of Alaska, where the composer lives. The result is achingly beautiful.

Readers familiar with this composer's work will find this rewarding. Newcomers will find this of value if they are in the right attentive space.

GIMBEL

AHO: *Sieidi; Symphony 5*

Colin Currie, perc; Lahti Symphony/ Dima Slobodeniouk—BIS 2336 [SACD] 61 minutes

Kalevi Aho's *Sieidi* (2010) is a concerto for percussion and orchestra written for Colin Currie, one of the world's great percussionists, here

showing off his extraordinary technique. The work's title comes from the name of a Finnish minority found in northern Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia. The piece is filled with scales derived from their folk music, providing scalar material for Aho's postmodernist language. The concerto is for a wide variety of instruments, some from far-flung sources (the djembe and sarabuka) and some from traditional sources (vibraphone, tam tam, etc.) The percussionist must navigate the variety of instruments, moving from one technique to another as the piece progresses while the orchestra sounds supply backdrop. The result is thrilling. We are told that the piece has become a standard repertoire item because of its astonishing demands on percussion players.

The early *Symphony 5* (1976) is more demanding for the listener, inspired by "the incoherence of our existence". He calls this "maximalism", produced by simultaneous and apparently unrelated gestures resulting in a simmering mess. The incoherence is fatiguing. This became prominent apparently because of the social and political matter expressed in the fashionable modernist language of the time, though Aho does not succumb entirely to the serial-clotted dissonance so beloved of the academic composers. Forbidding fanfares, funeral marches, wild hysterics, and an atmosphere of death are prominent. It will be a chore for most listeners.

Half of this is an important release. *Symphony 5* has a number of competing recordings, but this will be its benchmark. Notes by the composer.

GIMBEL

ALBENIZ: *Iberia;*

GINASTERA: *Milonga; Malambo; Danzas Argentinas*

Pola Baytelman, p—Elan 82288 [2CD] 109 min

Baytelman presents one of the best performances of *Iberia* that I've heard in a long time.

This is a beautiful album. 'Evocation' sets the tone with lovely nuances, tone, and balance. 'Fete-Dieu a Seville' is passionate, with shimmering effects. 'Almeria' has a lovely spectrum of sound, which is quite noticeable in the delicate section towards the end of the work.

Ginastera's 'Malambo' and 'Milonga' are not as well known as his *Danzas Argentinas* and are beautifully played here. Baytelman is not only a powerhouse of a player, but also a performer with a sense of narrative.

KANG

ALLEN: *Music for Woodwinds*

Michael Waye, fl; Allan Meyer, cl; Katherine Walpole, bn; David Wickham, p

Metier 28607—67 minutes

After studying chemistry and geography at Oxford, composer Geoffrey Allen (b. 1927) moved to Perth, Australia and worked as a music editor, publisher, and librarian. Here, 4 Perth-based musicians record 5 of his compositions for woodwinds and piano. 3 of the pieces are for bassoon: the Sonata (1964), the Sonatina (1998), and the Pastorale (1998). The *Outback Sketches* (2005) for clarinet and piano is a substantial three-movement programmatic work; and the *Fantasy Trio* (2007) for flute, clarinet, and piano is the longest selection, broken into 4 movements and requiring 20 minutes.

Allen wraps attractive lyricism and witty virtuosity in a congenial extended tonality; and though his writing is hardly groundbreaking, he aims to emphasize the best elements of each instrument. The renditions here have good energy; but they are also very rocky. The flute is too breathy and hollow; the clarinet has a likable earthy timbre that spreads a bit at loud volumes; and the bassoon routinely sports dreadful tone, control, and intonation. The piano handles the tricky scores well; but the sonics are boxy and unrefined. The composer deserves better.

HANUDEL

AMIROV: *Symphony to the Memory of Nizami; 1001 Nights*

Kiev Virtuosi Symphony/ Dmitri Yablonsky
Naxos 573803—57 minutes

Azerbaijani composer Fikret Amirov (1922-84) wrote the symphony in 1941, the 800th anniversary of the birth of Nizami Ganjavi, a 12th-Century Azeri Muslim epic poet. Written for strings, it's 22 minutes long, in 4 movements, and in a style somewhat akin to

Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian (basically tonal and influenced by his country's folk music). Russian conductor Dmitri Yablonsky moves the music forward with such sustained lyricism, strong drama, and infectious rhythms that I really would love to hear it played by a major symphony orchestra. The liner notes' description of the Kiev Virtuosi seems fair: "With an average age of 30, this youthful orchestra unites talented musicians from all over Ukraine, most of whom are winners of various competitions." The problem is that the strings are the weakest section. They play with good ensemble, and Yablonsky is a solid disciplinarian; but their tone quality is inferior (probably poor instruments).

Where the orchestra sounds really fine is in the suite from the ballet *1001 Nights*. The winds, brass, and percussion must encourage the strings to really put out in this 36-minute suite, arranged by Yablonsky and getting its first recording here. No wonder the musicians are giving it their all! And the engineers deliver a more resonant sound, better than in the symphony. The 12 excerpts, mostly with titles like Orgy, Shahriar's Anger, Execution, Celebration, Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves, Scheherazade's Triumph, and the 6-minute Chase, are mostly rambunctious—highly rhythmic and loud. Only Scheherazade's Love Theme and the Interlude are more soothing. The slapping drums that open and close the suite are terrific fun. Yes, "It sounds like film music", my spouse remarked. No, it doesn't sound like *Swan Lake* or *Romeo and Juliet*. But there it is, solidly written and well orchestrated. Leopold Stokowski had good judgment back about 1960 in recording Amirov's *Azerbaijani Mugam* with the Houston Symphony (on an Everest CD). With Armenia and Azerbaijan in the news recently, you might want to give it a try.

FRENCH

ASCENCIO: *Guitar Pieces*

Alberto Mesirca—Brilliant 95806—56 minutes

From a composer who never played the guitar, this music is astounding! It is rich in melody and harmony, with moments of technical brilliance and romantic expression; and it has found a sympathetic voice in the hands of an excellent artist, Alberto Mesirca, who continues a trend among classical guitarists of producing recordings of the complete works of composers, giving us the opportunity to hear more than just their "hits!"

Ascencio, a pianist, developed an interest in the guitar when a young guitarist named Narciso Yepes studied with him—not the guitar, but music in general. Ascencio would ask Yepes to imitate pianistic sounds and would not take “not possible!” for an answer! This desire to make the guitar sing in new ways is evident in his compositions, such as the *Collectici Intim* with its variety of moods. Mesirca makes the technically challenging moments of the concluding ‘La Frisanca’ sing with a musical effortlessness that conceals the challenges.

This recording brings to light works that are not often recorded, such as *Suite de Hom-enajes* and *Suite Mistica*. Mesirca excels at bringing out the musicality of these works.

More time between some tracks could have benefitted the listener, especially after major works like *Collectici Intim*. Please give me time to process what I have just heard—it is so lovely; allow me the space to enjoy the feeling before taking me somewhere else. I’m really in no hurry when hearing an artist of this stature playing great music.

Sonically, this recording is a pleasure. Mesirca’s control of tone color adds to engineer Andrea De Marchi’s technical acumen to make a disc worth hearing repeatedly.

MCCUTCHEON

ASHEIM: *Muohta*; see HAGEN

BACH: *Cello Suites*

Robert Max—Guild 7822 [2CD] 152 minutes

Cellist Max plays the first five suites on a Stradivarius cello made in 1726, as he tells us in his entertaining and informative liner notes. For the final suite, written for a cello with an extra E string added above the A string, he brings in a Chinese instrument. He plays with clarity and sensitive phrasing, perhaps with more use of the open strings than usual, but delicacy and accuracy cover the music well. All repeats are observed, and the recorded sound is fine. Vibrato is employed sometimes but not overdone.

Max has made a fine career as teacher and conductor, as well as cellist. He lives in London, and these interpretations are worth hearing.

D MOORE

BACH: *French Suites*

Thurston Dart, clavichord

Decca Eloquence 482 9398—52 minutes

Thurston Dart recorded this set of Bach’s six

French Suites for L’Oiseau-Lyre in 1961, when he was 39. For the rest of his short life (he died at 49), he was proud of this as one of his best records.

To fit everything onto a single LP, he deleted all the repeats. He used much more *bebung* (clavichord vibrato) in his right hand than would be fashionable now, making the quaint effect of a quivering tone in almost every phrase. His articulation was almost all legato, where I’d like to hear more variety in phrases; but it probably sounded normal enough to aficionados in the 1960s. He made full use of the clavichord’s dynamic range with crescendos and diminuendos. The bass strings sound closer to the microphones than the treble.

The performance has been available on CD before. The limited edition by the British Clavichord Society (1998) had these suites plus 12 minutes of music by Purcell and Croft. It was mastered more quietly than this new one, and it had only one track per suite (rather than the 39 short tracks here). Both that old issue and Eloquence’s new one reproduce Dart’s original liner notes from the 1962 LP, mildly re-edited. The BCS’s booklet notes were more extensive, describing Dart’s clavichord and giving a biographical sketch of him. According to those notes, this instrument was one of about 50 clavichords built by Thomas Goff (1898-1975).

This is good to have back in the catalog in Eloquence’s attractive budget issue.

LEHMAN

BACH: *Goldberg Variations*

Lang Lang, p—DG 32442—80 minutes

When a couple of excerpts from Lang Lang’s recording of the Goldberg Variations appeared a few months ago—as I recall, the aria and Variation 7—I was enchanted. Both movements were a bit on the slow side, but Lang’s beautiful tone demonstrated what, over the years, I’ve cried out for again and again from today’s players: a true singing quality, which Bach himself identified (in his preface to the Inventions and Sinfonias) as a most important goal of his teaching. Cantabile tone, long-lined phrases, sudden moments of unexpected rubato: these are the main things in Lang’s Goldbergs. They are long overdue. The historically-informed keyboard epigones laugh at these things, as do modern pianists who have been bludgeoned into accepting an unemotional Bach. But I rejoice. There is no one right way to play this music—fortunately!—and per-

formers need to restore to Bach the immense expressivity of his music, as Lang Lang has shown us.

The long road downward began, I believe, with Glenn Gould: not Gould himself, because he had a great technique, beautiful tone, and a great mind that made it possible to accept even his wackiest readings (the Mozart sonatas come to mind). No, it was later pianists who either tried to imitate Gould (without having the mind to pull it off) or who took to absurd lengths the purity of Gould's approach, leaching the music of any heart it had. Readers who have followed me for a few years know who I mean. I'm tired of giving them airspace.

Lang Lang gives me hope. Are there some oddities, infelicities? Yes, among them the addition of a third voice in Variation 7, 32nd-note improvised flourishes in Variation 5 (otherwise played flawlessly with Gould's tempo), a mislearned note in Variation 8. But the great moments outnumber them: I love the leisurely Variation 11, rich with rubato; the powerful quasi non-legato in Variation 12; the playful Variations 17 and 23; the ten-minute, beautifully agonized, Variation 25. Lang brings this listener along a memorable journey; and the return to home at the end—the *ca capo* performance of the Aria—actually feels like a new place rather than a dutiful, symmetrical closing off of cold, calculating musical architecture. In short, this recording belongs at the top of a very short list of the greatest examples of Bach keyboard playing, and I hope other future players take his example to make music with such individuality and courage.

HASKINS

BACH: *Goldberg Variations*

Jimin Oh-Havenith, p
Musicaphon 56981—80 minutes

It's outstanding for the fast variations, mediocre for the slow ones.

According to the biography of Jimin Oh-Havenith on the back cover, her piano playing is "characterized by an exceptional sonority and faithfulness to the text.... The synchronicity of sound and rhythm, not arbitrary changes in tempo and dynamics, inform the clarity of her interpretation." That's a fair way of saying she makes a beautiful tone while taking few interpretive chances beyond a literal reading of the notes. Isn't such supposedly "arbitrary" work the art of interpretation—crafting a communicative performance?

In her brief remarks about the Goldberg

Variations, she calls Bach's music "singing mathematics" in general, which makes no sense for the vocal or chamber music. She says she didn't want to play these variations in the first 30 years of her career, but she decided to learn them to support the curriculum at her son's school. (How many mothers do that? Wow!) She worked on this for ten years while often suffering from insomnia and physical and emotional exhaustion after her husband died. She found this music therapeutic, and she offers it as healing for others, "a musical affirmation of life."

I like the way she conveys energy, joy, and hope. Her technique is flawless, and her interpretation carefully organized. Many of the tempos, staccato articulations, and rigid interpretations of ornamentation are recognizable from the handful of recordings by Glenn Gould and Rosalyn Tureck. She plays all the repeats except in the very long variation 25 and in the reprise of the Aria. She adds no ornamentation of her own. Within her analytical blinders of "singing mathematics," emphasizing structure over free musical whimsy, this performance works well.

The weakest points are the slow variations 13 and 25, which plod without an Adagio "at ease" character of flexibility. The stiff literalism misses the Baroque expressivity implied beyond the notation (the same failings are in Gould's and Tureck's interpretations). The rest of the time I was often reminded of the *Time* magazine quote on the front of the old Gould LP: "Bach as the old master himself must have played—with delight in speeding like the wind, joy in squeezing beauty out of every phrase." It could have included more spontaneity.

Overall, this is recommendable as a joyous way to hear the piece. Take care not to lose the thin cardboard sleeve on a shelf between more conventionally packaged CDs.

LEHMAN

BACH: *Motets (6)*

with **BERTOLUSI:** *Osculetur Me Osculo Oris Sui*; **GALLUS:** *Ecce Quomodo Moritur Justus*; **GABRIELI, G:** *Jubilate Deo*

Pygmalion/ Raphael Pichon
Harmonia Mundi 902657—78 minutes

This recording combines the standard six Bach motets with three motets of the 16th Century found in the two-volume collection *Florilegium Portense* first published in 1618 in Naumburg. The collection contains 365 Latin

motets by 58 German and Italian composers. It was regarded as indispensable by many German schools and choral foundations in the 17th and 18th Centuries, including St Thomas and the other principal churches of Leipzig. As Peter Wollny points out in his notes to this recording, there is documentary evidence of its daily use in Leipzig and the frequent need to replace worn-out copies. The motets by Vincenzo Bertolusi (c1550-1608), Jacobus Gallus (also known as Jacob Handl, 1550-1591), and Giovanni Gabrieli (c1554-1612) barely scratch the surface of the collection, but offer specimens of the music that would have been sung alongside the works of contemporary Leipzig composers before, during, and after Bach's tenure.

Performance practice in the Bach motets can vary extremely from the unaccompanied one voice to a part of the Hilliard Ensemble (ECM; S/O 2007) to the lavish instrumental doubling of La Petite Bande under Sigiswald Kuijken (Accent; M/J 1993). Most recordings fall between these extremes, as does this one. Here a choir of 28 voices is supported by a continuo ensemble selected from cello, double bass, archlute, theorbo, organ, and harpsichord. The singers of Pygmalion are a mixed choir (with both male and female altos) who are undaunted by the challenges of Bach's vocal writing or Raphael Pichon's sometimes blistering tempos. The opening section of *Lobe den Herrn, Alle Heiden* (S 230) and the conclusion of *Singet dem Herrn ein Neues Lied* (S 225) will leave the listener dazzled. The technical performance standard leaves nothing to be desired.

Pichon takes an almost romantic approach to the motets, not in the sense of 19th-Century performance ideals, but a highly subjective interpretation that stresses feeling above all. In his booklet essay, he says that "Bach understood better than anyone else our need to feel. That is to say, he knew how to instill in us an emotion that is at once intellectual and sensible, but also and above all else physiological." Pichon insists on the dance-like quality of the music, stating that "dance lies at the heart of Bach's language: it irrigates and organizes his musical thought". In terms of the virtuosity involved, these are exuberantly physical and incisive performances; but I would not say that they sound spontaneous. Pichon knows what he wants and seems to micro-manage the performance to get it. Every gesture seems to be carefully calculated and sometimes imposed on the music rather than growing out of it. For

instance, some of the dynamic inflections in 'Es ist nun nichts' from *Jesu, Meine Freude* come dangerously close to "cute". Choral discipline is indispensable in any performance, but I submit that its purpose is to produce the impression of spontaneity, of the gestures emerging inevitably from the music itself. I do not find that to be the case here. The director's idiosyncrasies seem to hold sway.

There are many fine recordings of the Bach motets, and I do not claim to have heard them all. Among the recent recordings that have impressed me are the Berlin Vocal Consort under Marcus Creed (Harmonia Mundi 902079; J/A 2011) and the Stuttgart Chamber Choir under Frieder Bernius (Carus 83.298; M/A 2013). Another fine recording is by the Bavarian Radio Choir under Howard Arman (BR 900523; M/A 2019), but it omits *Lobet den Herrn*.

GATENS

BACH: *Major Preludes & Fugues*

E minor (S 548), C (S 545+547), C minor (S 546), G (S 541), A (S 536), D (S 532), B minor (S 544)

Ullrich Böhme, organ
Rondeau 6178—80 minutes

This recording brings together eight of JS Bach's most celebrated preludes & fugues in performances on three historic instruments and one modern organ. The early instruments were built in the final decade of Bach's life. Two prelude & fugue sets are played on each and are heard in the following order: Zacharias Hildebrandt organ at St Wenceslaus Church in Naumburg (1746), Johann Andreas Silbermann organ at St Thomas Church in Strasbourg (1741), and the Joachim Wagner organ at St Mary's Church in Angermünde (1745). One of the curiosities of the Angermünde instrument is a pair of kettledrums that are struck by mechanical angel figurines. They can be heard here to reinforce the recurring pedal figure in the "nine-eight" Prelude in C of S 547. The modern instrument is the Gerald Woehl "Bach Organ" (2000) at St Thomas Church in Leipzig. It was designed by Ullrich Böhme, who was appointed organist of the church in 1985. Its baroque tonal design makes it a worthy companion of the 18th-Century instruments. It contrasts with the church's large romantic organ (1888) by Wilhelm Sauer.

Böhme's playing is always rock solid and free from annoying eccentricities. Perhaps his most audacious gesture is a flashy cadenza towards the end of the fugue in G from S 541.

One of the intrinsic and probably insoluble problems of this repertory is that pieces of this weight and scope demand large chorus registrations with mixtures and sometimes chorus reeds. All of the organs here can supply this sonic grandeur, but the bigger the sound, the harder it is to hear Bach's intricate musical details. A lively reverberation further compounds the difficulty and reduces a complex fugue to a blur. For example, I found it very difficult to follow the fugal argumentation of S 545 in this recording, and it is a piece I have played many times over several decades. To his credit, Böhme uses lighter registrations for some of the pieces, but they are still substantial chorus combinations.

It is up to the listener to decide whether this is a pleasingly designed program. In one sense, these pieces belong together. They represent the mature summit of Bach's formidable artistry as a composer of free organ works. The earliest pieces (S 532 & 536) are from Weimar, but the others apparently date from the early Leipzig period. At the same time, I find it tiring to listen to them all at a sitting. Nearly an hour and a half of mostly full organ can be too much. I prefer programs that combine stentorian works like these with more understated pieces for contrast.

GATENS

BACH: *For Trumpet and Organ*

Andrew Balio & Bruce Bengston
Delos 3560 [2CD] 114 minutes

An all-arrangements collection that opens with organist Bruce Bengston's powerful setting of Gottfried Reiche's 'Abblasen,' the fanfare trumpeted for years by television's CBS Sunday Morning. This two-hour program offers numerous chorale settings, plus transcriptions of three flute and two violin sonatas.

Trumpeter Andrew Belio varies things by playing different instruments (E-flat trumpet, flugelhorn, and piccolo trumpets in G, A, and B-flat). He plays forcefully much of the time, but there is also brilliance and warmth. Organist Bengston creates plenty of variety with the organ of Reyes Organ and Choral Hall, University of Notre Dame.

Playing flute and violin sonatas on trumpet changes their character, of course, but so does playing the keyboard parts on organ. Here there is much more color—and much more solo-accompaniment equality—than would be heard with harpsichord. In III (Presto) of the

G-minor Flute Sonata (S 1030), the organ timbre sounds like a trombone at first.

The program ends with the posthorn solo from *Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother* (S 992), the piccolo trumpet contrasting nicely against a bassoon-like organ stop.

Organ aficionados might be interested in a tiny, easy to miss note that says that the organ is tuned to Kirnberger temperament. I had to look that up. Unfortunately, the note doesn't say if it's Kirnberger I, II, or III.

KILPATRICK

BACH: *Well-Tempered Clavier II*

Steven Devine, hpsi
Resonus 10261 [2CD] 149 minutes

Devine has completed what he started (Sept/Oct 2019). He has played Book II with the same harpsichord and same ad hoc temperament strategy (based on "Kirnberger 3", but slightly adjusted to dodge some of its roughest spots). The booklet layouts and artwork are almost identical, but here he has written about the second book and updated his own resume.

The performance virtues are consistent, as expected: good moderate tempos (a few are driven too fast), well-practiced fingering, and clear delineation of the counterpoint. The D-major Prelude is the only place where Devine breaks his stride, slowing down for some passages that sound labored. There are a few misread left-hand notes in the C-sharp minor Fugue.

He brings interesting experimental ideas about the rhythmic figures in the D minor Fugue, E minor Prelude and Fugue, F-sharp minor Prelude, and G minor Prelude (underdotted into weak triplets). Everything else is "by the book" and straightforward. As I said in that review of Book I, he lets the music make its own way without much emphasis. Because Bach used less rhythmic variety here than in Book I, there is always some danger of relentlessness in long passages. Devine falls into that trap, relying on his fluency and the listener's patience with firm tempos.

About the intonation: the *affekt* of simple beauty is spoiled for me in C minor, F minor, and A-flat, among some other keys with more than three sharps or flats. These melodic and harmonic intervals don't have to be that rough, having such different sizes from one another inside different major or minor scales. The differences here all stem from Kirnberger's extremist expectation of having the C-E

major third beatless in his temperaments, making everything else lopsided to compensate for that. Bach had taught him explicitly not to make any major thirds that small, but Kirnberger went his own way. (Kirnberger's published temperament that he heavily promoted is even more misshapen than this one, which he mentioned only in a private letter in 1779.) Here we are now, more than 275 years after the compositions, listening to Kirnberger's intervals, which don't really belong to the music. I know some people are content with hearing such an exotic range of dissonances in this repertoire, either savoring them or not noticing them.

Colin Booth, who built the harpsichord used here, is also well worth hearing for his own ideas about articulation and rhythmic alterations. He went farther than Devine with those, and he used this "Kirnberger 3" temperament more boldly without modifications (Mar/Apr 2019 & May/June 2020).

LEHMAN

BALAKIREV: *Islamey plus*

Nicholas Walker, p—Grand Piano 846—80 min

Walker saved Balakirev's most famous piano piece for the last track of the final volume in his six-disc series of the complete piano music. *Islamey*, composed in one month in 1869, is subtitled 'Fantasie Orientale' and quickly became recognized as a true showpiece. Pianists from Liszt to the present day perform this work, and it is the Balakirev piece most often heard in concert. Walker plays it here with all of the requisite technique and excitement along with an unusual feel for its figurations and compositional style. He does not aim to be the fastest or most brilliant (Simon Barere or Horowitz probably take this honor), but he is very likely the most musical.

The rest of the program is a hodgepodge of pieces. There are several little ones composed from 1859 to 1902: 'La Fileuse,' 'Au Jardin,' Toccata, Polka, and 'Tyrolienne.' Walker contributes world premiere recordings of his completions of two short works ('Elegy on the Death of a Mosquito' and 'Witches' Dance') and a large-scale transcription of his symphonic poem, *Tamara*. Transcriptions by Balakirev are also included: Glinka's *Kamarskaya* and 'The Lark' plus Prodyot's 'Do Not Say Love Passes Away' and Zapolsky's *Reverie*.

As with other discs in this series, Walker contributes an informative, well-written essay; and the recorded sound is quite good. This is

the set to have for piano music by the leader of the Mighty Five.

HARRINGTON

BALMAGES: *Wind Band Pieces;*

see Collections

BEETHOVEN: *Diabelli Variations;* *32 Variations*

Idil Biret, p—Naxos 8571407—66 minutes

As Volume 20 of the pianist's Beethoven Edition, this presents a collector with an inexpensive, yet very good choice. Biret, who apparently can do anything and usually does, offers a reading of lively impetus. All is clear, forward moving, and refuses to dawdle. Those are pluses in most anyone's book but maybe a bit short in spiritual nuance.

While a technical force to be reckoned with, Biret holds you on the edge of your seat, yet I am not so sure that is the place you'd want to be for the better part of an hour while listening to this music. Things move relentlessly forward when the ear demands an occasional release or repose to quell the inner rage.

Don't get me wrong. I will want to retain this for moments when my body demands to be thoroughly wound up and kept on edge. For other times I will turn to alternatives. I do suspect some of this response may be owing to the way the piano is recorded. While the sound is very good, it is up front and forceful, allowing for little variation in texture.

The 32 Variations were recorded in 1975, but the sound is similar and of the grab-you-by-the-throat kind. At this point I need a rest.

BECKER

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concertos;*

Piano & Winds Quintet

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Swedish Chamber Orchestra—Chandos 5273 [3SACD] 189 minutes

The Beethoven piano concertos have never been lacking for recordings. As of late, they have drawn the attention of many pianists, all wishing to display their prowess by doing complete cycles, demonstrating their ability to come to terms with the master from Bonn. Besides doing the standard five numbered concertos, many include the piano version of the violin concerto. Some include the Triple Concerto or the Choral Fantasy. Some use a fortepiano. Others show the artist in the dual role of pianist and conductor. A few make use of a chamber orchestra.

While a few readers automatically reject

the pianist-conductor idea, believing that an artist's full attention must be given to the role of soloist, that really depends on the person's abilities. Some do better than others. Even with the use of fortepiano, the results really depend on the choice of instrument and the artist's ability to control it. The use of a chamber orchestra does not make much of a difference if the recording sounds rich and full.

Bavouzet chooses the dual role and shows himself to be a master of both. His use of a chamber orchestra is of little concern; Chandos offers a forward recording projected with richness and power. There is no need to lament the absence of the converted violin concerto since most of our readership will already have acquired that less than fully satisfactory transcription. The Op.16 Quintet is a nice addition—and this is the only recording to add it.

Classic cycles such as Fleisher/Szell, Ashkenazy (both), Uchida/Sanderling, Rubinstein (several), Perahia/Haitink, Brendel/Rattle, Kovacevich/Davis, Bronfman/Zinman, Arrau/Davis, Gilels/Szell, and Serkin (several), will always have a place of honor on the shelves of collectors. The recent Andsnes also made a positive impression, as did the enjoyable set with Howard Shelley. So will Schnabel/Sargent, despite the monaural sound. More recent cycles such as the misguided set with Olie Mustonen should be avoided at all cost. While I was impressed with what I have heard of the single issues from Elizabeth Sombart and Inon Barnatan (S/O 2020) final judgment must await completion of their sets.

Bavouzet is blessed by having no weak links. Even the recording shows off the orchestra to best advantage, and the playing has a sparkle that does not preclude depth when called for. Phrasing is of paramount importance in these concertos, and Bavouzet joins other masters in his ability to make the concertos live and breathe and move the listener. Acquisition will be a must, especially if you have already purchased his fine sonatas.

There are also many fine individual performances of each concerto. Long gone are the days when a reviewer could hold up a mere handful of recordings and be familiar with all of them. Choosing just one of the sets is a near impossible task so just be prepared to reach for your credit card and start denying yourself those extra carbs and other unhealthy vittles. You may even be happy with the physical results and live a while longer to fully appreciate what really matters in life. Meanwhile

Bavouzet can be proud of his accomplishment; there is much satisfaction for the discriminating listener.

BECKER

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto 5; Triple Concerto*
Elizabeth Sombart, p; Duncan Riddell, v; Richard Harwood, vc; Royal Philharmonic/ Pierre Vallet
Signum 637—78 minutes

French pianist Elizabeth Sombart, 62, sounds more spirited in the Triple Concerto than she does in the *Emperor*. In Concerto 5 her numerous mini-retards and stretching out of cadences result in an unsteady pulse with too many dainty touches. Nor does she articulate the left hand clearly, especially in thicker passages. Vallet too is less than acute. Passages without the pianist like the orchestral introduction are foursquare and literal, without character—just the notes. Even the motto theme (the dotted tam-ta-tah) is not incisive much of the time, and the octave passages with contrary motion in the piano versus orchestra are really prosaic. II is very nice, but not the last word in shading. III is weakest of all, running out of rhythmic spunk with fluctuating tempos. Even in the final measures the piano is blurry and the orchestral chords spongy.

Once French conductor Pierre Vallet, who conducts a lot of opera (including at the Met), gets past his spongy orchestral introduction to the Triple Concerto, the Philharmonic's concertmaster Duncan Riddell is the one who takes charge. As the music moves right along with fine pulse, even Sombart becomes as strong as the trio's leader. I wasn't especially aware of the English cellist. Too bad the orchestra constantly seems just a hair behind the trio. II is lovely and, *mirabile dictu*, a tempo. And III is really lively, but it's too late to save the performance.

Balances between soloists and orchestra are fine.

FRENCH

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonatas*

Jonathan Biss

5, 11, 12, 26: Orchid 100118—74 minutes

4, 14, 24: 100119—61 minutes

15, 16, 21: 100120—70 minutes

These three discs seem to be part of a re-release of Biss's 9-year Beethoven sonata project; they were originally recorded on Onyx from 2012 to 2015. Mark Koldys reviewed Vol.

1 (May/June 2012) and said that “Biss himself will almost certainly change and grow over time, and may have a different view of the music than when he began a decade earlier.”

Koldys also characterizes Biss’s playing in Vol. 1 as “Intimate, light, somewhat dry, and small scale”, even “bland”. I agree. Sonata 11 is restrained and precise, but does not have enough contrasts, and the melody needs to be brought out more in I and II. While I appreciate the understatedness of Sonata 12, as well as its grace in the opening, the variations drag, and the middle of the work felt too weighty. The left hand had some jagged edges, and the work plods. The Scherzo is excellent, though—light and delicate. Still, I wanted more contrasts.

It doesn’t look like we reviewed Vol. 2 before, but his playing is well paced—sensible tempos. I would have liked more contrasts for Sonata 6, again, and his touch on the pedal seems too light sometimes. In the *Appassionata* he builds drama, but listeners will certainly find it restrained. While I appreciate his control, I would have liked more spontaneity and passion.

I reviewed Vol. 3 in May/July 2014, and I commended his authority and ease and praised Sonata 16 for its wit and droll humor. I found the contrasts in the first movement effective. But I noted too that his playing is more on the intimate and dry side. The *Waldstein* was reserved and never quite built towards the grandeur that the piece demands. Some of the transitions feel a little labored. Listening to the same recording 6 years later, Biss seems much smoother and more fluid than in Vol. 1; but one wonders how he’d interpret it now.

KANG

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonatas 11-18, 21-23*

Giovanni Bellucci—Brilliant 95131 [3CD] 3:50

This is Volume 2 of a complete recording of Beethoven’s piano sonatas (though perhaps without Nos. 19 and 20). There is a lot of music here, but I am sorry to say I heard only a few minutes of it. Immediately, at the beginnings of several sonatas, a mannered distortion of the rhythm was evident that was positively sickening, and I quickly stopped listening. Why are such important projects offered to pianists who are totally unsuited to the task? Does this honor Beethoven in his anniversary year? If my stomach had not been turned yet,

reading the pianist’s pretentious and self-serving liner notes would surely have done it.

I almost forgot that I reviewed Volume 1 (N/D 2017)—perhaps had purged that fact from my memory. I wrote a longer paragraph then but arrived at similar conclusions.

REPP

BEETHOVEN: *Quartets 1-6*

Dover Quartet—Cedille 198 [2CD] 155 minutes

Before I remembered that I have encountered the Dover Quartet before, I took one look at this two-disc set and assumed it was a reissue. The packaging is dark, with text in bronze all-caps lettering alternating with the dying art-form known as cursive. It is so far from eye-catching that it simply had to be part of a Beethoven cycle by some British group that I had never heard of, probably on CD for the first time. But no. The Dover Quartet is young, attractive, and quite talented, so it seems commendable that the cover doesn’t have a picture of them mugging for the camera, or a randomly chosen 19th Century painting—nor is it plastered with accolades. Their previous recording is *Voices of Defiance*, an inspired program of Shostakovich, Ullmann, and Laks (J/F 2018).

I criticize musicians for allowing themselves to run down the “mandatory recording” checklist, even though it is a given that quartets that stay together for a few decades will check most of the boxes. That wouldn’t be fair in this case, because these musicians do have something special to offer. This is Volume 1, and there can be no doubt that they are going the distance.

In Quartet 2 II (allegedly inspired by the tomb scene in *Romeo and Juliet*), you can hear modernism in the distance. Nonetheless, what distinguishes both of these albums is their adherence to the norms of the classical era. This is music written on the heels of Haydn; these quartets aren’t gauntlets thrown down for Schumann and Brahms.

The opening Allegro of Quartet 2 is a bit lackadaisical and the sound thins out a bit. Power is sacrificed to beauty, finally. Probably most listeners love Beethoven for his passion and pathos, but—to agree with Glenn Gould—I enjoy it best when he is playful, creative, unconcerned with making the big splash. That’s what you get here, with IV resembling a folk dance. Quartet 3 also sounds a bit downsized, which occasionally distracts, even as it serves the larger vision.

In the second half of the Opus 18 set, the artists settle in, completely owning their ideas about the Haydnesque dynamics. The fifth quartet is a particularly choice example, with its muted gaiety and the quiet gasp that ends the piece. Impetuous and a bit flashy, Quartet 6 hews the closest to a standard performance, though IV plays to their strengths.

The liner notes are truly substantial, running seven pages plus a group bio, and there's only one photo. Again, these musicians are in it for the long hall. Everyone has a favorite recording of these pieces, but make room for another.

DUTTERER

BEETHOVEN: *The Ruins of Athens; Calm Sea & Prosperous Voyage; Opferlied* Sidonie von Krosigk, narr; Valda Wilson, s; Simon Bailey, b; Brunn Philharmonic Choir; Cappella Aquileia/ Marcus Bosch

CPO 777634—53 minutes

In 1811 Beethoven wrote this as incidental music to a play by August von Kotzebue, who in turn wrote the play to open a theatre in Pest (Budapest). The play has never been heard since, but Beethoven's music has lived on.

The premise is that the goddess Athena, daughter of Zeus, awakens after 2000 years of sleep and finds Athens completely changed. The city is in ruins, and the remaining inhabitants are oppressed by their Turkish rulers. Athena and Hermes travel to Pest, where the culture is pictured as similar to Greek antiquity. At the end the emperor is praised for his enlightenment.

Besides the overture (about 4 minutes) Beethoven wrote mostly vocal music—soprano, bass, and chorus. The music itself lasts about 30 minutes. Only one piece is a “melodrama”—spoken narrative over the music. Kai Wessler created that, based on Kotzebue and Schiller. (A Schiller ode is substituted for Kotzebue's final monolog, which was apparently even sillier than the rest of the play.) The narrative, like the music, is in German; the booklet supplies texts and translations.

The famous Turkish March is way too fast—who can march that fast? The chorus is excellent, especially as dervishes. The orchestra is also fine. They are a chamber orchestra, which is fair enough, since the original was a pit orchestra. They are not “period instruments”, and their playing is not stiff or bumpy.

With the chorus on hand it made sense to add *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* (7 min-

utes) and the *Opferlied* (Op. 121, 5 minutes), both beautifully done.

As for other recordings, the Segerstam on Naxos is much longer (82 minutes); and Paul Althouse, who reviewed it (July/Aug 2020), tells me it is not a matter of tempo at all (though Segerstam is noted for slow tempos). Apparently Beethoven wrote 30 minutes more music for a Vienna occasion (not the same play). The Naxos has at least 15 minutes of narration, with 3 narrators and 5 roles. Mr Althouse found it rather boring. The Beecham (EMI, March/April 1993) takes 22 minutes and has been reissued by Warner. It is the best recording, though it has less music than here (a short duet is the main item missing). Beecham also does the three choruses in English. Carl Bauman praised the Dennis Russell Davies recording (also EMI, March/April 1991), but that may not be available.

VRON

BEETHOVEN: *Serenades, opp 25+41*

Luisa Sello, fl; Myriam Dal Don, v; Giuseppe Mari, va; Bruno Canino, p

Dynamic 7886—59 minutes

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote, or at least completed, his *Serenade* for flute, violin, and viola around 1797 and it was published in 1802. In the notes, Danilo Prefumo describes it as “one of the lightest and sunniest compositions of Beethoven's chamber output”. Who made an arrangement for flute and piano is uncertain, but the author at least revised the transcription that was published with a different opus number by Hoffmeister and Kuhnel of Leipzig in 1803. To these two selections have been added the Adagio of Piano Concerto 1, arranged in 1871 for flute and piano by Bavarian-German performer, instrument maker, goldsmith, mining engineer, industrialist, and composer Theobald Boehm (1794-1881). Boehm in fact made 8 Beethoven arrangements, mostly with piano: 4 for flute and 4 for alto flute. They included the Opus 8 *Serenade* for violin, viola, and cello in 1876; any of them could have gone well here.

These Italians play modern instruments: a 14k gold Miyazawa flute, a Steinway piano; the makers of the bowed strings are not specified. The sound is consistent and perhaps too close for comfort. As a result, anything marked forte comes across merely as loud and unpleasant. The playfulness in the Allegro molto movements is too harsh.

The tone quality of the players is superla-

tive. A rich, relaxed, and expressive flute dovetails and converses with two fine strings for half the program, and the other half with a robust piano. All the supporting players come across as consummate professionals. Honorable mention goes to Giuseppe Mari on viola. Not Luisa Sello, unfortunately, though her high level of accomplishment is clear. Jean-Pierre Rampal had a term of affection that we should give short notes in contexts that are appropriate: “living staccato”. These 8th notes don’t live; they’re just short. In the variations of the Andante this approach comes across as rather soulless. At best it’s chirpy. I’m also not impressed by the need to break phrases and breathe on bar lines in the Minuet with piano, or the unclear, uneven flute playing both times, especially when done with the strings.

It’s a pity Bruno Canino had to waste his talent on this project. James Harrington enjoyed his Chabrier in Jan/Feb 2014; he has also recorded with violinist Viktoria Mullova and cellist Lynn Harrell.

Our flutist has a Doctor of Arts degree in performance from the Bratislava Academy and a PhD in linguistic and literary sciences from Udine University in Italy. She has also recorded on the Italian label Stradivarius and Chinese label Millennium. Helen Dabringhaus has recorded the Boehm arrangement on MDG 9032135 (May/June 2020). Kazunori Seo and Makoto Ueno have recorded two discs of Beethoven for Naxos (573569, July/Aug 2018 & 573570, Nov/Dec 2018), but the quintets by Kuhlau and Reicha far surpass anything else written for flute around this time.

GORMAN

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies 1-5*

Concert of Nations/ Jordi Savall
AliaVox 9937 [3SACD] 171 minutes

Jordi Savall planned four sets of concerts, around which the Concert of Nations would record Beethoven’s complete symphonies: 1, 2, and 4 in Spring 2019, and 3 and 5 in Autumn 2019. The others were planned for 2020, but the coronavirus pandemic put that on hold.

Each set of performances and recordings are based on Savall’s study of the original scores and performance notes, followed by two “academies” in which 35 professionals from his Concert of Nations and 20 young instrumentalists became—based on what I hear on this album—a consummate ensemble with tuning so exquisite that, unless you have

perfect pitch, you’d never know they tune to a concert A of 430.

Nor did I ever reflect, “I’m listening to period instruments”. Vibrato or no vibrato? Never even thought of it, so rich and full are the 32 strings (10-8-6-5-3), especially the cellos and basses. Only the sound of the 18 winds reminds me that they are period instruments.

I had high praise for Bernhard Forck’s recording of Beethoven’s Symphonies 1 and 2 with the Berlin Academy for Ancient Music (Sept/Oct 2020). Comparing it to Savall’s recordings, Forck’s tend more toward the period-instrument clichés of flatlined woodwinds, no vibrato, a pattern of swelling and ebbing with every phrase, thinner strings, and lighter weight—and, in this instance, fine performances but not as infectious as Savall’s.

While I was listening to Symphonies 1 and 2, I noted that I heard no revelations in the performances—sort of a required justification for producing yet another early-instrument set of complete Beethoven symphonies. Then a friend-pianist phoned while I was listening to 2. When he described his favorite pianist as “a highly educated mind and a very natural player”, I replied, “You just gave me the words to describe Jordi Savall conducting Beethoven”, making the “no revelations” bit irrelevant. Let’s take Symphony 1: Savall says he’s religious in using Beethoven’s own metronome markings (faster than we’re used to), yet the orchestra makes its superb articulation of rapid 16th notes sound relaxed and easy but vigorous. Vivace never feels rushed. Bright and energetic never becomes frantic. Yes, the tempo in II normally would make it feel upbeat; here it is graceful. III is brisk and energetic, yet light on its feet and with a trio that is just an edge slower, for perfect relief. And in IV the rapid articulation of 16th notes is clear but never frantic. In fact, IV became an ear worm that had me singing for several days.

Savall makes 2 feel like another world. What an adagio introduction to I! All those many expression marks, contrasts, dotted notes, etc. are made meaningful. He slips seamlessly into the Allegro con brio with its sudden *ff* marking and explosive timpani. And who ever wrote a better coda to a movement than the ending of I, which Savall projects in its full glory. II has a lyrical flow, crisp and alert yet graceful and beautifully contoured. Same with the Scherzo. IV reveals at brief moments how creamy Savall’s cellos and basses are. And what wonderful rage he summons at the end!

Yes, no “revelations” on the first disc in the album, but what stunning performances!

I had recently listened to Herbert von Karajan’s 1962 recording of Beethoven 3 with the Berlin Philharmonic on DG, as magnificent a modern performance as I know. What a revelation (that word again) came with the first two chords in Savall’s performance. Like rapid cannon fire (quarter-note 150)! Would he stick to the tempo? Yes! And without the music ever feeling rushed! Once again, the orchestra’s powers of articulation make the music sound clear and unforced. In I contrary motion in the strings’ harmonies becomes clear for a change. Timpani beats attain special character. When the winds have the lead, the character of the subordinate strings changes from lyrical to pungently rhythmical. And Savall makes the development section a revelation in itself with the many shifting woodwind tone colors, a lyrical bass motif under all the dotted fuss in the treble winds, and the terraced levels of developmental activity. Following the development’s peak with those unresolved trumpet and French horn chords, this is the first time I’ve actually heard the contrary motion in the woodwinds, the pulse created by the ostinato strings, and the importance here of a full, clear, rich bass. And that’s just I.

The Funeral March (quarter-note 45) is precisely that—a *march*, start to finish. Even when it swells with lyricism, the 32nd-note triplets and resonant timpani maintain the beat. Savall never lets the tempo get away from him. Even in the fugue, the funereal mood remains steady. The Scherzo is taken at 180; no revelations here except that the French horns barely manage to make their instruments’ just (or harmonic) tuning (temperament) fit into the orchestra’s equal temperament. Only in IV does Savall allow the tempo (quarter-note 120) to verge toward rushing. But he’s saved by the fugue, which is absolutely steady, played with perfect ensemble. In IV the high resonance of the hall, which normally poses no problem, sometimes obscures the instrumentation, as if quick dialoguing figures in the winds and strings tend to swallow each other. At the end Savall honors Beethoven’s Presto by practically grabbing the speakers and shaking them. As he says in the liner notes, “In Beethoven’s case, the act of creation often takes the form of a combat. Beethoven often struggled with himself in order to create, and his work is the result of a creative process that bears witness to a new conception of art.”

Savall makes the harmonies in Symphony

4’s introduction so transparent that Beethoven’s very textures are enriched, especially with the rich, resonant cellos and string basses. The slow tempos are tightly paced, making the transition to the Allegro Vivace bracing (quarter-note 150). Also, the superb engineering and Savall’s conducting make me realize for the first time how the music’s strong character is reinforced by the timpani. In II the syn-copation in the perfectly balanced second violins defines the movement’s pulse. The final two movements are the only places on this album where Savall doesn’t adhere to Beethoven’s tempo; the Scherzo feels a bit less than Allegro Vivace. He takes IV at about quarter-note 70 instead of 80, but it does seem to flow naturally from the pace taken in III. I mention this because Savall himself stresses in the liner notes the importance of following the composer’s metronome markings.

In Symphony 5, where Savall honors all Beethoven’s tempos, he takes the opening eight notes—the motto theme—rather deliberately. But once the charge begins, it is integrated into the set tempo, except at the beginning of the recapitulation, where it is the same as at the opening. Savall makes even this sole liberty fit into the charged, exciting, seamless sweep he creates in I. In II the gorgeous, calming violas and cellos offer some relief, as Savall maintains a steady pace. In III he maintains the tempo right into the trio, which is quite exciting. The only problem here is that, in the pizzicato section, all the plucked strings overwhelm the first violins, which means the melody can’t be heard. But the finale is really something! Beethoven wrote an assault with just a few moments of relief. People at the 1808 premiere must have felt pummeled to death—he even had to add a piccolo to cut through all the sound! Today we’re used to more extravagance, but Savall comes as close as I’ve ever heard to re-creating how it must have felt back then. And for the icing on the cake, he takes the coda at the tempo marked—whole note equals 112 beats per minute! Oxygen, please.

In brief, this is the most enlightening, revelatory, exciting, best performed, and one of the best recorded sets of Beethoven’s symphonies I’ve ever heard. The notes by Savall, translated into easy-to-read English, are superb; and the photos and the packaging are first-class. Here’s hoping they’re able to complete this project.

FRENCH

BEETHOVEN: Violin Sonatas 1-4

Frank Peter Zimmermann; Martin Helmchen, p
BIS 2517 [SACD] 70 minutes

Sometimes I wish that Beethoven violin sonata cycles would start at the other end, with the dreamlike Op. 96 and the ferocious *Kreutzer*, and work backwards. It's much easier to infer the beginning from the end than the reverse. Be that as it may, here we have the first four sonatas from yet another Beethoven-year cycle. Zimmermann and Helmchen's way with the Op. 12 sonatas and with Op. 23, their successor, is nippy, brisk, and occasionally brusque—sassy good humor that lapses sometimes almost into sarcasm. It's a reasonable approach to this music. I like particularly Helmchen's playing, which brings out all that must have confounded listeners in the young Beethoven's own pianism. Zimmermann matches him well, too, diving into the wild swirls of figuration in tight unison with his partner.

THOMSON

BEETHOVEN: Violin Sonatas 3, 6-8

Lorenzo Gatto; Julien Libeer, p
Alpha 565—81 minutes

This is the last of three installments of Beethoven violin sonatas. A previous disc in this cycle was reviewed by Joseph Magil (Nov/Dec 2016). Gatto recorded the violin concerto and romances (2014), so he has now recorded all Beethoven's major compositions for violin. A section on his website is called "My focus on Beethoven"—his thoughts about Beethoven performance. A billing no doubt would label him a "champion" or "advocate" of Beethoven. In the spirit of full disclosure, my doctoral research centered on the Beethoven Violin Concerto, so I especially appreciate his breadth of knowledge and dedication to this great composer.

I will never forget a question during oral examinations for my Master of Music degree: "Is Beethoven's Violin Concerto romantic or classical?" This inquiry is akin to asking if the baptism of John is from heaven or of men. Gatto and Libeer believe these sonatas are classical; romanticism is expunged from their interpretation; personality does not play a central role. An Enlightened Mozartian purity persists through the most astonishing moments.

People now speak of Beethoven as if his ascendance as revolutionary genius was fated,

but they quickly forget the inner turmoil and conflict as he indulged in the beginnings of romanticism while his venerable, musically conservative and business-minded teacher Haydn lived nearby. These sonatas are full of drama enclosed in strict classical idioms handed down by Mozart and Papa Haydn. Beethoven displays counterpoint mastery, sophisticated formal transitions, subito dynamic explosions, and a host of characteristic sforzando accents. The timings are executed well by the performers, but the dynamic palette is too limited when the music is stormiest. Beethoven releases seething inner fury at the end of 7:I, but the performers unnecessarily restrain themselves—especially Libeer. This is one of the most virtuosic and grim passages in all the violin sonatas; he should wage war; there is no Enlightenment in this passage—only raw emotion. In 3:III I was struck by thinness in Gatto's sound. The music itself is sparse; a non-vibrato sound is too pale; listeners would welcome more warmth and sweetness. Their style fits perfectly in 8:III wherever sparkle is needed and iridescent passagework appears. Counterpoint passages are disciplined and performed in the style of Bach, allowing firm pulse to dictate sound. Phrasing and dynamics are thoughtful but not as artificial as many performers. I appreciate that the pianist does not over-pedal, and the violin's sound is not pressed. Balance and engineering are excellent. One could easily fall in love with both the sound and ensemble skills of this duo. This is an excellent recording. Gatto and Libeer are among the best interpreters of Beethoven right now. The music feels alive.

KELLENBERGER

BEETHOVEN: Violin Sonatas 4-6

Lucy Russell; Sezi Seskir, p
Acis 2958—70 minutes

I was a big fan of the Fitzwilliam Quartet—of which Lucy Russell is the current first violinist—back in their Shostakovich-and-late-Beethoven Decca days, and so I honestly wanted to like this. Unfortunately, there's not much to admire here. Russell is a good though not flawless "period" player (the Fitzwilliams now play both "period" and modern instruments, depending on the repertoire), decently if not infallibly in tune, with all the usual instincts in all the right places—but nothing here sings (or zings, for that matter) as it might. This is most noticeable in the lyrical *Spring* Sonata, where the competition is even more formidable than

in the other works. But all three pieces suffer by it.

Russell plays a Gagliano violin with a Dodd bow; Seskir a modern copy (by Thomas and Barbara Wolf) of a fortepiano by Johann Schranz. The latter is an unusual and colorful instrument (I wish there were photos), and Seskir gets around it most deftly. Russell uses an unwound gut D string in addition to the usual plain gut A and E, enabling her, so she writes, “to bring out the contrasted vulnerability and robustness of Beethoven’s sound world”. Whether it does that or not, I couldn’t say; but from the sound it’s solid gut, not roped—that means it has a clearer sound, and one less amenable to wooliness, but is also harder to keep in tune.

I imagine there are a great many Beethoven discs like this floating around this year. Composers’ birthday parties rarely bring out *only* the best in musicians, and this is a big one. Fortunately, with such music there are ridiculously many choices; my own favorites for the sonatas are the sets by Arthur Grumiaux and Clara Haskil (monaural); Augustin Dumay and Maria Joao Pires; Pam and Claude Frank; and Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov (though I haven’t heard all of the last). Don’t forget the very old but still inimitable Kreisler and Rupp.

THOMSON

BEETHOVEN: *Septet*; see REICHA

BEN-HAIM: *Violin Sonata*; see Collections

BESSEGGI: *Violin Sonatas, op 1*
Opera Quinta—Tactus 670290 [2CD] 109 minutes

These are chamber sonatas with violin as the lead voice. Although it is not clear where Italian composer Angelo Michele Besseghi (1670-1744) was born, we do know that at some point he went to France and came under the patronage of Louis Fagon (1680-1744) who served in King Louis XIV’s private council and supported Besseghi for the rest of the composer’s life.

We also know that Besseghi was a highly skilled violinist and played a Guarneri violin. With the title *Sonate Da Camera A Violino Solo Col Violone O Cembalo* and published in 1710, Besseghi’s Opus 1 collection of 12 sonatas is modeled in some ways on Arcangelo Corelli’s widely known and very effective Opus 5 (also 12 violin sonatas, from 1700).

The performances and the sonatas have many attractive qualities ranging from lyrical vocal phrasing in slow movements—10 of the

12 sonatas begin with an Adagio—and delicate passagework in Sonata 7 to lovely gravity-defying upward syncopations in the final movement, Tempo Di Gavotta Presto, of Sonata 9, and nice echo effects with the violin replying to itself in the scampering Presto finale of Sonata 11.

It took me a while to get the playback volume and balance right, so you may have to experiment. In some sections I found the violin too much in the foreground and sounding harsh. This might be caused by the instrument’s sound or a close microphone. Lowering the volume didn’t help, because then the other instruments (viola da gamba, archlute, and harpsichord) were too soft. In time my ears did adjust somewhat to the sound, and I did find that the balance was much better when I switched to headphones.

C MOORE

BIBER: *Requiem in F minor*;

TUMA: *Stabat Mater*

Pluto-Ensemble/ Marnix De Cat; Hathor Consort/ Romina Lischka—Ramée 1914—61:34

After the 54 voices and instruments needed for the *Salzburg Mass*, which has had at least six recordings, Biber’s F-minor Requiem is the “low-budget” alternative with only five voice parts (doubled by strings and the three lower voices also by trombones) and an independent first violin part. This profound work has been recorded six times (see Mar/Apr 2005), so this new release faces some serious competition. The Pluto Ensemble on this recording includes 10 singers (5 soloists and 5 ripieni for the tutti passages), and the Hathor Consort consists of single players for the 5 string parts, 3 trombones, and organ. It’s not a large group, but the photos in the booklet show everyone circling the microphones—and the resulting sound is both full and blended.

I believe the overall direction is by Marnix De Cat, who is also the alto soloist; he leads an effectively paced and dramatic performance. My main problem with this recording is that the single first violin is often overshadowed in the mix by the rest of the ensemble—a fault also in the Paul McCreesh reading (Mar/Apr 2005), and both De Cat and McCreesh omit the original bassoon parts. The main reason for the balance problem is that De Cat ignored the indications in the original parts that the first and second violins were to have at least two players in the tutti sections and only one would play with the soloists. Two of the other

comparison recordings with larger forces are much less subtle: Gustav Leonhardt (Nov/Dec 1993; see VALLS) and a recent release led by Antonio Eros Negri (Halidon, available only as a digital download), where the sopranos are a bit too shrill. De Cat is much closer in style to Erik van Nevel (Ricercar 81063, 1990) and Philip Pickett (L'Oiseau Lyre 436 460, 1994); but where Van Nevel is perhaps too slow, Pickett is lethargic—De Cat is just about right. I still return to the 1969 recording with the Vienna Choirboys and Concentus Musicus (reissued on Teldec in 1998). The violins sound above the full ensemble; and though the soprano soloists from the Choirboys may be a bit earnest, the anonymous boy alto soloist is still more expressive than the countertenors on the other recordings.

Alongside ensemble sonatas by Johann Heinrich Schmelzer and Biber, and Andreas Christophorus Clamer's Partita I in E minor, the significant bonus on this new release is Frantisek Ignac Antonin Tuma's 18th Century setting of the *Stabat Mater*. Tuma had studied with Johann Joseph Fux in Vienna, and all of his sacred music demonstrates his contrapuntal skill (see May/June 1997). The 15-minute *Stabat Mater* divides the stanzas into sections with varying combinations of voices and instruments and is given its first recording here.

The booklet includes an acceptable essay, excellent for learning more about Tuma, though there are some inaccuracies about Biber. The "sung texts" with incomplete English translations (at the moment) are available as a download; but both the Requiem and *Stabat Mater* are the customary texts. While I would not highly recommend this new release for the Biber, it is still important for the Tuma.

BREWER

BORISOVA-OLLAS: *Angelus; Kingdom of Silence; Before the Mountains Were Born; Creation of the Hymn; Open Ground* Stockholm Philharmonic/ Andrey Boreyko, Martyn Brabbins, Sakari Oramo

BIS 2288 [SACD] 82 minutes

Victoria Borisova-Ollas (b. 1969) was born in Russia and moved later to Sweden. Debussy and Vaughan Williams are major influences, but she does not shy away from more contemporary orchestral language when called for by the subject matter. The music is essentially tonal and lushly orchestrated. Religious connotations are prevalent.

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Angelus (2008) is a tone poem depicting bells heard in the churches around Munich, where she was visiting at the time. Gregorian chant-like phrases are developed. *The Kingdom of Silence* (2003)

opens with more bells and moves into more sinister territory; it progresses to a lyrical pastoralism until fanfares introduce more vigor and things disperse into more bells and peace.

Before the Mountains Were Born (2005) takes Genesis as inspiration. It opens with relative chaos depicting the earth before God's intervention. The world is saved by the appearance of heavenly forces and nature.

Creation of the Hymn was originally for quartet and is adapted for string orchestra. It has a Vaughan Williams-type texture and flavor. *Open Ground* (2006) was inspired by Salman Rushdie's novel *Ground Beneath Her Feet*, about an earthquake and its noble and spiritual aftermath.

All told, this is a worthwhile introduction to a composer not as well known here as she should be. She is well served by these excellent forces. Notes by the composer.

GIMBEL

BOYER: *Chansons & Airs de Cour*
Ratas del Viejo Mundo
Ramée 1910—53:51

Jean Boyer (before 1600-1648) was a singer who was first mentioned in 1611 as cantor of King Louis XIII's Chamber and Chapel, and in 1629 was promoted to Ordinary Secretary of the King's Chamber. Aside from the many anthologies of serious *airs de cour* that include his, three separate collections devoted to Boyer were published by Pierre Ballard in Paris. He also published two collections of *chansons !@! boire et danser* (drinking and dancing songs) with lyrics much more popular (if not outright ribald).

This is the second recording by the Ratas del Viejo Mundo I have reviewed (July/Aug 2019: 193) and I am glad to note that the quality of the recording has improved. These airs and songs are clearly chamber music and do not require the resonance of a church (which seems to be a fashion among early music recordings, even for secular chamber music). The performances work through the permutations and combinations of voices and instruments, which along with a harp, gut-strung harpsichord, various lutes and guitars includes, anachronistically, a kankles—a

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Lithuanian zither. The most effective tracks are the ones sung by the four singers, with excellent diction and balance and a rhythmic elan as vivacious as the instrumentalists, though some of the accompaniments sound a bit more impressionist than baroque. Full texts and idiomatic translations are included, though they are sometimes slightly bowdlerized in the drinking songs.

BREWER

BRAGA SANTOS: *Quartets 1+2; Sextet*

Quarteto Lopes-Graca; Leonor Braga Santos, va; Irene Lima, vc—Toccata 207—79 minutes

This dip into the chamber music of Joly Braga Santos, possibly Portugal's best composer since the Renaissance, but better known for his orchestral music than his string quartets, comes courtesy (again) of Toccata Classics, which has done more than any other label in recent memory to ... well, I was going to say "revive fascinating but little-known music", but the condescension involved in saying any such thing gives one pause, yes? It doesn't need to be "revived" by or for us; it was always there, and we were just utter chumps for not looking at it. Anyway, here it is—this tranche, anyway—and here is what I have to say about it.

The first things that strike me, on listening to either of the quartets, are their modal harmonies and their characteristic texture: long-limbed, arched lines over restlessly rhythmical accompaniments. It doesn't "sound" Portuguese, to the extent that phrase even means anything; for me the first referent was Vaughan Williams and the rest of the British Isles "cowpat school", only with a greater fount of energy. The First Quartet is nominally in D minor, but you don't even sense the minor-ness, only the vague archaism and the living line. That one is mainly in D Aeolian (i.e., natural minor); but the Second Quartet, which is without a formal key designation, ends up in a very pronounced A Lydian.

The Sextet, later than either quartet and indeed among Braga Santos's last works, is a different sort of thing. For one, it's a good deal more chromatic than its quartet predecessors, and the textures aren't nearly so clear. The piece is said in the notes to have been inspired by a visit to Lisbon by Alberto Lysy and his Camerata Lysy—they played Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. This piece is not really very much like that one, though, as its predecessor was on the Lisbon occasion, it was premiered by a string orchestra rather than a sextet. The

textures are, naturally, thicker than before, and the idiom much more chromatic. It is good to see Leonor Braga Santos, one of the composer's two daughters, playing second viola here. (Her sister, Piedade, wrote the general program note.)

Toccata is candid in acknowledging that these aren't first recordings; the quartets were recorded in 1990 for an LP long since deleted, and the Sextet more recently, in 2015. Both labels were Portuguese, so this is the music's first shot at wider distribution. The performances aren't ideal, though they're quite good.

THOMSON

BRAHMS: *Cello Sonatas;*

MARTUCCI: *2 Romances*

Luigi Piovano; Antonio Pappano, p
Arcana 479—59 minutes

Here we have a fine recording of two of my favorite cello sonatas played by two musicians who have been working together for 13 years and have much to say to us. Piovani studied with the well-known Radu Aldulescu and is first cellist with the Santa Cecilia Orchestra as well as conductor of the Magna Grecia Orchestra. Pappano is well known as a conductor. They put the depth and drama across with a clear understanding, and the instruments they play contribute to the depth and discernment of their interpretations. Piovano's cello is a Gagliano made in 1710. They balance with care and conviction. All repeats are observed. What more can we ask for?

Well, the liner notes consist partly of an interview they had with Carlo Cavalletti that covers pleasant territory. The music is further described by Guido Salvetti. All this is in English, French, and Italian. And don't forget that we also have two little Romances by Guido Martucci (1856-1909). All is played with precision and warmth of tone and grace of phrasing. It is really rather special.

D MOORE

BRAHMS: *14 Intermezzos*

Christophe Sirodeau, p—Melism 22—63 minutes

Christophe Sirodeau (b 1970) is a French pianist and composer. I have not encountered him or his music before, but his recordings of pieces by Feinberg and Ullmann have been reviewed favorably in these pages (J/A 2004, S/O 2008, J/F 2015). This appears to be his first recording of standard repertoire. It is dedicated to the memory of his recently departed father, which offers an appropriate motivation

for choosing the quieter pieces of Brahms's late piano cycles. They are not arranged chronologically but in a sequence the pianist considered pleasing; for example, the four Intermezzos from Op. 76 surround the three of Op. 117 (the only integral opus here). The others come from Opp. 116 (4), 118 (1), and 119 (2). Brahms wrote 19 pieces with the title Intermezzo, so five are not included, though there would have been room for some of them (perhaps even all).

Sirodeau loves Brahms, as is clear both from his playing and his liner notes. The performances are thoughtful, expressive, and rendered in warm sound. Given the outstanding quality of the music this is certainly an enjoyable recording. Its misfortune is that quite recently an excellent complete recording of the Brahms Intermezzos by Evgeni Koroliov appeared (Tacet 256, M/A 2020), one of several close runners-up to my "Critic's Choice" in this issue. The main reason why I did not choose it is that I was not convinced by a program of only Intermezzos. There is a lack of contrast in a succession of mostly slow pieces, no matter how wonderful they are, and one misses the expected faster pieces from those sets. While this reservation perhaps applies less to the present release, for reasons already mentioned, Koroliov's recording is not only complete but also preferable in terms of interpretation. Koroliov has a delicate touch, lets the music flow naturally, and chooses ideal tempos. By comparison, Sirodeau sounds somewhat heavy and deliberate, perhaps trying too hard to squeeze the last ounce of expression from the pieces. His rubato is sometimes extreme, and his touch is rather forceful in the occasional loud passages. Sometimes his tempo is too slow, and sometimes his hands are not quite together. Koroliov's recording is the one to get if all you want is the Brahms Intermezzos.

Another minus point is that this release has a promotional character. Sirodeau's already rather personal notes, which include the dedication, precede a long essay by a colleague that praises the present performances extravagantly, a discography, a list of compositions, and reproductions of other Melism CD covers. The booklet is more about Sirodeau and the label than about Brahms. In the music, though, Brahms still comes through strongly.

REPP

BRAHMS: *Piano Sonata 3; Pieces, op 76; Rhapsodies*

Peter Orth—Challenge 72850—77 minutes

Peter Orth, whose birth date seems to be a well-guarded secret, is a seasoned American pianist who has been living in Germany since 1992. He has made only a few recordings, none of which have been reviewed by us; they include Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations* and Chopin's Preludes. The liner notes, which are in form of an interview, show him to be a thoughtful and modest person, and the photographs confirm that impression.

So do his performances. His playing is solid and mature, expressive without any exaggeration, warm in sound and technically accomplished. He aims for clear articulation and eschews virtuosity, but his tendency to be especially deliberate in difficult pieces and passages results in some stodginess. In the sonata, which is a youthful composition, greater drive and brilliance in I, III, and V would have been welcome; and II and IV are too literal and short on poetry. Annie Fischer in her 1961 Edinburgh recital (BBC 4054)—my direct comparison here—threw caution to the wind and made numerous technical mistakes but achieved a more riveting interpretation.

In the Op. 76 Pieces, for which my benchmark on this occasion was the excellent Walter Klien (Vox 3612, M/A 2005), Orth tends to be slower in the fast pieces and faster in the slow ones. No. 2 is not jocular enough, No. 5 is especially ponderous, and 8 is not *grazioso*, as marked; 6 is a little too fast and not sufficiently expressive. In the two Rhapsodies, Orth does not match Peter Rösel's (Berlin 9032) energy, and the lyrical second theme of the second rhapsody is not sufficiently contrasted with the first. These are minor criticisms of performances that I quite enjoyed.

REPP

BRAHMS: *Songs 10*

Sophie Rennert, mz; Lawrence Power, va; Graham Johnson, p—Hyperion 33130—79 minutes

This is the 10th and final volume in Graham Johnson's decade-long project of recording all the piano-accompanied songs of Brahms, each volume with a different singer. I've reviewed five of them with great delight. (ARG missed Volume 6 with Ian Bostridge.) This brings the project to its conclusion with strong and glowing accounts of 30 songs.

The ordering of songs in each volume is

designed to present a sampling of Brahms's songs in roughly chronological order from early to late in his life. Like the previous volumes, this program is a mixture of songs and folk song settings, familiar and unfamiliar.

'Liebestreu', Op. 3:1, was Brahms's debut as composer of lieder and shows him already in full flower. One of his most familiar songs, 'Die Mainacht', composed midway through his career, shows him at the height of his expressive powers. The eight *Gypsy Songs*, Op. 103, come from his mature years. (Johnson includes all the songs of a particular opus only if there is evidence that Brahms intended them to be performed as a group.)

As Johnson points out in his erudite liner notes, it was the common practice for Brahms to have his songs sung in home gatherings "and discussed in an environment of lively and cultivated enthusiasm" rather than "listeners buckling down in respectful silence to a substantial sequence of songs as if they were at a public concert". With that in mind, I found it beneficial to read his commentary about each song, listen to the song, and then pause before going on to another.

This valedictory volume presents some of the best singing of the series. Rennert's smooth and creamy voice is close to a contralto and is nicely mirrored in the viola obbligato of the songs with viola. She uses that tonal depth in 'Die Mainacht' to great effect as she conveys the "darker shadows" in the line "aber ich wende mich, suche dunklere Schatten" before opening into the surging emotion of "und die Einsame Träne rinnt". Johnson describes this moment as "weeping that starts from deep inside the body—a tear as lonely as the protagonist [Brahms] himself". It's one of the most affectively powerful moments for me in all his songs, and she gets it just right.

That is followed immediately by two settings of Daumer texts: 'Von Waldbekränzter Höhe' and 'Unbewegte Laue Luft', with their libidinal eagerness of a woman to be united with her lover. Rennert consistently catches the affect of each song. She brings boundless energy to the 8 *Gypsy Songs* and frolics in the *czardas* style that alternates the slow and fast sections.

She makes these songs luminous with a smooth legato lyricism in some and a sprightly rhythmic swagger in others. Her diction is clear and precise, her phrasing is elegant, her breath control is impressive, and her voice maintains consistent beauty at all dynamic levels. This is superb lieder singing.

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Johnson's commentary on each song is exceedingly valuable not only in the details he illuminates about the song but also about the challenges these songs make on the pianist.

The sound quality and engineering of these recordings has been first rate. The last three I've reviewed have been recorded in the same place with the same engineer and producer, which produced a consistent sound quality for the series.

The liner notes alone with texts and translations are worth the price of this album.

R MOORE

BRAHMS: *String Quintets*

Energie Nove Quartet; Vladimir Mendelssohn, va
Dynamic 7883—58 minutes

Brahms's two string quintets were written in 1882 and 1890. They show the composer at his very best, and both are rich-sounding, exciting works when played and recorded properly—and they certainly are here. The first is in three movements, and the second is in four. As beautiful as the first is, I slightly prefer the second. Don't think that this means that I skip the first and proceed directly to the second! There is an hour of wonderful music here, and once it begins, I am captivated and must listen to both from beginning to end. What surprised me most when I got this was the quality of the Lugano, Switzerland-based Quartetto Energie Nove. Drawn from musicians of the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, the group is international. The violinists are Hans Liviabella and Barbara Ciannamea, the violist is Ivan Vukcevic, and the cellist is Felix Vogelsang. They are fortunate to have excellent instruments, and Liviabella plays a Stradivarius from 1708. The group has a very full sound and is well recorded. They play with plenty of enthusiasm but don't force the music, allowing the sound to blossom.

There are also excellent sets by the Takacs Quartet with violist Lawrence Power (Sept/Oct 2014) and the Raphael Ensemble (July/Aug 1996 & Overview Sept/Oct 2006). Mr Althouse reviewed the Takacs and liked it but preferred the Raphael, which I have not heard. Maxim Rysanov et al made a superb recording of Quintet 2 that I reviewed and found "beyond criticism" (July/Aug 2011). But the present one is just as good with expansive yet very detailed sound. Wow!

Quartetto Energie Nove is planning to record Beethoven's late quartets. Let us pray

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that the current fuss with the virus does not prevent that.

MAGIL

BRAHMS: *Symphonies, all*

Vienna Symphony/ Philippe Jordan
WS 21 [4CD] 162 minutes

Here we have a set of *echt* German symphonies played by a Viennese orchestra led by a French conductor on their label. In many ways the set fits the stereotype, but there is more to it than that. Jordan writes that he hears Brahms as a composer of great songs and chamber music, and he applies those qualities to the symphonies with song-like lyricism, chamber-like styling, and clarity of instruments and inner parts. He also notes that Brahms often makes use of chorales and song melodies in symphonic themes. To Jordan, the “earthy Brahms sound is...a cliché”. Rather than produce the “rich, thick Brahms sound”, he hears Brahms as looking back to Beethoven, Schumann, and Mendelssohn (even as he notes Schoenberg’s admiration for the composer). The result is a “more slender, more sensitive and intimate sonic image”. Tempos are on the fast side, and textures are light for Brahms. That may suggest performances played by a chamber or a “period” orchestra, but neither is the case here. The string section sounds mid-sized and fairly warm, and it uses vibrato. The winds and brass sound like modern instruments, though the trombones probably have smaller than usual bores and an alto on first. The difference between these readings and most performances is mainly in conception and style. They do not actually sound French, but there is justification for thinking of them that way.

Nowhere is this approach more striking than in the muscular First Symphony. The introduction is the fastest I have heard. Textures are light, and the line sings. The orchestral tone is darkish in color but light in weight. Where conductors lean heavily, Jordan flows. The result is different enough to justify his taking first movement repeats, which he does in the first three symphonies. (There is no such repeat in the Fourth.) Tempos through I remain on the fast side but are not rushed. II is halting in its way but keeps moving at a tempo that is fastish but not hurried. Textures are full but no more than that. III begins quickly and picks up speed without seeming rushed, and it always feels that it is moving forward. Jordan’s Finale looks back to I, plus very long pauses

before the two episodes where the low strings play soft *pizzicato*, making things sound mysterious. Annotator Rainer Lepuschitz writes that the horn entrance sings an alphorn theme that Brahms heard in Switzerland. The trombone chorale is played as softly, darkly, and mysteriously as I have heard it, to eerie effect. When the chorale returns in full, it sings like a choir before the symphony ends in triumph.

Symphony 2 benefits from Jordan’s approach. The second theme of I, introduced by the violas and cellos, famously suggests the Brahms Lullaby. This performance makes the Second sound like a symphonic lullaby. It is light-hearted, chamberlike, and balanced so well that woodwind solos carry well without strain; the clarity of the low string lines suggests a string quartet. In the loud section, the rising thirds are clearly and evenly passed from high to low instruments, and the horn solo is nicely balanced. Often the horn “takes over” in this passage, but here it is a partner to the other instruments. The Adagio is sweet, relaxed, intimate, and gentle. The louder section gets its due but matches the general approach. III is fairly quick, light, and folklike, with the midsection nicely spirited. The Finale opens softly, but when the music breaks out, it does so with good speed and energy. The woodwinds are stellar here. The passage before the final celebration is gentle and soft, and the “big tune” sings. The ending can be driven, but this one is not.

The Third Symphony maintains this style. The grand opening of I is on the fast side with light textures and plenty of woodwind color. “Gentle” appears often in my notes. All of this moves along well, abetted by the sleek string sound. II is on the quick side, evoking the impression of quiet singing; the clarinets add sweetness, the bridge before the low string theme is intimate, and the horns and trombones are dark and rich at the end. III feels simple and heartfelt, with a clear-eyed midsection. The soft passage before the main theme returns in the typically contained Viennese-sounding horn to heavenly effect. There is some rubato in all this but not as much as in many performances. The finale seems to sneak in, and the playing is sleek, strong, and never heavy or too powerful. There is a spirited piquance to the string accents before the powerful climax, and the ending is warm and quiet.

No. 4 may be the weakest entry, but it is still quite good. The opening violin figures are like caresses and set the tone. The tempo may

be too fast, and the coloring could be a little darker and more serious, but do not be too concerned about either point. All told, Jordan's approach—especially the lightness—does not work as well here as in the other symphonies. II is on the quick side, but it is fluid, really sings, and works better than the previous movement. That Viennese horn sound and the clarinet are very pleasing. III is terrific—fastish of course, but joyous and jubilant. IV enters after essentially no pause and is very extroverted. The lyrical string passage before the slow section is almost syrupy in a good way. The famous flute solo could be fuller, but it fits the interpretation. The slight push and pull, phrase by phrase, of that slow section, works. The rest is quick, bold, and exciting.

Brahms aficionados will likely find these performances fascinating or maddening. I like them for what they are and know of none like them. The sound is excellent. Lepuschitz's thoughtful and comprehensive booklet notes relate and sometimes analyze Jordan's ideas and approach. Putting each symphony on its own CD is convenient but results in a four-CD box, though it appears to be selling at mid-price.

HECHT

BRAHMS: *Symphony 1; Tragic Overture*
Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra/ Herbert Blomstedt—Pentatone 5186 850—63 minutes

Blomstedt has been with us quite a while, and we perhaps know him best from his years with the San Francisco Symphony (1985-95). He has been music director of several European groups and is still active. For this recording, made in Fall 2019, Blomstedt was 92. He is still a fine conductor, as these performances will testify; time has not slowed him down. Both of these Brahms works are rich and full of expression, and the Leipzig orchestra sounds very good, with excellent contributions by the solo wind players. All the movements are taken at conventional tempos, and I was very happy with everything except for the very beginning of the symphony. The slow introduction is well paced, but feels too metronomic for me, and then Blomstedt takes the exposition repeat, which may please some listeners. After that things are better. The slow movement is very expressive; it oozes with little bulges. Blomstedt does keep it moving—it is an Andante, not an Adagio. III has a delightful rhythmic flow, and the finale has lots of weight and power—as does the *Tragic Overture*.

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I am not wholly pleased with Pentatone's sonics, which are thick and bassy with insufficient "air" around the music.

This is not distinctive enough to recommend if you already have a favorite performance. As I've said before, if I could have only one performance, I would take Furtwängler's—crusty 1951 sound and all!

ALTHOUSE

BRAHMS: *Symphony 4; Tragic Overture; Hungarian Dances 2,4,8,9,17-21*
Swedish Chamber Orchestra/ Thomas Dausgaard—BIS 2383 [SACD] 73 minutes

The symphony has been recorded hundreds of times—and mostly better. It's not the sound, which is very beautiful, but tempos and orchestra size. One of my earliest childhood memories is that the orchestra had to get much bigger for Brahms—and I loved it. The music was rich and majestic; it required a big orchestra. This is a chamber orchestra; I can never accept that.

And every movement is too fast. The first two movements are faster than any recording I know. The Scherzo (III) is not so bad this fast—and a few other recordings are similar. In IV I think the fast tempo ruins it (only Levine comes close). I can understand that it's a big theme-and-variations, and often it sprawls and fails to cohere. But I can't accept the sheer speed here. Coherence at the expense of expansiveness and warmth?

The Hungarian Dances are Dausgaard's own orchestration. Dvorak orchestrated 19-21, so it was unnecessary to do it again. But the others recorded here were orchestrated later, so there was no harm in trying. Still, Ivan Fischer recorded all the Hungarian Dances twice, and both are better than this. Try this for a slightly different slant on them—less folk-like, more string-oriented.

The *Tragic Overture* takes a mere 12 minutes. Conductors as varied as Bruno Walter and Georg Solti take 13:20 or more. I realize a chamber orchestra allows faster tempos, but I don't enjoy this lean and mean tragic music.

VROON

BRAHMS: *Violin Sonatas*
John Fatial; Andrew Harley, p
Centaur 3711—72 minutes

I do not believe in the concept of recording saturation. A good recording justifies its existence, and a bad recording does not. This is not a top-tier recording of Brahms, but there

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are moments that elucidate the pieces in a new way—an impressive feat considering their rich history. The opening of I in the first sonata is too cheerful and enthusiastic. I miss the peaceful serenity and pastoral qualities. Brahms wrote the sonata in his beloved vacation locale, Portschach am Worthersee, in the summers of 1878-79, and performers should observe the gentle contemplations and restfulness of the music. The piano swerves too far in the other direction during the first theme above the violin's pizzicato accompaniment, stodgy and tired. They approach II with more delicacy and tenderness. I felt I learned more about the music—a sure mark of a good performance. Clipping notes contribute to a martial style in the contrasting sections. Melodrama enters near the end as the performers commit to ominous stillness and coldness. The extreme contrast feels operatic and narrative-driven; listeners will intuit a tale behind the music. Brahms rarely displays this much personal touch; the performers relish the raw emotion. Warmth returns to finish the movement. Unfortunately in III the performers rarely find the right sound.

The second sonata is unremarkable: a slow and languorous III, a slow and ponderous II with covered melodies, and an average I except that the stillness near the end is similar to the hesitancy in II of the first sonata. Brahms famously loves invoking Beethoven, but here he quotes himself.

The performers force transitions in I; it is better to allow the transitions to happen. Too much thought and nuance tarnish II. The beat is over-emphasized, and there is not enough lyricism. They misrepresent the style and sound in III. Sequences are too similar in IV. The development sounds dainty, and 8th notes poke like needles. But good playing resides here. Does this recording deserve to exist? Barely.

KELLENBERGER

BRAHMS: *Clarinet Quintet*; see MOZART

BRITTEN: *Peter Grimes*

Stuart Skelton (Peter), Erin Wall (Ellen), Roderick Williams (Balstrode), Susan Bickley (Auntie); Bergen Philharmonic/ Edward Gardner

Chandos 5250 [2CD] 138 minutes

Leading the Bergen Philharmonic, of which he is Chief Conductor, and presiding over what seems from the photos to be a semi-staged concert, Edward Gardner enjoys a rare level of

control over this exquisitely prepared performance. His attention to sonorities and details of articulation affords many pleasures, and he builds the opera's tension with thrilling intensity. The ebb and flow of the orchestral accompaniment to the Act I ensemble 'I'll give a hand, the tide is near the turn,' taken a little faster than usual, keenly mirrors the pull of fate, as inexorable as the sea. Brisk tempos also add *frisson* to the Grimes-Balstrode confrontation ('And do you prefer the storm'), leading to a gloriously hair-raising rendition of the second 'Sea Interlude.' It's an approach very much in the spirit of Britten's own personality as a conductor.

In the title role, Stuart Skelton's somewhat thick tenor has neither the biting clarity of Vickers nor the impassioned elegance of Pears. But he does make a sharp contrast between Grimes's brutish outbursts and the gentleness of his internal monologs. I've always found Ellen's character one-dimensional, especially in comparison with (or perhaps intentionally in opposition to) Peter's complexities and contradictions. But Erin Wall, like the great Heather Harper of a previous generation, brings a powerful personal warmth to the role that fully fleshes out the woman behind the notes. Her soprano is radiant, phrasing and diction are direct and natural, and her performance serves as a remarkable testament to her artistry—the final testament, since she has just died at age 44. The choral forces and the entire supporting cast are excellent, including baritone Roderick Williams, whose ingratiating vocal presence makes Balstrode a model of kind concern.

ALTMAN

BRONSART: *Jery und Bätely*

Caroline Bruker (Bätely), Harrie van der Plas (Jery), Laurence Kalaidjian (Thomas), Söhnke Tams Freier (Father); Malmö Opera/ Dario Salvi

Naxos 660476—67 minutes

Ingeborg von Bronsart, née Starck (1840-1913), was born to Finnish Swedes living in St Petersburg, Russia. By age 14 she was an accomplished pianist and had begun to compose. Four years later she went to study with Liszt in Weimar and soon began performing in major cities (including Paris). In 1861 she married a fellow composer, Hans von Bronsart, and soon after, when he became an official in Prussia (at the royal theater in Hanover), she was required to cease performing publicly. From that point on, she concentrated her

energies on composition, writing four operas and many chamber works, piano pieces, and songs. An early piano concerto is apparently lost. (Don O'Connor greatly liked her husband's piano concerto; Jan/Feb 2019.)

This is my first encounter with Ingeborg von Bronsart's music. *Jery und Bätely* (1873) was apparently her biggest success as an opera composer. Its libretto derives from a "love in a village" singspiel text that Goethe wrote in 1779. The story, briefly, is that Jery, a wealthy young farmer, has thus far failed to win the love of the sturdy, principled milkmaid, Bätely. He offers money to his friend Thomas to win Bätely for him, but Thomas overdoes things: ordering a glass of wine from her as if her house were an inn, threatening the lass physically, and finally driving his herd of animals across her property and smashing her windows. He then attacks Jery. Bätely, belatedly, recognizes that she is attracted to the wounded, woebegone Jery. Thomas pays for the damage he has done, and all is forgiven. (There are brief roles also for Bätely's father, a shepherd boy, and a chorus of herdsman.)

Goethe's highly condensed text had served as the free basis for operas by Auber (*Le Chalet*, 1834) and Donizetti (*Betty*, 1836, rev. 1837). The Auber version was extremely effective, reaching 500 performances in its first 17 seasons. Other works using some version of the text were composed by Peter Winter, Johann Friedrich Reichardt, Conradin Kreutzer, and Julius Rietz.

I don't know any of them. Presumably the composers were seeking to capitalize on Goethe's renown. Bronsart's style resembles Weber, from 50 or 60 years earlier, but without Weber's itchy inventiveness. The singers do convey the basic thrust of the vocal lines. But the penny-plain harmony and foursquare phrase structure give them little to work with.

It doesn't help that the six arias (honestly labeled "Lieder") and four duets are all extremely short—many shorter than two minutes. The final duet (recognition of mutual affection by the title characters), the two trios, and the finale are somewhat more substantial, but not enough to salvage the whole thing.

One oddity compounds the lack of dramatic development and interaction: in the duets and larger ensembles the voices almost never overlap. This allows Goethe's verses to be clearly heard. But, since the composer then often repeats some lines, she could have allowed the singers to join their voices in simultaneous melodies or in the same line

doubled at, say, the octave or the sixth. Was she influenced by Wagner's model of largely avoiding any overlap in vocal lines? If so, this seems a miscalculation, given how simple her musical materials are in the work.

I admit that, when Jery and Bätely finally do get to sing together in their last duet, I felt a rush of appreciation. It also helps that the music at that moment shows greater harmonic sophistication and fuller orchestration than anything previously heard. (Musicologist Melinda Boyd, in her booklet essay, argues that the work reveals more complexity and richness as it goes along.)

I suspect that *Jery und Bätely* might come alive with less dutiful performances, perhaps especially if all the singers were native German-speakers highly experienced in operetta or cabaret and could enliven the spoken and sung parts with nuances, such as hints of menace, pomposity, humor, and irony. Indeed, the most effective performer here, Laurence Kalaidjian (as the out-of-control Thomas), was born in Hamburg. Although his voice is sometimes unsteady, he conveys a wider range of emotions than do the others. Particularly limited here is American soprano Caroline Bruker, whose non-native German pronunciation (e.g., in the crucial name "Jery") is distracting and whose vocal tone is thin, sometimes like a child soprano.

It also would have helped if the singers had had a chance to perform the work on stage. I wonder if they even knew the opera's full libretto, which includes frequent stage directions. (I consulted a copy at the Library of Congress's website.) For example, the libretto makes clear that, in Scene 9, Thomas is standing outside Bätely's house and that she finally slams the window shut. (The recording lacks sound effects.) Perhaps the singers only knew the sung and spoken words but not the stage directions.

The latter are entirely missing from the libretto that Naxos makes available online. This is absurd for a little-known opera.

Might there be better vocal works by Bronsart: her songs, perhaps? An otherwise inconsistent composer can often find inspiration in a touching or forceful poetic text, as can be demonstrated in songs by such composers as Felicien David (Sept/Oct 2014), Regine Wieniawski Poldowski (July/Aug 2017), and Cesar Cui (May/June 2017).

LOCKE

BROSSE: *A Symphonic Journey*
Brussels Philharmonic/ Dirk Brosse
Antarctica 19—80 minutes

Dirk Brosse is a Belgian conductor and composer who has written over 200 works, including film, television, stage music, and symphonic compositions. He is currently Music Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and has conducted many international orchestras. The works here were composed over several years and are making their recorded debut. Some of the music was written for films, but others are concert works. I was impressed by the variety of music and musical styles, and everything here is highly accomplished. Brosse knows how to write music that meets the subject's requirements while remaining wholly individual, melodic, and inventive. He is expert at introducing themes and developing them in an interesting way. His orchestrations are colorful and beautifully enhance the music. You can hear the influence of Bernard Herrmann, John Williams, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofieff, but Brosse has developed a unique style that is appealing.

The works here include the excellent and propulsive *Philadelphia Overture*, the suite *Sea Life Aquarium*, written after a visit to the Antwerp Zoo, and the *Radetzky Waltz* a lively and elegant dance using the music of Johann Strauss, Sr. The Adagio for Strings is an impressive, reverent, and somber piece dedicated to victims of the Syrian Civil War.

There is music written for the sound and silent films *Back to Utopia* and *Amore Pedestre*, with memorable themes. The *Grand Canyon of the Colorado* is an ethereal piece beautifully scored to envision misty panoramas. The final selection, the *Olympic Fanfare and Hymn*, is appropriately magisterial.

The only piece that I found disappointing was the suite *Fur Elise at the Movies*; it supposedly uses Beethoven's themes as an homage to various films. The music is quite good, but I didn't hear the relationship of Beethoven's music to the films.

The Brussels orchestra plays excellently and follows the conductor's lead with precision. The sound is demonstration quality. Brosse's new disc demonstrates his accomplishments as a composer, and the music is both compelling and enjoyable. The English-only booklet offers information about the selections and the composer.

FISCH

BRUCKNER: *Mass 2 in E minor*
with motets: *Ecce Sacerdos*; *Tota Pulchra Es*;
Virga Jesse; *Locus Iste*; *Ave Maria*; *Christus Factus Est*
King's College Choir; Academy of St Martin in the
Fields/ Stephen Cleobury
King's 35 [SACD] 57 minutes

Stephen Cleobury died from cancer just over a year ago (November 22, 2019) at the age of 70. This was recorded in March and June of that year and became his last recording; the poignant liner notes tell us that in his final days he was concerned with making final edits for this recording and also listening to all of Wagner's *Ring*.

Cleobury directed the Choir of King's College, Cambridge for 37 years and also served as Chief Conductor of the BBC Singers. This recording includes Bruckner's Mass No. 2 (the one with wind accompaniment since the premiere took place on the square outside Linz Cathedral) and six of the more popular Bruckner motets. Chief among these is the splendid, grand *Ecce Sacerdos Magnus*, which also uses wind accompaniment (three trombones plus organ).

There are people for whom the choral sun rises and sets with King's College, and for them no further recommendation is needed. This is wonderful music, and everything is expertly done. Others might argue, though, that the King's sound, the British boys' sound, isn't ideal for Bruckner. Continental boys' choirs tend to have a warmer sound, and there also mixed choirs who can do a pretty good job with Bruckner. A good comparison here would be Rilling's recording of the Mass along with the *Te Deum* and *Psalms 150* (Hänssler 98119, July/Aug 1998). What is impressive about the British singers, though, is the purity of their sound, which makes the thick choral writing very clear—and their intonation is almost perfect.

A wonderful disc, all in all, and a wonderful tribute to Cleobury, a musician who will be long missed. Texts, translations, and unusually fine liner notes with a good discussion of the Cecilian movement.

ALTHOUSE

There is an inverse relationship between social status and the size of television screens. The same applies to the number of cars in the driveway.

BRUCKNER: *Overture in G minor*
with *Symphony 0*; **MAINTZ:** *Chorale Prelude LI*
Hansjörg Albrecht, organ
Oehms 476—62 minutes

with *Symphony in F minor*; *March in D minor*; *3 Pieces*

Rudolf Innig, organ—MDG 917 2174—70 min

I have often wondered why Bruckner, a devoutly religious man, did not leave a large corpus of organ music. His father was an organist, and by the age of 10 young Anton was able to deputize for his father at church services. He went on to play, assuming positions at the Augustinian monastery of St Florian, then Linz Cathedral, and finally at the Imperial Chapel in Vienna. He gained international fame for his improvisations and was acclaimed in Paris (by Gounod, Saint-Saëns, and Franck) and London, where he gave a series of recitals on the organ at Crystal Palace. In addition many have felt that his symphonic music took inspiration from the organ; his terraced dynamics and slow harmonic rhythm with frequent pedal points suggest organ style. Perhaps his interest in and skill at improvisation made it unnecessary for him to write down his efforts at the organ. In any case all we have is a handful of preludes and a couple of fugues, though it is certainly possible that many early works have been lost.

Here we have two CDs of Bruckner's symphonic music transcribed for organ. The works are early. There are nine numbered symphonies, written from 1865 to 1896. Preceding these by only a short time are two others: a *Symphony in F minor*, generally known as the *Study Symphony* (1863); and another in D minor, which is given the number 0 or called *Die Nullte* (c 1863-64). With these two discs, then, we have both of the "pre-numbered" symphonies, along with orchestral pieces, all from 1862-63. Everything pre-dates *Symphony No. 1*.

Hansjörg Albrecht is known primarily as the director of the Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra. His CD is the first of a project to record all of Bruckner's symphonies on organ; this one is listed as Vol. 0 (cute). All are to be done at "original locations", which in this case is the splendid instrument at St Florian, where Bruckner was a choirboy and later the organist. (The instrument has been updated since Bruckner's time.) In addition, each of the ten discs is to be filled out by new compositions written specifically for each volume. Here we

have a five-minute chorale prelude by Philipp Maintz, a nice, colorful piece, quite modern in style, that supposedly relates to Bruckner's F-minor Mass (I don't understand how.) For the *Overture in G minor* Albrecht uses Rudolf Innig's transcription; for *Symphony 0* the transcription is by Erwin Horn.

The organist in the other CD is Rudolf Innig, who has enriched the catalog over the years with the complete organ works of Barber, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Messiaen. Now in his early 70s, he still plays exceptionally well. Here he plays the Goll organ at the Marktkirche in Hanover. The transcriptions used are his own, and his liner notes are unusually informative and interesting.

Both of these issues are very well done and can be recommended to organ lovers. Both instruments sound splendid, though the St Florian instrument is a bit grander and the building is more reverberant. Complete stop lists are given in the notes. Both players are first rate, and indeed, their performances of the *Overture in G minor* (the only piece in common) are quite similar (the timings 12:13 and 12:20). I confess, though, that once my initial curiosity was satisfied, the music wasn't very interesting. The organs are capable of a lot of tonal variety, but they don't substitute for an orchestra. I would be curious to hear what Albrecht will do with one of the later symphonies, where the music is stronger than in these early works. Again, though, I suspect it will be a curiosity and not a serious threat to the wonderful orchestral originals.

ALTHOUSE

BUSONI: *Early Piano Pieces*

Holger Groschopp—Capriccio 5416 [3CD] 3:05

Busoni is a composer whose works I do not appreciate, and very few have remained in my collection. Thus I was not looking forward to listening to 3 hours of totally unfamiliar piano pieces composed in his teenage years. But I was in for a surprise!

This release is titled "Early Masterpieces". Busoni was born in 1866, so he was between 11 and 17 years old when he wrote them. One piece on CD 2 is even from 1873. There are 71 pieces altogether, with an average duration of about 3 minutes, and 10 are recorded here for the first time. The ones on discs 2 and 3 are arranged chronologically according to the *Busoni-Verzeichnis* (BV); their opus numbers do not correspond to the order of composition. At the end is a bonus track—a piece by

Anna Weiss-Busoni (1833-1909), the composer's mother.

On CD 1 there are two cycles: a set of 6 pieces called *A Village Festival*, Op. 9, followed by a march, Op. 32, that Busoni meant to substitute for one of the pieces, and 24 Preludes, Op. 37, arranged into four books of 6 each.

I listened to all of this with amazement and unflagging attention. Busoni was clearly a prodigy of the highest order, as the famous critic Eduard Hanslick (cited in the liner notes) already recognized in 1876—before the present compositions. These pieces have nothing immature about them; even the one from 1873 measures up to the others. They are extremely inventive and varied. Their thematic material is clever; they are rhythmically interesting, and their harmony, while conventional, is used in unhackneyed ways. A single exception (Prelude No. 13) seems to point forward harmonically in its chord sequences, anticipating Reger. With rare exceptions, the pieces are not virtuosic and playable by amateurs, and nearly all have dedicatees.

What is truly astonishing is that there is no influence whatsoever from romanticism—not from Schumann, Brahms, or Liszt, nor even from Chopin in the Preludes—and really none from the classicists either. A whole century was lost on Busoni! Although his music sounds more “modern”, its roots are in Bach and his period. It is linear and often polyphonic, though not with Bach's rigor and complexity. Its texture is generally light and transparent. Many pieces have baroque titles such as Minuet, Gavotte, or Gigue—or even Preludes and Fugues. Nearly all pieces are dance-like rather than song-like, and rather abstract. Even the few pieces with more specific titles do not differ much in character from the others; there is minimal “tone painting”. Giving some pieces descriptive titles (as in the *Medieval Caricatures*, Op. 33) is Busoni's only concession to romanticism, but his attempts to convey concrete characters or scenes actually diminish the musical substance. In several instances his titles do not match the character of the piece: his Scherzo, Op. 4—one of the finest and most extensive pieces here—has a moderate tempo and an even slower middle section; his *Scène de Ballet*, Op. 6, is a virtuosic exercise with chord sequences; and there is nothing nocturnal about his *Danza Notturna*, Op. 13. No, his strength lies in “pure” music.

The piece by his mother, called *Improvvisata* and composed 11 years before he was born, is quite different in style. It is an

Italian song with accompaniment, surrounded by virtuosic passages reminiscent of Liszt.

The excellent and indefatigable performer of all this is the German pianist Holger Groschopp, who also wrote the liner notes. His previous recordings of the technically and musically far more demanding Busoni transcriptions have been reviewed without enthusiasm (M/A 2002, N/D 2009, N/D 2014), but here he seems to be in his element. His playing is clear and engaging and shows the “extremely even touch” praised by Brent Auerbach (N/D 2009). I tend to agree with Groschopp's judgement that the pieces on CD 1, especially the 24 Preludes, are the best here; but the differences in quality are really slight and inconsistent. This suggests to me that Busoni's musical language and compositional skills did not evolve much in this period, and perhaps this offers a clue as to why he eventually had to come up with a “new aesthetic” that contaminated his own style and made him turn increasingly to grandiosity, transcription, and philosophy.

REPP

BUSONI: 2-Piano Pieces

Aldo Ciccolini, Aldo Orvieto, Marco Rapetti
Naxos 574086—74 minutes

In 1910, Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), who had been working on a completion of Bach's *Art of Fugue*, published the first version of his *Fantasia Contrappuntistica* in a private edition. There followed three different publications of *Contrapuntal Fantasy*: Prelude to the chorale ‘Glory to the Lord in Heaven’ and Fugue in four obbligato voices on a fragment of Bach. In 1912 and 1916, Busoni published two different “minor editions” of the *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*. The final, definitive version of this monumental work came in 1921; it was for two pianos. Here we get a stellar performance from March of 2000 by Aldo Ciccolini and Aldo Orvieto.

Ciccolini student Marco Rapetti joins Orvieto for the remaining 2-piano works on this program, three of which are listed as world premiere recordings. These are two substantial original works—Prelude and Fugue in C minor (1878) and Capriccio in G minor (1879)—and a transcription of Schumann's Introduction and Concert Allegro. The Schumann is a standard second piano reduction of the orchestra parts; the original piano solo part is unaltered.

Two Mozart works complete the program. *Duetto Concertante* is a wonderful, quite

original reworking of the Finale from Piano Concerto 19. Then there is Busoni's transcription of the Overture from *The Magic Flute*.

We get good recorded sound and informative notes very well translated from the original Italian (not usually the case). The piano ensemble is top notch for both pairs of pianists. The technical demands of Busoni's writing are handled admirably, and this should be considered a must-have for anyone interested in the composer or 20th Century 2-piano music in general.

HARRINGTON

BUSONI: *Violin Sonatas*

Ingolf Turban; Ilia Scheps, p
CPO 555213

Busoni (1866-1924) was one of the last musicians who was just as important a composer as he was a performer. What is remarkable is that this had been the norm for hundreds of years, but beginning in the 20th Century, it is rare.

Busoni wrote two violin sonatas, the First in 1889 when he was 23 years old and the Second in 1898 at age 32. Entering middle age occasioned a big change in his artistic personality, and he later referred to this Sonata, Opus 36a, as his true Opus 1. It is easy to hear why. Sonata 1, in the conventional three movements, is unimaginative and not memorable; but Sonata 2 sounds like it comes from a different world. Conventional form is jettisoned, and the nearly 35-minute work extends across 11 sections. Busoni's inventiveness is remarkable. Just as remarkable is that he would continue to evolve as a composer and soon come to look down on this work as conventional.

Ingolf Turban and Ilia Scheps are excellent musicians, fully up to this music's technical and expressive demands. Good sound.

MAGIL

BUXTEHUDE: *Organ Pieces 1*

Friedhelm Flamme—CPO 555 253 [2SACD] 2:16

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707) marks the climax of the North German tradition of organ playing and composition in the 17th Century. He was widely admired in his day, and more of his organ pieces have come down to us than of any other German composer before JS Bach. Organist Friedhelm Flamme is a noted authority on this music, and it is appropriate that his series of the complete organ works of Buxtehude should follow closely on the heels of his comprehensive recorded survey of the North

German School for CPO. I have reviewed several of those releases including works by Vincent Lübeck (CPO 777 198; N/D 2006), Hieronymus Praetorius (777 345; J/F 2013), Michael Praetorius (777 716; J/A 2015), Jakob Praetorius (777 959; M/A 2017), and Heinrich Scheidemann (777 562; J/A 2017).

My praise for the performances on those recordings was often qualified. Sometimes (but not always) Flamme employs a detached articulation to the detriment of phrase coherence. That is less the case in these performances of Buxtehude than in some of the earlier North German masters. Some registrations rubbed me the wrong way, but more about that later. There is no question that these recordings constitute a valuable document of an important chapter in the history of baroque organ composition by an artist who knows that repertory from the inside out.

For this opening volume of Buxtehude, Flamme has chosen the three-manual Christoph Treutmann organ at the abbey church of St George in Grauhof near Goslar, an instrument used for some of the recordings in the North German series. It was completed in 1737 and is the best preserved of that builder's instruments. The most recent restoration was carried out from 1989 to 1992. Gerhard Aumüller points out in his detailed essay on the instrument that it combines characteristics of the North and Central German schools of organ building, particularly in its use of gamba stops of a kind common in Silesia and its smooth blending of registers. Its well-tempered tuning makes it better than meantone for pieces in relatively remote keys, such as the Prelude in F-sharp minor (K 146) and the Prelude in E (K 141)—both here. A considerable amount of action noise may be annoying to some listeners, especially in the quieter pieces. Fans of the baroque organ tend to regard that as just part of the territory.

The plan for the project is to structure the contents of each CD as a recital program that draws on the variety of genres found in Buxtehude's organ works. Thus we have a mix of the large-scale preludes (sometimes erroneously called preludes & fugues), individual chorale preludes, liturgical verses, chorale variations and fantasias, a pair of canzonettas (K 167 and 225), the Chaconne in E minor (K 160), and Passacaglia in D minor (K 161). The contrasts in style and volume are certainly welcome to the listener, far more so than hearing all the examples of a given genre in succession.

Choices of registration and tempo can vary

extremely from one artist to another. For the most part, I found Flamme's choices, whether in the grandeur of the preludes or the delicacy of some of the chorale preludes, to be admirable and a fine exposition of the colors available on the Treutmann organ. A few registrations struck me as odd. For example, the Chaconne in E minor (K 160) is bombastic, with an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink registration. There is just too much sound; the effect is oppressive and tends to obscure the details of Buxtehude's contrapuntal writing. I have long thought of this as a piece for mezzo-forte foundation stops with perhaps some brighter sounds towards the end. Most of the other recordings I have heard share my outlook.

At the other end of the spectrum, Flamme treats all but the final section of the Prelude in F-sharp minor (K 146) as a vehicle for quiet flute tone with tremulant rather than the more conventional principal chorus with or without chorus reeds. In the end, Flamme's playing is always authoritative, and his skillful rhythmic flexibility ensures that the music never sounds stiff. With the help of a registration assistant, he varies the sound between the sections of the larger free pieces. This promises to be an impressive set of recordings.

GATENS

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Songs*

Caroline Helton, s; Kathryn Goodson, p
Blue Griffin 549—65 minutes

This is Volume 3 in Helton's series, *Songs from a Lost World of Italian Jewish Composers*. Volume 1 is *L'Infinito* (Equilibrium 123, July/Aug 2014, p202) and volume 2 is *La Tregua* (Blue Griffin 425, Nov/Dec 2017, p246). Our reviewers enjoyed the program but commented that the performances weren't the best. Others' tastes and tolerances vary, especially where rare repertory is concerned, but I had to stop after a handful of songs. Helton's care for the music comes across in her phrasing, but I found her voice intolerably wobbly and lacking a solid core. Texts and translations.

ESTEP

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Violin Pieces*

Fulvio Luciani; Massimiliano Motterle, p
Brilliant 95927—60 minutes

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's (1895-1968) career can be divided into two halves. He began in his native Italy, but after the passage of the Italian Racial Laws in 1938, he turned to

fellow Italian Arturo Toscanini, himself already an emigre, and fellow Jew Jascha Heifetz for help immigrating to the United States.

The *Adriatic Nocturne* (1924) is from his Italian period. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a sort of very conservative impressionist, and listening to this I can imagine myself some evening on the shore of the Adriatic enjoying the sea breeze. There are also arrangements by Heifetz of two selections from the Shakespeare Songs of 1932, 'Sea Murmurs' and 'Tango'. They are very brief trifles suitable for encores.

After the composer arrived in America in 1939, he sought employment writing commissions, and he wrote Violin Concerto 3 for Jascha Heifetz. He had already written his Violin Concerto 2, *The Prophets*, in 1931—Heifetz recorded it later. Heifetz was not satisfied with this new concerto, perhaps because it is not very imaginative, so he never performed it. Fulvio Luciani gave its premiere in Milan in 2016.

The rest of the program includes arrangements of the Op. 117 Intermezzos by Brahms and 12 of Chopin's Preludes. The Brahms arrangements were published in 1953; the Chopin never were. Both sets of arrangements pale compared with the originals.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a mediocre composer who ended up working mainly in Hollywood, and perhaps his greatest accomplishment was training three of the best film composers: John Williams, Henry Mancini, and Andre Previn. It seems that his great gift was teaching.

Luciani plays a violin built by the Cremonese master Lorenzo Storioni around 1810 or 15.

MAGIL

CHAUSSON: *Symphony*;

HONEGGER: *Symphony 3*;

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony 4*;

BERLIOZ: *Benvenuto Cellini & Beatrice and Benedict overtures*

Paris Conservatory & Suisse Romande orchestras/ Robert Denzler

Decca 4840262 [2CD] 127 minutes

Robert Denzler was born and died in Zurich (1892-1972). His recordings with Decca came about because of his friendship with Ernest Ansermet in Geneva. The Berlioz and Tchaikovsky were recorded with Ansermet's orchestra, the Suisse Romande.

I have always thought that the most beautiful recording of Chaussou's symphony is this

one. It is lush and velvety and string-dominated—and the Decca sound is simply gorgeous. It was recorded in 1956! Decca at that time (London in the USA) was simply way ahead of other record labels in sound. This is stereo, too!

There used to be quite a few recordings of this symphony. I have Fournet, Ansermet, and Dutoit; and I think the first two are deleted now. I really like Fournet in French music (Jan/Feb 2011), but his sound is not as warm and velvety as Denzler. The Ansermet is the same label as Denzler, coupled with Fauré; but it disappeared more than 10 years ago. I always liked Ansermet recordings, but the Denzler Chausson is hard to beat.

The only symphony of Arthur Honegger (Swiss composer born the same year as this conductor) that I ever really liked is this one, the *Symphonie Liturgique*, and I think that is mainly for III, ‘Dona Nobis Pacem’. Karajan’s Berlin recording is still the one to have. Denzler’s Honegger and Berlioz (1954) are not stereo. Honegger’s 5-minute ‘Song of Joy’ is appended to the symphony; it’s a pleasant, song-like piece that is seldom heard.

The Berlioz overtures sound their recording age (1954)—muffled and not very energetic or vital.

That leaves the 1961 stereo Tchaikovsky 4th. I can think of many better recordings, so I would never recommend that you buy this set for the Tchaikovsky. Denzler sounds much like Beecham from the same period—but Sir Thomas was always unique, and I wouldn’t give up his Tchaikovsky 4. They sound similar—that is, I think their engineers had a similar approach to recording an orchestra. It is blended, homogenized sound. Nothing stands out (except perhaps an obtrusive breath taken by the horn around 14 minutes in and an abrupt splice near the beginning of II). The conducting here is confident but conventional—never moving or startling. I think Tchaikovsky demands more.

VROON

CHAUSSON: *Piano Quartet*; see RAVEL

Poem of Love & the Sea; see Collections

CHESKY: *Abreu Danzas*; *Song of the Amazon*; *Descarga 1-2*

Marisa Martinez, s; Descaregas Orchestra, Orchestra of the 21st Century

Chesky 456—47 minutes

David Chesky’s *Abreu Danzas* (2019) is a ballet composed of catchy, interrelated Latin Ameri-

can dances along the lines of Roberto Sierra, brilliantly orchestrated and flawlessly crafted. This is a welcome enterprise that will put a smile on your face—certainly needed these days. I loved all of them.

Song of the Amazon (2019) is a colorful and moving piece illustrating the sound and atmosphere of the region, where Chesky and his family spent much time. It is beautifully sung by Ms Martinez. *Descarga 1 and 2* (also 2019) are dances in a similar style.

Performances are enthusiastic and extremely well played. Text is included for the song. One considerable flaw: the conductor is not credited. Notes contain helpful information, but are not by the composer and need a magnifying glass to read. Nevertheless, this is a terrific release. Don’t miss it.

GIMBEL

CHOPIN: *Nocturnes, all; piano pieces*

Jan Smeterlin

Decca Eloquence 4841308 [2CD] 138 minutes

This Polish born pianist (1892-1967) will be remembered by readers of a certain age for his warm interpretations of the music by his countrymen Frederic Chopin and Karol Szymanowski. As a friend of the latter he maintained a close relationship for many years. During his time under scholarship in Vienna he studied with Leopold Godowsky. He and his wife Didi lived in New York for a while and recorded much Chopin for several labels.

The Nocturnes are presented complete, and we also have a BBC London recital from 1949 with two Ballades and several Mazurkas.

Word Police: triage

This word has only recently entered dictionaries. It means a system to allocate benefits or scarce commodities. So it is a bureaucratic and political word. Also, recently it has been used as a verb. To triage is to decide who gets the benefit or commodity. The implication seems to be that such a decision is difficult and is bound to seem unfair to someone.

I like to reject new and unnecessary words, but this one has colors and implications that no other word has, so it is serving a purpose. Still, it seems that people who use it are almost always bureaucrats. It would be sad if the word simply came to mean “difficult decision”.

The latest usages of it mean “treatment”. Why? Stupidity.

In addition there is the Etude Op. 25:3 and a Mazurka made for Decca in 1946 that were never issued.

All of these recordings are in good monaural sound, with only an occasional tinge of boxiness, and should present no impediment to enjoyment for our ARG readers. They all show the pianist as a fine, highly nuanced artist with a natural sense of rubato, and should be enthusiastically gobbled up by any reader who cares about the world of fine pianism.

The notes are good and the presentation further enhanced with several photographs.

BECKER

COLISTA: *Sinfonie a 3*

Ensemble Giardino Di Delizie/ Ewa Anna Augustynowicz—Brilliant 96033—75 minutes

I had high praise for this ensemble's Lonati program (Brilliant 95590, J/A 2019), and I'm about to do the same here. Composer and lutenist Lelio Colista (1629-80) was hailed in Rome as "an Orpheus" and even as a boy he was on stage—as a dancer—amidst the opulence of the Barberini court's theatrical productions. Later he performed as a musician at the highest churches and courts in Rome.

These pieces date from Alexander VII's papacy (1655-67), they are preserved in the Giordano 15 manuscript in Turin's Biblioteca Nazionale, and we know that some were performed in 1664 on Christmas Eve at Santa Maria Del Popolo in Rome. They were composed with the assumption that the finest players were available to play them—the reputation of Rome as having "the greatest instrumentalists of the time" spread well beyond that city and beyond Italy.

Their full noble sound belies the fact that there are only 5 players in Ensemble Giardino Di Delizie. Around half of the sinfonias have harpsichord in the continuo, and others are anchored by the historic organ where the recording was made, St Francis Church in Trevi, Italy. Its oldest pipes date from 1509.

The playing is very fine, full of verve and panache. There's a fine breadth of phrase as the music is given time to breathe, and the ebb and flow in rapid passagework is nimble and varied. Graceful dancelike sections alternate with fluid fugues (a hallmark of the Roman tradition), and in two of the sinfonias there's an indication in the score that if the players wish—and are up to the challenge—they

should insert an improvisatory section between the first and second movements.

C MOORE

COOKE: *Oboe Pieces; 2-Piano Sonata*

Melinda Maxwell, ob; Harvey Davies, Helen Davies, p; Sarah Ewins, v; Susie Meszaros, va; Heather Bills, vc—MPR 108—76 minutes

The British composer Arnold Cooke (1906-2005) may not have the name recognition of his contemporary Benjamin Britten; yet he remains an important figure in 20th Century English music. He studied at Cambridge with Edward Joseph Dent (1876-1957) and in Berlin with Paul Hindemith (1895-1963); and in 1938, after five years as a professor at the Royal Manchester College of Music, he moved to London to further his career as a composer and teacher. During World War II he served as an officer in the Royal Navy, and in 1947 he obtained his doctorate from Cambridge and an appointment as composition professor at Trinity College in London. He retired from Trinity College in 1978; and he wrote music until he suffered a stroke in 1993.

Cooke's catalog includes one ballet, two operas, keyboard music, vocal and choral works, orchestral music, and a considerable volume of chamber music. His music combines the sweet lyricism of English nationalism with the intricate counterpoint of German practice. This British project encompasses a half-century of his library, from the Sonata for Two Pianos (1937) to the Intermezzo for Oboe and Piano (1987). In between appears the Oboe Sonata (1957), written for Leon Goossens (1897-1988); the Sonata for Oboe and Cembalo (1962), written for the just as renowned Evelyn Rothwell (1911-2008); and the Oboe Quartet (1948), written in response to a commission from Cambridge music patron Lys Hackforth and premiered by Goossens and the Mary Carter String Trio.

Maxwell has a pleasant sound and good fingers; and her declamations at the peaks of the musical landscape are heartfelt. Yet her overall timbre is dry and sometimes chirpy, her legato is a little wobbly, and her renditions can be rather plain. Harvey Davies is a terrific collaborator in the sonatas, offering a beautiful touch, excellent technique, and keen artistic instinct and delivery. In the Sonata for Two Pianos, he joins his mother Helen Davies for a mesmerizing keyboard duet that sounds like one mind. The string trio in the Oboe Quartet differs a bit on sonic philosophy—the violin

and viola are gossamer and the cello is rich—but on the whole the reading is effective.

HANUDEL

COUPERIN, A-L: *Harpsichord Pieces*

Christophe Rousset—Aparte 236 [2CD] 101 min

It's good in isolation, but not great against tough competition.

Armand-Louis Couperin (1727-89) was a nephew of Francois Couperin. In his early 20s he published this single book of harpsichord pieces in Paris (1751). Half of the pieces are in either G major or minor, and the other half are in B-flat major or minor (an especially poignant key). The music is enchanting.

Rousset brings his usual technical polish and straightforward powerful drive through the given notes and rhythms. The virility of this interpretation is sure to please listeners who like such high energy, along with all the notated repeats. He is better at the fast music than the slow. *L'Affligée* and *Les Tendres Sentimens* could have had more delicate simplicity or more intensity.

The recorded sound is excellent. The instrument is a Paris original by J-C Goujon, from the first half of the 18th Century. J-J Swann enlarged it in 1784.

In the available older recordings, everyone else has trimmed some repeats to get the music onto a single disc. Some of the pieces are probably too long with the repeats, anyway, going through the same emotional journeys twice.

I concur with Rob Haskins (Mar/Apr 2014) that Charlotte Mattax Moersch's disc for Centaur has been among the best available. She brings more characterization and more rhythmic nuances to the music than Rousset does. She omitted the four pieces of *Les Nations* at the end of the book.

Jennifer Paul (Sept/Oct 1994) included all the pieces. Her performances have gentle grace and a pliant tempo rubato that I find very attractive as a contrast to Rousset's harder-edged drive. She lets the music flow easily, where Moersch takes a more cerebral approach to bring out details. The temperament on her harpsichord is more moderate, too. Paul's wistful interpretation of *La Gregoire* is exquisite.

Like Paul, Jean-Patrice Brosse (Pierre Verany 700026, 2001, not reviewed) included all the pieces. He has more rhythmic drive than Rousset, and his 1774 Kroll harpsichord has a special tone in the bass. It's exhilarating. Some

of the bass notes develop a distorted buzz as he plays them vigorously, especially noticeable in *L'Intrepide* and *L'Arlequine*. His recording is apparently deleted, but used copies occasionally become available.

From 2004 (Nov/Dec 2005), Sophie Yates's rhythmic profiles sound stodgy and prim next to the imaginative characterizations by these other players. Her touch is deftly controlled, but her interpretations don't engage my emotions. She omitted *Les Nations*. Gustav Leonhardt in 1987 made a Philips recording that is terrific, but it includes only three of this composer's pieces: *L'Intrepide*, the *Rondeau*, and *L'Arlequine*. Dorota Cybulska-Amsler (July/Aug 2020) included four selections in good performances, but that recording is spoiled by intonation problems.

Rousset's set costs more than twice as much as either of the single CDs by Moersch or Paul. Although it is perfectly played technically, and in excellent sound with all the repeats, I can't prefer it. The competition here is that strong. The way out of this problem is to get as many of these as you can to hear the vastly different interpretations.

LEHMAN

CRAMER: *Piano Concertos 1, 3, 6*

Howard Shelley, London Mozart Players

Hyperion 68302—78 minutes

This completes Shelley's Cramer Piano Concerto Series. Like the earlier issues (the first was on Chandos), this one is superbly crafted and rewarding. Cramer could rightfully be said to fill the gap between classical and romantic, though there is a tendency to look backwards rather than forward.

Readers weaned on some of the composer's technically aimed pieces will be pleased to find that there is nothing pedantic about any of these concertos. To the discriminating listener they will be an absolute delight, with flashes of Mozart's influence appearing quite often. While no one would claim that Cramer was the equal of mature Mozart, the man certainly had taste, as well as the talent to absorb the best from the music world of his time.

Shelley continues to be an excellent guide to this world, and the London Mozart Players could not be bettered. The Steinway piano is well reproduced, and Jeremy Dibble's notes are a model of their kind. Do not miss this one—or the earlier ones, for that matter.

BECKER

DEBUSSY: *Images II; Preludes II; Suite Bergamasque*
Alessandra Ammara, p
Piano Classics 10210—72 minutes

Ammara gives us a fresh take on Debussy, hitting all the right notes in these familiar pieces. In *Suite Bergamasque*, her interesting use of the damper pedal stands out—and also in *Images*. She aims for clarity of sound with a blossoming melody. I was also impressed and surprised by her rendering of ‘Clair de Lune.’ I was moved by her wide range and impeccable timing. The pulsating rhythm in ‘Passepied’ and immaculate control are enchanting. The *Images* show that she has a brilliant technical mind when it comes to sound. Her sound is transparent when needed, with a whimsical bent. This approach may not work for other composers’ works, but it certainly works with impressionists. Contender for 2021 Best of the Year.

KANG

DEBUSSY: *2 Arabesques; Claire de Lune; Images I; Ballade; Feux d’Artifice*
with **CHINESE MUSIC:** *Autumn Moon Over the Calm Lake; Dance of the Waterweeds; Spring Dance; Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon; Little Bamboo Raft; Liuyang River; Music at Sunset; Ode to the Yellow River*

Sabrina Xiao He, p—Ivory 20190—71 minutes

It is surprising how well the Chinese pieces (composed 1959-1980) go with Debussy (1888-1913). The Chinese are well schooled in Western piano writing as exemplified by Debussy, and all of the works here have a certain impressionist flavor along with a Lisztian vocabulary. All one has to do is listen to Debussy’s ‘Pagodas’ to know the French master was no stranger to elements of Oriental music. Still, the compositional expertise between a group of contemporary Chinese composers and Debussy is as different as night and day.

Sabrina studied at the Sichuan Conservatory from age 13 and came to the US to earn her Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD. A Chinese-US Cultural Exchange Ambassador, she is quite active in both China and the US (as well as having a number of European credits). Her Debussy is great music played quite satisfactorily. Without any comparative performances, the Chinese pieces should be considered fairly predictable music played very well. I am familiar with a number of pieces by Western com-

posers based on Chinese themes or styles. The ones that are closest to popular music (Abram Chasins’s ‘Rush Hour in Hong Kong’ or the soundtrack to the movie *Mulan*) most resemble the piano pieces here. The Debussy pieces give you a good idea of the pianist’s abilities: sensitive, well-shaped phrases and a nice legato style that suits most of the works here.

HARRINGTON

DELLA JOIO: *Trial at Rouen; Triumph of St Joan Symphony*

Heather Buck (Joan), Stephen Powell (Pierre Cauchon), Luke Scott (Father Julien); Boston Modern Orchestra Project/ Gil Rose

BMOP 1073 [2CD] 120 minutes

The story of Joan of Arc has been the source for many theatrical works, a story of a young woman who believes God had called on her to help her people, wins victory for them, and then is betrayed and turned over to the enemy to be mocked, humiliated, and finally executed. In spite of immense, crushing pressure by her persecutors, Joan never wavers in her faith, going to her death certain that she was God’s servant and had acted as He commanded.

Norman Dello Joio composed in just about every genre imaginable: chamber music, choral, ballet, opera, piano, symphonic—and did it all very well. I remember singing his original choral music as well as any number of his arrangements in high school and college. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1957 for his *Meditations on Ecclesiastes* for string orchestra. In his thorough notes, Robert Kirzinger tells us *The Trial at Rouen*, set to the composer’s own libretto, originated as a television opera for NBC and aired in April 1956. Dello Joio later revised it for the stage and renamed it *The Triumph of St Joan*. That was given its stage premiere by the New York City Opera in 1959.

Perhaps if I saw the opera I would like it more. This is not a “numbers” opera; everything flows from one scene to the next with little interruption. The music is tonal and attractive, but the vocal lines never seem to go anywhere, written as they are mostly in the middle of the voice. The text is clearly articulated over the orchestra, yet the music and therefore the drama never builds to any sort of climax. It all begins to sound alarmingly the same, and ennui sets in halfway through the central, lengthy trial scene. The final moments of the opera depicting St Joan’s execution do supply a small musical catharsis, but not enough to offset the blandness of the previous 90 minutes.

The singers on this recording are all excellent. Stephen Powell has sung leading roles at almost all the major US opera houses, including a number of Met appearances back in the 90s. He is in great demand for master classes. His rich baritone makes something ominous of Pierre Cauchon, though this is barely suggested by the music. Heather Buck sings Joan's plain lines with lovely tone. The composer doesn't give her any real vocal opportunities, but she conveys Joan's faith and sincerity with great conviction. Luke Scott displays another warm, beautiful baritone in his role of Father Julien. Ryan Stoll is heard briefly as the lecherous jailor and is effective—though his evil laugh needs some work.

The chorus has more interesting music to sing than the soloists and is very good. Gil Rose and Boston Modern Project deserve praise for bringing this opera to a wider audience. We are also given a performance of the *Triumph of St Joan* symphony, which I found more interesting than the opera.

Notes and complete texts in an elegant, beautifully illustrated booklet.

REYNOLDS

DEVIEENNE: *Trios*

Le Petit Trianon—Ricercar 416—72 minutes

French bassoonist, flutist, and composer Francois Devienne (1759-1803) last appeared in these pages in a collection of flute sonatas played on period instruments by Joanna Marsden and Mark Edwards (July/Aug 2019). Here we have his Opus 17: 4 & 5 for bassoon, violin, and cello published around 1782 and Opus 66: 1-3 for flute, violin, and cello published in 1783. They appeared amid a wealth of chamber music written in France by Pierre Vachon, Francois-Joseph Gossec, Giuseppe Cambini, and the Jádins.

Other sources have Opus 66 as a set of quartets for flute and strings in A minor, B minor, C, and D recorded by the Kuijken on Accent or Naive (May/June 2005) and 1 & 3 by Musica Reale in Super Audio sound for Channel (2015, not reviewed). The complete set of six trios for Opus 17 was recorded with Canadian bassoonist-composer Mathieu Lussier on ATMA (S/O 2006). The Trio in G minor, Opus 66:2 appeared on Eclectra with other trios by Carl Stamitz, Joseph Haydn, and Beethoven (Nov/Dec 1999: 251 and Jan/Feb 2000: 197). In July 2018 Brilliant released an album of six trios for flute, viola, and cello with flutist Sara Ligas (Jan/Feb 2019); all are distinct from

these and date from the early 1780s. Three sets of trios are Opus 66. The earliest edition published in 1783 was a set of three in D, G minor, and C, which we have. The edition published around 1795 was a set of three in G, D, and D minor. Later there was published a set of six around 1798-1801 in G, G minor, C, D, F, and A—not composed of the two earlier sets. Like his contemporary Pleyel, Devienne's publication history is complicated and his American biographer William Montgomery sorted this out as well as he could in 1975.

The Opus 17 trios have two movements and the Opus 66 have three; repeats are taken. The writing differs between them. In the Opus 17 trios, a bassoon solo line is mostly offset by the violinist and cellist, who form a duet. The Opus 66 trios have three lines that are more independent, with writing that offers plenty of interest, contrast, and imaginative exchange. The bass lines are always engaging rather than perfunctory, perhaps since Devienne, as someone who played a bass instrument, was more attuned than usual to the need for interest here. The outer movements of the Trio in G minor end in F major.

The playing is entirely satisfactory and has enough character to sound distinct from modern instruments. The bowed instruments do sound "stringy" without coming across as poorly played. The winds are capably commanded through fairly difficult passages and always with excellent phrasing. Though there are only touches of vibrato from the violinist, I found the playing expressive. Alterations to the rhythm on occasion add further variety. If you are willing to accept the essential qualities of period instruments, you ought to enjoy this.

The name of the ensemble comes out of French history. Between 1663 and 65, Louis XIV purchased the hamlet Trianon just outside Versailles. A chateau called the Marble Trianon was built in a park. Between 1758 and 68, Louis XV had a smaller neoclassical chateau built called the Small or Petit Trianon. From then on, the original building would be called the Large or Grand Trianon. Olivier Riehl plays a flute after maker August Grenser (1720-1807) of Dresden copied in African blackwood; Xavier Marquis plays a modern copy of a bassoon by Paris Prudent Thieriot (1732-86); Amandine Solano plays a violin made by Aegidius Klotz in 1777, and Cyril Poulet plays a cello by an unknown Eastern European maker from the late 18th Century.

ORMAN

DICKINSON: *Violin Sonata; Quartets 1+2; 4 Violin Solos; 2 Pieces*

Peter Sheppard Skaerved; Roderick Chadwick, p; Kreutzer Quartet—Toccata 538—71 minutes

Peter Dickinson, born in 1934, has apparently led both a calm life and an interesting one. Apart from a few years in America (as a graduate student at The Juilliard School), he has lived in the UK, serving for a while as his mezzo-soprano sister's accompanist, teaching at various universities, writing books on music (Barber, Copland, Lennox Berkeley, Billy May-erl), and composing when he liked. The last work here says "revised 2018".

Most of the music here, though, is earlier, much of it from the Juilliard years of 1958-61 and some earlier even than that. The 1950s were a rather rough time to be a composer, especially in the United States. It's no great surprise that Dickinson both wrote some pretty thorny music at that time and simultaneously began studying the composers, like Barber and Copland, who didn't.

There are three biggish pieces here, and many smaller ones. The 1961 Violin Sonata, almost the last product of his stay at Juilliard, is an example of Dickinson at his knottiest: a quasi-serial composition, with 'Greensleeves' (notes octave-displaced in the violin part) as the central movement and a finale that begins by running up against a wall at ever-tighter distances until the violinist crashes through. The movements are titled: 1. Fast; 2. Slow; 3. Fast. Geddit? Oh, they must've *loved* this fellow at J-school.

The First Quartet of 1958 appears to have been greeted as "over-modernistic" by New York critics (!) on its first professional performance there. It seems only middling-gnarly to me, though it is the only quartet I've heard to date with actual runs of notes in upbow staccato in the first violin part. (Correction: The only quartet I've heard do so that wasn't an arrangement of "Hora staccato" or some such; I mean original music for the medium. My husband reminds me that the Mendelssohn Octet's Scherzo does this. I don't think it's quite the same.)

The Second Quartet (1976), meanwhile, falls into the realm of thought-experiment. A quartet is playing something or other, very slowly and quietly, while from time to time a (taped) fragment of a piano rag breaks in. Gradually it becomes apparent that what the quartet is playing is just parts of the rag, massively slowed down and de-rhythmicized. The

interruptions from the tape become more and more frequent; the quartet players start to show signs of disgust, the cello suddenly thumping to a halt, and so forth. The piano interruptions keep increasing; the distress in the quartet keeps growing. Formerly strictly-tonal harmonies start to curdle, then grow entirely rancid. Finally the rag breaks forth entire, and the players try to keep up with it, only to remain (as the composer puts it) "comically out of synchronization". As Dickinson continues: "This confrontation superimposes one of the most polished forms of black music—ragtime—with Europe's most sophisticated development in chamber music—the string quartet." That it is: a deliberately blurred simulacrum of racial "harmony".

The little pieces are mainly for violin solo, four works spanning 1955-59. Two were originally for flute. The other two pieces, with piano, are in great contrast to the sonata above. One is a song to be sung by a young girl as hunters try to trap a unicorn in an unfinished opera of Dickinson's; the other is an outtake from Dickinson's Violin Concerto, written in memory of violinist Ralph Holmes. It's the opening of Beethoven's *Spring* Sonata, only reimagined as a 30s pop tune.

THOMSON

DUPONT: *Songs*

Rachel Joselson, s; Bo Ties, p
Centaur 3811—77 minutes

Gabriel Dupont was a promising student of Widor's whose life was cut short by tuberculosis; he died in 1914 at age 36. Even in his last decade when he was perpetually at death's door, he continued writing. Most of the songs, even the ones written before his illness, are imbued with melancholy. They are all well crafted but lack the inspiration and charm of Hahn and Fauré, or of the brilliant work of the little-known Auguste Descarries that I reviewed recently (ATMA 2799, Sept/Oct 2020).

Joselson has a pleasing voice that is strong over her entire range, but her interpretations are fairly straightforward; it wouldn't hurt to import more personality into the songs. The distant acoustic tends to blur her consonants, but texts and English translations are included.

ESTEP

DVORAK: *Cello Concerto & Pieces;*
Silent Woods

Kian Soltani; Berlin Staatskapelle/ Daniel Barenboim—DG 483 6090—62 minutes

Cello Concerto

with **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Rococo Variations* (original)

Sandra Lied Haga; Svetlanov Symphony/ Terje Mikkelsen—Simax 1363—62 minutes

The trouble with the Dvorak concerto (if indeed this is a problem) is its position at the top of Cello Mountain with few competitors (Elgar perhaps?). Every cellist who can get the instrument out of the case and tuned up thinks about recording it. We, then, have to choose among Casals, Rostropovich, Ma, Harrell, Rose, Piatigorsky—and the list goes on.

Now we have two more from young cellists, both still in their 20s. Kian Soltani was born in Austria to a family of Persian musicians; he now holds Austrian citizenship. He came up through the ranks as first cellist with the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra under Barenboim's leadership, but now he is (Covid permitting) appearing with orchestras around the world. Immediately apparent is his gorgeous sound, particularly on the A string. The warmth of his playing is matched by complete technical security that conquers any difficulties in the concerto. He is aided by the fine playing of the Berlin orchestra and terrific sound from DG. The program is filled out by five short Dvorak pieces, arranged (three by Soltani himself) for solo cello and a cello ensemble—members of the orchestra. These pieces, all lush and romantic, are simply lovely, and one ('Lasst mich allein') is the song that was worked into the slow movement of the concerto.

Even younger than Soltani is Norwegian Sandra Lied Haga, who was born in 1994. She too is a fine player with the likelihood of a great future ahead of her. She plays the Dvorak at tempos almost identical to Soltani, but her sound is more "stringy"—one might say more nasal—and the Russian orchestra isn't at the level of the Berlin Staatskapelle. This is certainly a worthy performance, but not at the level of Soltani's. Her companion piece, though, is the wonderful *Rococo Variations*, which she plays with great feeling and security; and it's the original version, not heard until 1941 nor published until 2004. (I also note she studied for six years with Truls Mork, who made a well-regarded recording of the *Variations* with the Oslo Philharmonic and Mariss Jansons.) The Tchaikovsky has many more opportunities for virtuosic display than the Dvorak, and I confess I enjoyed Haga's *Rococo Variations* more than her Dvorak.

In the Dvorak I would put Soltani in the select company of Casals, Rostropovich (with Giulini), Ma (with Masur), and, to pick something more recent, Zuill Bailey. Haga's Dvorak is less impressive, but the original version of the *Rococo Variations* would make this a reasonable choice as well.

ALTHOUSE

DVORAK: *Symphony 7; Serenades;*
Slavonic Dances;

BRAHMS: *Hungarian Dances*

Hamburg Radio/ Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt
Decca Eloquence [2CD] 4840365 132 minutes

A while back I reviewed an Eloquence reissue of a performance led by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt where I somewhat praised the performance but thought the sound negated the point of reissuing it. There is an echo of that in play here. The monaural sound for the Dvorak symphony, *Slavonic Dances*, and the Brahms will not win any rewards; but the performances are excellent and in the spirit of all the works, so they will do nicely for Schmidt-Isserstedt fans.

The conductor and his German orchestra produce a Dvorak Seventh that would do Czech performers proud. I is energetic and brilliant. II moves along well, but still manages to probe along the way. The opening clarinet solo is beautifully phrased, and the woodwinds produce just the right sound. III is vigorous—perhaps a touch too much—and the trio exhibits plenty of warmth. The finale is strong and nicely set in the Czech tradition.

The four *Slavonic Dances* (3 from Op. 48 and 1 from Op. 72) go well with the symphony performances. I found the *Slavonic Dances* boring if I listened to too many in one sitting until I heard the infectious complete set led by Jiri Starek. From the evidence here, a Dorati set might have been interesting, too. The sound for the works covered so far is harsh enough in the violins to be bothersome. The performances are still enjoyable, but they should not be your only recordings of these pieces. The Brahms fares best in the sound department because it does not often soar into the high violin range. The Dvorak serenades are fine performances in decent stereo. What this amounts to is another mixed-quality Elo-

quence that is hardly a must, but should be welcomed by enthusiasts for the conductor.

HECHT

ELGAR: *Cello Concerto*;

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Dark Pastoral*

Dai Miyata; BBC Scottish Symphony/ Thomas Dausgaard—MDG 6502181—40 minutes

Japanese cellist Dai Miyata, who turns 35 this year, is in way over his head interpretively in Elgar's Cello Concerto. The introductions to I, II, and IV are ponderous. He doesn't give real sweep to portamentos. He doesn't grasp the form of II or give full voice to the climaxes. He treats III as if it's tender and dainty rather than extravagantly passionate (or am I too wedded to Jacqueline Du Pré with John Barbirolli and the London Symphony?). In the finale he and Thomas Dausgaard can't settle on a tempo, and after three minutes the pair simply lacks intensity. Nor does Dausgaard draw out the inner voices of the orchestra. In fact, his tempo changes in the entire concerto relate so poorly that there's no natural flow that unites the four-movements-in-one work.

What's listed as Vaughan Williams's *Dark Pastoral* is really David Matthews taking material from what Vaughan Williams intended as the second movement of a cello concerto he started writing for Pablo Casals in 1942 (and never completed) and adding his own filler and orchestration. Matthews admits that the piece is about one-third Vaughan Williams and two-third him. (I'd make it even more.) The motifs are so sparse and so repeated that there's practically no substance to the 11 minutes, and the orchestration doesn't remind me of Vaughan Williams at all. To use this as filler for a 29-minute concerto is no reward at all.

FRENCH

ELGAR: *Falstaff*; *Sea Pictures*

Elina Garanca, mz; Staatskapelle Berlin/ Daniel Barenboim—Decca 4850968—59 minute

Sea Pictures, Edward Elgar's only song cycle, is based on five poems, one by his wife, Alice. He wrote it for alto Clara Butt, whose wide vocal range allowed for a tessitura that was low for a mezzo and high for an alto. The only documents I know of her work with the piece are two recordings of 'Where Corals Lie' from 1912 and 1916. The first complete one I know of was with Leila Megane under Elgar's baton in sessions from 1922 and 1923. Maria Brunskill followed in 1925, and Gladys Ripley in two recordings from 1946 and 1954. Those singers

were altos, and their performances are worth having, especially Ripley's, which are in good sound. Most recordings from the stereo era have been made by mezzos. The best is Janet Baker's first one, with Barbirolli (preferable to her remake with Vernon Handley). Other good ones are Della Jones for her rendering of the text delivered in a small voice that adapts well to the piece, and Brigitta Svenden's lyrical and flowing one. Among later recordings that I have sampled are good ones by mezzos Sarah Connolly with Simon Wright (M/J 2007) and Kathryn Rudge with Vasily Petrenko (N/D 2020).

This is Daniel Barenboim's second recording of the work after a decent one from the LP era with mezzo (some say alto) Yvonne Minton. His present soloist, Latvian mezzo Elina Garanca, is generally associated with lighter roles such as in Mozart and Rossini operas and Octavian in Strauss's *Rosenkavalier*. She has also taken on heavier roles like Delilah in the Saint-Saens opera, Eboli in *Don Carlo*, and the title role in Bizet's *Carmen*. She has sung at the Metropolitan Opera and appears often at the Vienna Opera. I have enjoyed her Mozart and loved her performance of Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* from this year's Salzburg Festival. Her new *Sea Pictures* makes her one of the few non-native English speakers to record it, and it is a very different interpretation from the British singers mentioned above. Her tone is rich, full, and burnished. The result is lyrical, warm, and subtle, sung in some ways as if this were Strauss's *Four Last Songs*. Her mezzo is somewhat bright in color and light in weight. The high register is strong and creamy, and the voice projects well enough below the staff to produce decent low Gs in 'Sea Slumber Song.' Her fastish vibrato is noticeable but not too much. She sings with wonderful flow and sensitivity. She does not project the English text as clearly or as dramatically as British singers do, but it is comprehensible. Barenboim's tempos are fast. His interpretation matches the singer's style, and the orchestra plays beautifully with a lighter color than usual. Baker and Barbirolli are slower, darker, weightier, and employ much more rubato. Baker is also closer to an alto than Garanca is. If the latter sings with more flow, Baker caresses notes expressively while keeping things moving. Ripley (my second favorite after Baker) and the other British singers lie in between but lean toward Baker. Great as Baker and Ripley are, there is something hypnotic and addictive about Garanca's performance.

Many Elgarians deem *Falstaff* the composer's best orchestral piece. It is unique among his output, and I wonder how many people would recognize it as Elgar at a first hearing. The composer called it a "symphonic study", but it is a work of remarkable descriptive powers, perhaps even more than *Enigma Variations*, though not every conductor approaches it that way. Two of my favorites, Barbirolli and Boult, take a symphonic view. Solti takes the descriptive approach one better and treats it almost as a comedy. Andrew Davis's second recording, on Teldec, is symphonic; but his recent effort for Chandos, and one of the best, is dramatic.

This *Falstaff* is also a second recording for Barenboim, who falls firmly in the descriptive camp with a reading that is lively, light in texture, and deft in movement. True, the opening is somewhat lacking in vigor and a little heavy on downbeats, but 'Eastcheap' picks things up with added spark and a nice singing quality. 'Boar's Head' maintains that approach with sneaky but high-spirited caper music. The famous bassoon solos are expressive but could be more boastful. The solo work in 'Dream Interlude' is excellent in the winds, sad in the solo violin, and beautifully wistful. 'Falstaff's March' is a nicely descriptive wake-up, followed by bustling, jaunty, and lively battle music. 'Return' is wistful, and the exchanges in 'Interlude' between the winds and covered string chords are very well done. 'New King' is urgent and hurried in a good way. 'Progress' produces some real pomp and virtuosic orchestra playing, with Falstaff's death sad and sympathetic. This is a fine performance of its kind, though I still prefer Boult, Barbirolli, and Davis's last one in no particular order.

It is generally assumed that Elgar does not travel well outside the British Isles, but the Staatskapelle Berlin sounds comfortable with his music, lending it a suave, slightly dark color. It does not hurt that they are playing under a devoted and experienced Elgar conductor. The sound is excellent. Anthony Burton's notes are thorough for *Falstaff*, adequate for *Sea Pictures*, and include song texts in English, German, and French. What they do not include is biographical information about Garanca. I do not recall Barenboim's earlier recordings of these pieces.

HECHT

Justice follows the pursuit of truth better than
truth follows the struggle for justice.

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ELGAR: *Cockaigne Overture; Introduction & Allegro; Violin Concerto*

Yehudi Menuhin, v; NBC Symphony/ Malcolm Sargent, Arturo Toscanini

Somm 5008—70 minutes

This is Volume II in a series of remastered 1940s Elgar performances from the US. Malcolm Sargent leads the overture and concerto, Arturo Toscanini the Introduction and Allegro.

The performances are competent; the NBC Orchestra strings especially play with the excellent ensemble and dexterity this music demands. Menuhin, of course had played the concerto as a teen with Elgar conducting. He was 29 for this performance and plays the music with assurance and elegant phrasing. There is a small cut in II and a longer one in III. Done for commercial, not artistic reasons, these shave about eight minutes off the playing time. They were all recorded in NBC Studio 8H, aka the Acoustic Dead Zone Of The Americas. The listener must make some sacrifices. In the *Cockaigne*, the bass drum accents towards the end lack depth. People will buy this recording primarily for its historical value. The sound has the immediacy of radio broadcasts I remember pleasurably from childhood.

O'CONNOR

FAURE: *13 Barcarolles*

Namji Kim, p—Centaur 3820 — 53 minutes

Kim offers solid interpretations, if a bit limited in range. In the first Barcarolle, her melodic sound can be a bit thin sometimes, especially in cantabile sections and the sostenuto section. When she blossoms into forte dynamics, she could have a fuller sound. She is much better in the second Barcarolle in terms of color and texture. Barcarolle 3 requires a bit more imagination to come alive, and could be more playful especially in its key changes. Everything sounds a bit too much the same. Barcarolle 13 is well played, but again shows limited range, especially in the melody. There is no sudden drop of sound or large increase of sound in moments that need more build up and dramatic energy.

KANG

FELDMAN: *Coptic Light; String Quartet & Orchestra*

Arditti Quartet; Vienna Radio Symphony/ Michael Boder, Emilio Pomarico

Capriccio 5378—53 minutes

Coptic Light, Feldman's final work, is quite dif-

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ferent from his *pianissimo* chamber pieces. The orchestral fabric—the work was inspired by Coptic textile art—is fairly thick, with the different instruments slowly weaving in and out of each other. The entire ensemble breathes slowly, or perhaps laps at the shore like a quiet lake. But the lake is in some alien world, and the atmosphere breathed is not of earth. There is always a feeling of foreboding, as if the listener is trespassing. In the last few minutes, the anxiety comes even more to the fore with pointed yet bated warnings from the brass.

Michael Tilson Thomas's recording (Argo 448513, Nov/Dec 1999) is slower paced: 29:50 instead of 27:26. It breathes more naturally and has more subtlety. Boder's is more overtly agitated from the start, lessening the contrast at the end. Some things appear more clearly, though, including eerie low stirrings in the final few bars.

String Quartet and Orchestra shares many of the same lugubrious tone clusters but is more static, hovering rather than washing over you in gray waves. Although this is still not music for the impatient, the ideas change more often; the writing is more pointillistic. And are those microtones or approximate intonation? The performances are fine otherwise. Feldman's chamber music appeals to me more, but I'm glad I've heard this.

ESTEP

FISCHER: *Violin & Viola;*

HASSLER: *My Mood Is Confused*
Antoinette Lohmann, v, va; Furor Musicus; Furor Agrarius—Globe 5274—65 minutes

This is one of the most unusual releases I have had to review. Furor Musicus and Furor Agrarius specialize in baroque music and play on period string instruments with harpsichord. What is interesting is that on the two tracks that include the aptly named Furor Agrarius are instruments of the type used by peasant musicians. These instruments are so low-class that they are generally ignored by old-music specialists. One of these is a fiddle made from a wooden shoe! Another is the *bumbass*, which is a bass violin made from a large box, though it can also be made from a broomstick with an inflated pig's bladder attached as the resonator. The *kistegitarre* is a guitar also made from a box. Of these peasant instruments, the hurdy-gurdy has the most sophisticated, complex construction. They can be heard on two tracks: *The Difference Between a*

Proper Violinist and a Peasant Fiddler and *Palace and Peasant Violinist Prepare to Play and Dance a Ballet* by Johann Fischer (1646-1716). These are humorous works, and they have all sorts of rude noises added that would never be heard in a concert hall—perhaps to represent farm animals. The refinement of the violin is delightfully contrasted with the bold coarseness of the wooden shoe fiddle! Fischer was the spiritual ancestor of PDQ Bach! These two works are the real reasons to get this. I just wish that the booklet gave more detailed notes and photos of the instruments. Good sound.

MAGIL

FREDERICK THE GREAT: *Flute Sonatas;*

DE MARCHI: *Preludes & Variations*
Claudia Stein; Andreas Greger, vc; Alessandro De Marchi, p—Naxos 574250—78 minutes

About half of these selections are unpublished or recorded for the first time, including three of the six sonatas. Check our Index for other recordings of music by Frederick, his court flutist Johann Quantz, their accompanist CPE Bach, and the court's director of music Carl Graun. Three military marches by the king appear on a 1994 collection from Capriccio. There was also a 10-disc set, *Music of Old Cities and Royal Courts* on EMI, covering German-speaking Europe in the 18th Century. It has the only recording of a Symphony 3 in D from 1742. Similar collections came to us on Chandos 541 (Jan/Feb 1994: 174) and Harmonia Mundi 902132 (July/Aug 2012: 261); a flute-guitar program on Meridian 84558 was not reviewed.

The notes by Detlef Giese of the Berlin Opera point out that "almost his entire life's work dates from before the Seven Years' War in 1756, which brought Prussia and its ruler to the verge of ruin..."

Claudia Stein plays a modern flute, and Alessandro De Marchi plays a fortepiano that is a replica of the king's Gottfried Silbermann instrument. The preludes and set of variations come from our keyboard player; one prelude by Friedrich Marpurg is added as well. The first De Marchi prelude we hear is for solo flute. The second is for cello.

A considerable range of tempos and ideal balances among the three performers set any further judgements on a favorable basis. Since the flutist is at the center of musical activity, she carries the program. "Inflected" is the word I'm going to choose to represent an approach to musical interpretation that is fun-

damentally rhetorical or conversational. This is not “historically-informed performance”. This approach is based on smoothness of line and evenness among notes. It is never insensitive but could be called conservative. The vibrato varies from gentle to strong, and although I never object to what I hear, I would characterize it overall as dated from our standpoint. I think you would like this if you had, say, a recording of Bach sonatas by a modern instrument player such as David Shostac (July/Aug 2001) or Laurel Zucker (Mar/Apr 2002). Her sound is just not consistently as lovely as Shostac’s. However accomplished her playing might be, sometimes it is ungraceful, even brusque.

After Frederick died, Graun’s successor, Johann Reichardt (1752-1814), set a Latin text based on one of Horace’s odes (What man or hero—Quem virum aut heroa) by recently-married court chamberlain Marquis Girolamo Lucchesini, spelled Luckesini when the work was published the next year. This funeral cantata was published again in 1912, recorded in 1983 and issued on LP.

In the late 1830s and early 1840s Adolf Menzel worked on 379 woodcut illustrations for Franz Kugler’s *History of Frederick the Great* (1840-42). His later oil painting, “The Flute Concert at Sans Souci” (1850-2), appeared on an ARG cover (Sept/Oct 2013).

ORMAN

FUCHS: *Discover the Wild; Point of Tranquility; From the Field to the Sky; Rush; United Artists; Christina’s World; Forever Free* Greg Case, sax; US Coast Guard Band/ Adam Williamson—Naxos 573567—59 minutes

Kenneth Fuchs, composition professor at the University of Connecticut, has compiled a list of very good recordings by the London Symphony with JoAnn Faletta conducting. Here his wind music is played by the US Coast Guard Band, and I must say that after hearing school band after school band—regardless of their competence—it is a pleasure to hear one at a professional level. When hearing new works played by school bands, one doesn’t always know what one isn’t hearing, or what one should hear. With a band like this, we hear everything quite clearly. All of the musicians are excellent, all instrumental sections work together beautifully, all contribute to a whole.

‘Discover the Wild’ (2010) is a rambunctious overture, *Point of Tranquility* (2017) quite the opposite. The program includes

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three concert-length fanfares: ‘From the Field to the Sky’ (2012), ‘United Artists’ (2008), and ‘Forever Free’ (2013).

The big pieces are *Christina’s World* (1997) and *Rush* (2012). The 14-minute *Christina’s World*—inspired by the Andrew Wyeth painting—attempts to portray “her world of sea and pasture, of yearning for home, and a sense of loss and fulfillment”. Here Fuchs’s ability to depict in sound a visual image and the ideas it brings to mind is quite evident. At least it is in the opening minutes, where breathy woodwinds seem to conjure the sight of the grassy hill. As for the bombastic sections, though, I don’t know what they have to do with the painting. I suppose that in the end, it is more a piece of music than a sonic portrayal of visual art.

Rush is a 2-movement, 15-minute concerto for alto saxophone and band. Greg Case, one of the USAF Band’s co-principal saxophonists, is the soloist. The opening of I (‘Evening’) begins almost inaudibly, Case’s very quiet note seeming to grow out of nothingness. The movement is entirely for woodwinds, harp, and quiet percussion. II (‘Morning’) begins almost like I, with a very quiet saxophone cadenza. There is a hint of blues, and then the brass join in with energy. I greatly enjoyed this fascinating work and the excellent performance.

KILPATRICK

FUCHS: *Violin Sonatas 1-3*

Hyejin Chung; Warren Lee, p
Naxos 574213—86 minutes

Robert Fuchs (1847-1927) was a much-admired composer and teacher: a friend (and occasional imitator) of Brahms, and mentor to a rather astounding bevy of later composers including Enesco, Mahler, Zemlinsky, and Sibelius. He wrote in most genres—his string serenades are tolerably well-known—but chamber music seems to have been his primary line, a fine line if these three sonatas are anything to go by. (There are at least three more where they came from, and Chung and Lee plan to record them all.)

The first thing one notices in this music is how easily it slips into and out of third-related keys. The first sonata, in the unusual key of F-sharp minor, spends most of its time somewhere else; in fact, there is almost as much F-sharp minor in the following D-major Sonata as in this one, because that work, too, constantly modulates to third-related keys. The

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effect is at once startling and charming, because the utter naturalness of the moves mutes their ordinary shock value.

The slow movement of the First Sonata, like the other two in this set (these are all three-movement works) is wistful and a little sad; the finale brings a return to affirmation, though neither here nor anywhere else does Fuchs assert any mood with brute force.

Here as elsewhere, there are one or two intensely Brahmsian passages in the piano writing, but for the most part the piano is thinner and more transparent than you'd expect of Brahms. The violin writing is fairly low-key, avoiding the upper regions almost entirely and sticking to the lyrical middle, where it works to best advantage.

The Second Sonata is the real charmer of the three, with a lovely slow movement and a chipper finale that begins almost like a Kreisler character-piece, and ends—winningly and unexpectedly—very quietly with a last pizzicato. The Third is rather different. Unlike the First, it tends to take its minor mode seriously, and so the first movement is tempestuous, even blustery. The slow movement is a set of variations—nominally in B-flat, but in fact the many third-related modulations in the initial theme (replicated in each later variation) mean that, once again, the music is seldom in any one key for long. In the finale the bluster is back, but even that has a sort of rightness about it. There is nothing in any of this music to suggest genuine disquiet.

Sibelius is quoted as describing Fuchs thus: “a clever orchestrator, professional to his fingertips, and very happy as a composer”. Damning with faint praise, perhaps—and yet, an ideal hopelessly out of reach of most composers. How many, really, could you describe as “very happy”? Certainly not Sibelius himself.

THOMSON

GALYNIN: *Orchestral Suite; Scherzo; Aria; Quartets 1+2*

Anastasia Latysheva, v; Academy of Russian Music/ Ivan Nikiforchin

Toccata 514—65 minutes

Here's an album for the person who has everything. Music by Herman Galynin (1922-66), a Russian who led a troubled life: orphaned as a child, survived the war, battled schizophrenia or bipolar disorder from the early 1950s, and died in an institution, yet composed lucidly with a secure grasp of form.

Galynin also had a strong grasp of how to write for strings, evident on this album. In the 21-minute Suite (1949) Ivan Nikiforchin shapes I's energized lines into expressive phrases of intensity and tenderness. Accents have character. The Scherzo has the fleetness of Mendelssohn and the playfulness of Shostakovich. The Intermezzo, almost a study or etude with hypnotic repetition and a melancholy emotion, is unexpectedly intense. The Finale is almost obsessive as Nikiforchin expands the strings (5-5-3-3-2) to their full range; it opens with tightly bound harmonies promising a bright resolve.

The five-minute Scherzo (1966) and seven-minute Aria (1959), which open the album, are for violin and string orchestra. It is immediately clear that both the orchestra and concertmaster Anastasia Latysheva are superbly tuned and perform with tight rhythm and ensemble. The forward motion in the Scherzo is propulsive but never feels pushed. They also capture the lovely melancholy in the clear harmonic movement of the Aria. The Scherzo was the last piece the composer wrote. He never heard it performed, and this is its first recording.

The two string quartets are performed by the orchestra's principal players. Quartet 1 (21 minutes) has four clear voices, whose tuning and ensemble are flawless. I hear echoes of both Shostakovich and Prokofiev in the music, yet Galynin combines all elements into his own voice or style. It's not the melodies or harmonies but the rhythms and gait that give I its identity. Following a short Vivace, the Andante is a theme and variations with a difference. It takes work to be conscious of the evolving theme because, as voices enter, they become woven into a denser texture, as if the threads are tightening. It's a haunting trip. The Presto is motive, urgent, pressing, almost a chase, with a second theme that is more lyrical. Here as elsewhere Galynin uses semi-fugal ways of developing and modulating the music.

Quartet 2 was written in 1956, after his series of hospitalizations began. It was first performed in his hospital ward. Each movement is about three minutes long. The Adagio has tight, sweet harmonies. II is a galop. The Andante has a lonely minor-key melody with an intense B section and uses motivic imitation. The Moderato finale has an accented rhythmic melody. Both quartets are well written, and the players take no note for granted.

The engineering is warm and balanced.

What I haven't mentioned is that Ivan Nikiforchin is 25 years old, and his own lengthy

liner note shows a conductor with the intellectual prowess to research extensively a composer whose scores have been edited, corrected, and changed over the years to the point of abuse. He founded the Academy's orchestra and choir in 2016 at the age of 21. It performs mainly in the three halls of the Moscow Conservatory and devotes itself to 20th- and 21st-Century Russian music. Concertmaster Latysheva is 22! I can't wait to hear more from these precocious artists.

While this album is an all-Russian production, you could never tell that by the liner notes. Every word is in superb English, and the notes give a thorough history of the composer, sensible analysis of each work, background on all the artists, and recording details. Bravo, Toccata!

FRENCH

GASSMANN: *Opera Arias*

Ania Vegry, s; NDR Philharmonic/ David Stern
CPO 555057—65 minutes

Florian Leopold Gassmann (1729-74) is one of those composers that most of us have heard of, but whose music is rarely played. Not much of his early life is documented, and some of the details are lost to time. According to Bert Hagels's detailed notes, his early musical training was from the local church choir director, who discovered his musical talent. Gassmann fled his hometown in order to avoid having to submit to his father's dictate that he learn a trade. At some point, having heard that the seat of music was in Italy, he left his native land and traveled straight to Venice. Many hardships later, in the carnival season of 1757 he first came forward as a stage composer with the opera seria *Merope* to a libretto by Apostolo Zeno. His success grew and for the next five years an opera composed by him was staged in Venice, including another opera seria *Catone in Utica*—we have here three arias from it. Emperor Joseph II named him the successor to Georg Reuter the Younger, the incumbent music director, who had died in March 1771. He had now climbed to the top in the hierarchy of musical professions in the realm of the Hapsburgs. He was not able to enjoy the post for long; he died January 21, 1774 when he was not even 45 years old, following a travel accident.

Most of these arias are from his opera seria, but a few are from opera buffe. Gassmann's music is delightful: tuneful, expressive, and original in its treatment of the

orchestra, especially the woodwinds. The composer follows the expected format of opera in his time, yet always does so with attractive melodies, with the skillful use of the orchestra to underline the texts. Some of his operas must be extant; this made me want to hear one in its entirety. His music is not quite on the level of Mozart or even the best of Salieri, but it is certainly worth reviving.

Ania Vegry has a colorful soprano that she uses with skill and obvious enjoyment. She easily accommodates Gassmann's sometimes intricate vocal writing. Gassmann requires no extremely high notes, but a skilled singer is needed nonetheless. Vegry specializes in Mozart heroines (Pamina, Ilia, Susanna, and Servilia, to name a few), but she has also sung Gretel, Annchen, Sophie, Gilda, and Cunegonde in Bernstein's *Candide*. If Gassmann doesn't really give her a chance to show off her high notes, she still has charm and musicality. David Stern leads the NDR Philharmonic effectively. People who love music from this period should acquire this, not only because of the performances, but because it gives a more complete picture of the musical milieu. Excellent sound, texts and translations.

REYNOLDS

GERSHWIN: *Rhapsody in Blue; American in Paris; I Loves You Porgy; Fascinating Rhythm; 3 Preludes; I Got Rhythm*
Shelly Berg Trio; Royal Philharmonic/ José Serebrier—Decca 28889—77 minutes

Sign of the times: this is an album produced independently and licensed to Decca and released as Decca Gold. Make no mistake: this is a purely "pops" album. The Shelly Berg Trio (piano, bass, drums) inserts lounge-lizard music in *Rhapsody in Blue* at three different places. Soloist Berg leans so heavily on the pedal that phrases end with veritable tone clusters. Serebrier's smarmy interpretation of *American in Paris* end with a lady named Ledise singing 'Home Blues'. She's fine, but it's just someone's cute idea to add it on. 'I Loves You Porgy' blends into 'My Man's Gone Now' from *Porgy and Bess* as two vocalists alternate with trumpeter Arturo Sandoval. The 3 Preludes are in Serebrier's "oh so cool" (that is, rhythmic) arrangement with a jazzy tilt. And in 'I Got Rhythm'—a part rhythms, part lounge-lizard arrangement—Berg as piano soloist shows he's not as good as he is with the trio.

If it's Gershwin with a "pops" tilt you want in most of these works, nothing beats Earl

Wild, Arthur Fiedler, and the Boston Pops on RCA, and it comes with a terrific Concerto in F. FRENCH

GINASTERA: *Piano Pieces*; see ALBENIZ

GIORDANI: *6 Cello Duos, op 18*

Charlie Rasmussen, Anton TenWolde
Centaur 3819—49 minutes

Tommaso Giordani (c1730-1806) spent most of his professional life in Dublin, though he scooted off to London for a few years following an accusation of plagiarism. These are cute two-movement duos for two cellos. Tim Sterner Miller's liner notes inform us that these pieces are listed in various ways in different sources, sometimes referred to as sonatas and published as Opus 18 in Paris and London but elsewhere as Opus 4. So watch out!

These are attractive, musically straightforward, almost simplistic works that must make the players smile as they do in their photograph. They are gracious to each other and blend well in their clear-cut recording. It's a bit close-up for comfort, but you can deal with that.

D MOORE

GOLEMINOV: *Quartet 4*;

see SHOSTAKOVICH

GORECKI: *Quartets*

Molinari Qt—ATMA 2802—57 minutes

These are Gorecki's complete quartets (there are 3). No. 1 (*Already it is Dusk*, 1988) opens with cosmic mystery and goes on to strenuous dance. Both sections are juxtaposed, ending with quite meditation.

2 (*Quasi una Fantasia*, 1991) is in 4 movements. I is a plodding funeral march relieved by a Beethoven prayer; II's march is more insistent and jagged, but still ends in that prayer. III (Arioso) follows the same trajectory (march-prayer). Finally, IV's dance is wild, with the final prayer resigned.

3 (*Songs Are Sung*) is by far the most demanding of the set. Most of it consists of unrelenting slow music with little or no relief. Misery is the watchword consistently. Some might say that this is a definitive sample of "too much of a muchness", but it may be solace for those seeking encouragement for depression.

These are certainly the most important works of this kind since Shostakovich, and Gorecki is every bit as individual as any 20th Century master. The Molinari is a superb

group, competitive with the Kronos's pioneering work on Nonesuch. If you don't have that set, definitely get this one.

GIMBEL

GORTON: *Ondine*; see MESSIAEN

GRAZIOLI: *Harpsichord Sonatas*;
Variations;
Pastorale

Chiara Minali—Brilliant 95935 [2CD] 155 min

Giovanni Battista Grazioli (1746-1828) published these two sets of sonatas in Venice in 1780. It's the kind of keyboard music where a pleasant phrase goes by, you know what the next three consequent phrases will be, they happen, and by the end of the piece you've forgotten everything that happened.

I don't know of any competing recordings. This performance is probably adequate, unlikely to be challenged by a competitor soon.

Minali says in her booklet essay that "Grazioli would appear to have been kindly and sensitive, and in his compositions his style is restrained, elegant, and far removed from virtuosic ostentation". In other words, it's pretty enough but not deeply interesting. She says that her project is "intended as an homage to a composer who has been wrongly neglected". I would suggest that this composer has been neglected because his music doesn't offer us enough to care about, beyond its moments of pleasant euphony. This is no Haydn in the rough.

All the sonatas are in three movements. There is a seven-minute set of dull formulaic variations at the end. The only organ piece is a somnolent Christmassy pastorale that meanders for 11 minutes in parallel thirds and sixths.

Almost everything is in major keys. The left hand usually has an uninspired series of accompanimental figures from broken triads. Minali sets impatient tempos with these, but then she slows down temporarily whenever the right hand encounters difficulties with faster notes.

The harpsichord is a modern copy of Ruckers from 1638. It sounds decent enough, but the unisons are out of tune very often when Minali couples the manuals together. That tuning problem and her hasty tempos give an impression that this may have been a slapdash project to get through everything in a rush. Despite the general thinness of the musical content, I wanted to hear more relaxation and

grace in it, and more probing to differentiate the pieces from one another.

LEHMAN

GUASTAVINO: *Songs*

Letizia Calandra, s; Marcos Madrigal, p
Brilliant 95798—58 minutes

Carlos Guastavino (1912-2000) was from Argentina. His ability to match voice and piano led to his being called “the Schubert of the Pampas”. He had his own approach to music—pretty much a romantic one. He did not “experiment with sounds”. He simply wrote 500 intimate pieces, often for voice and piano—and they all sounded somewhat 19th Century. Why not? He was the most important songwriter in Latin America while he was alive, and he set the poems of all the great writers, from Pablo Neruda to Borges.

The notes claim, correctly, that “rarely in this global age do we come across a dialog between language and interpretation as perfect” as we have here. Even the sound seems perfectly suited to these pieces. There is no “edge”; it is smooth and glowing.

VROON

HAGEN: *Lament*;

ASHEIM: *Muohta-Language of Snow*;

NORDHEIM: *Aurora*

Hans-Kristian Kjos Sorensen, Daniel Paulsen, Terje Viken, perc; Ensemble Allegria Strings; Norwegian Soloist's Choir/ Grete Pedersen

BIS 2431 [SACD] 59 minutes

This probably wound up on the wrong desk. Yes, it's a choral release, which explains why I got it. But with all the prepared electronics, flying saucer noises, and general avoidance of melody and rhythm, the music should have been listened to by ears more attuned to the contemporary idiom than mine. Ah, well.

The only work making direct use of a text is Arne Nordheim's *Aurora*, which is keyed to Dante and elements of Psalm 139. Crafted for choir, soloists, two percussionists, and prepared electronic sounds, it is the most colorful work of the program, bells and various combinations of vocal sounds hint at the luminous harmony of creation.

The least compelling work is Nils Henrik Asheim's *Muohta*, which brings on a complement of strings to accompany a wordless double-choir depicting 18 different types of snowfall as spoken in the Sami language of the Arctic. If you'd care to meditate on *The Language of Snow*—snow so deep it must be waded

through, snow that sticks to your clothes, snow with ice between its layers, snow with indentations caused by animals, and 14 other kinds—this exercise in musical meteorology is for you.

Lament is a 16-minute descent into the dark void of despair. A bit of EE Cummings inspired it; but it is beyond words, with the choir, percussion, and a prepared recording creating disembodied voices coming together and moving apart. Distant thunderclaps in Part II got my attention, which means I found *Lament* more interesting than the Sami snowstorm. The notes are helpful and the sonics are impressive.

GREENFIELD

HANDEL: *Arias*

Teseo, Alcina, Giulio Cesare, Atalanta

Margriet Buchberger, s; Il Giratempo

Perfect Noise 2004—51 minutes

“Proud queens, brave soldiers, and wicked witches” proclaims the back of this package, giving us the theme of the recital. Handel certainly loved his women and took them seriously, writing brilliant music, full of character, for them. The notes tell us that Handel found himself in a sticky situation from 1726 to 1728 because he had two rival prima donnas, Faustina Bordoni and Francesca Cuzzoni, under contract, both of whom jealously guarded their claims of superiority over the other, having locked horns with each other on more than one occasion. Handel did his best to make sure that both singers had sufficient display opportunities and that neither felt upstaged by the other.

We can never know today what either one actually sounded like, but Margriet Buchberger stakes her own claims to this repertory with a shining, silvery voice that can move like the wind or break our hearts with plaintive sounds. The characters she interprets are very different from each other: the ever seductive Cleopatra, the frighteningly vindictive Medea, the powerful, yet vulnerable Alcina, and so on. Somehow Handel manages to see to the heart of these women and gives us music of incredible variety. Buchberger differentiates the characters through vocal color and ornamentation designed to match the woman she is portraying.

Il Giratempo is an outstanding period orchestra that mirrors Buchberger's singing and assists in her characterizations. The booklet offers provocative, sometime strange photos of Buchberger in costume for the various

roles, though who each is supposed to be is not made clear. One photo clearly has Buchberger as Cleopatra with an asp between her fingers—though that part of the story happens years after the events of Handel's opera.

The sound is warm and clear. Texts and translations.

A treasurable disc!

REYNOLDS

HANDEL: *Concerti Grossi, op 3*

Berlin Academy/ Georg Kallweit

Pentatone 5186 776—54:11

It would seem that Handel's Opus 3 concertos are the poorly served step-children among his instrumental works. Beginning with John Walsh's first edition in 1734, which was poorly proofread and included what was perhaps a spurious concerto (now labeled "4b"), the problems were compounded even in the revised edition. In his review of an earlier recording led by Lars Erik Mortensen of this set (July/Aug 2012), Mr Barker supplied a concise overview of some earlier recordings, preferring five that I also still enjoy: John Eliot Gardiner (Erato 45981, 1981), Hans-Martin Linde (Jan/Feb 1996), Christopher Hogwood (originally Oiseau-Lyre, reissued on Avie, July/Aug 2006), Roy Goodman (Nov/Dec 1993), and Richard Egarr (May/June 2007). Comparing these recordings and some of the other discussions of Opus 3, it is clear that there is no single version of these works. Many of the earlier recordings are performances based only on Walsh's revised edition (Gardiner, Linde, and Egarr). Hogwood recorded a speculative version of the sixth concerto based on research into the watermarks on Handel's original manuscripts. Goodman used that, too, and also recorded concertos "4a" and "4b". Both included the second movement of Concerto 6 (with solo organ) as an appendix.

This new release, led by Georg Wallweit, is basically a performance of the revised version but lacks drama, contrast, and, like Mortensen, interprets the quicker movements much too fast, especially in the organ solo of Concerto 6. Handel's inventiveness in these works deserves the full creative engagement of their interpreters.

BREWER

Fear is more contagious than any other emotion.

—RUTH ANSHEN, THE REALITY OF THE DEVIL

HANDEL: *Italian Solo Cantatas*

Ditte Marie Braein, s; Marianne Beate Kielland, mz; Christian Kjos, hpsi—Simax 1365—61 min

Titled "Arcadian Affairs", this new release includes five cantatas for solo voice and basso continuo that Handel composed during his sojourn in Italy. Of the three soprano cantatas ('Nice, che fa? Che pensa?', 'Chi rapi la pace al core?', and 'Lungi dal mio bel nume') performed by Dite Marie Braein, only 'Chi rapi la pace al core?' has other available recordings (Nov/Dec 2001; July/Aug 2006). Braein's voice is somewhat covered, a little shrill in the upper register, but it is clear and flexible in Handel's melismas and assured in the chromatic passages, making this a more effective recording than others. Two cantatas ('Fra pensieri quel pensiero' and 'Lucrezia') are sung by mezzo-soprano Marianne Beate Kielland, whose voice seems well suited to Handel's vocal lines. 'Fra pensieri quel pensiero' has been recorded by countertenors Axel Kohler (Sept/Oct 2009) and Victor Jimenez Diaz (Columna 384, 2019), and altos Sonia Prini (Ludi musici 4, 2009) and Marie-Nicole Lemieux (Mar/Apr 2003), but Kielland's interpretation seems to more closely match Handel's musical style. Prini's recording also includes Handel's 'Lucrezia' transposed to a lower pitch, as does Kielland. In Prini's interpretation some of the tempos are so slow that she has to take extremely audible breaths at the ends of some phrases. Kielland's pacing is much more natural.

The idea of this recording is shaped by Christian Kjos, who thinks that the solo cantatas are more likely to have been performed by voice and harpsichord only. He has both researched and performed many of the solo cantatas in order to develop accompaniments that are supportive of the voice but also incorporate something like what Handel may have improvised. Compared to all the other recordings, in every instance he has made intelligent musical decisions that create performances that have more flexibility than when other instruments have been added to the harpsichord. Perhaps the greatest contrasts are with two performances of 'Lucrezia' by sopranos Veronique Gens (Sept/Oct 1999), who uses a continuo "band" of four instrumentalists, while Marc Minkowski assembled a mini-orchestra of seven players and arranged extra instrumental parts for Magdalena Kozena's recording (Jan/Feb 2002). In both cases, the addition of the extra instruments lessens the

possibility for subtle variations of tempo and texture (I imagine that Minkowski actually had to conduct his group).

Much more than an academic exercise, this new release should be a model for how to interpret the large repertoire of Handel's solo cantatas. In addition to an informative essay in the booklet by Kjos, full texts and translations are included.

BREWER

HANDEL: *Samson*

Matthew Newlin (Samson), Klara Ek (Delilah), Lawrence Zazzo (Micah), Luigi di Donato (Manoah & Harapha), Julie Roset (Philistine Woman & Isrealite Woman), Maxime Melnik (Messenger & Philistine); Namur Chamber Choir; Millenium Orchestra/ Leonardo Garcia Alarcon
Ricarcar 411 [2CD] 2:29

Handel's *Samson* (1743) is a product of the composer's ripe maturity. The work was a success in its day, with several revivals and revisions in his lifetime. There have been relatively few recordings, and most of them leave much to be desired.

There was a concert performance July 4, 2018 at the church of St Loup in Namur as part of the Namur Festival. There are 19 singers in the choir and an orchestra of period instruments. There is no harpsichord in the continuo ensemble, but we have a cabinet organ and a rather assertive theorbo that introduces the recitatives with a bit of noodling. The oratorio is heavily cut, and many of the recitatives are abridged. The recording by Harry Christophers and The Sixteen (Coro 16008, first issued in 1996 on Collins 7038) runs nearly an hour longer at 3 hours and 25 minutes.

Some concert recordings are almost indistinguishable from good studio recordings, but not so in this case. There is a great deal of extraneous noise from standing and sitting, shuffling of pages, and movement on the platform. These sounds might not even be noticed by a member of the audience—perhaps not even on a DVD—but here they are a serious distraction. Balance is not always ideal. The instruments have greater presence than the voices; and if anything, it should be the other way around.

The performance itself is highly respectable but not above reproach. Conductor Leonardo Garcia Alarcon delivers a reading with high energy, but in some places it is frantic and raucous. Tenor Matthew Newlin sings the title role with purity and refinement.

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Countertenor Lawrence Zazzo as Micah has a tone that is too heady for this role. Bass Luigi di Donato has serious difficulty with English diction in the double role of Samson's father Manoah and the Philistine warrior Harapha. I find his lyrical delivery of Manoah preferable to the vehemence of Harapha, where his tone is not always attractive. A pleasant surprise is the clarity and virtuosity of soprano Julie Roset, who gives stunning performances of 'Ye Men of Gaza' near the beginning of Act I and 'Let the Bright Seraphim' at the end of Act III.

Some years ago, John Barker, our quondam encyclopedic authority on this repertoire and recordings of it, wrote an overview of Handel operas and oratorios (J/F 2003). He could name "only six comprehensive recordings" of *Samson*, and found most of them deeply flawed. He expressed enthusiasm for a modern instrument recording of 1978 with Raymond Leppard directing a stellar cast of British soloists: Robert Tear, Janet Baker, Helen Watts, John Shirley-Quirk, Norma Burrows, Felicity Lott, and Philip Langridge. It first appeared on LP from RCA and was later reissued on CD by Erato. Mr Barker praised it for dramatic vitality and lamented the fact that it was then no longer available. A quick online search today shows it currently available (second hand?). Barker respected the recording by Christophers but found it superficial and lacking in dramatic vitality.

GATENS

HARTMANN, E: *Piano Quintet; Quartets; Andante & Allegro*

Elisabeth Zeuthen Schneider, Nicolas Dupont, v;
Tony Nys, va; Justus Grimm, vc; Daniel Blumenthal, p—Da Capo 8.226183—76 minutes

It has been a pleasure to make the acquaintance of yet another neglected Dane—musical history at a certain point appears to be full of them—but Emil Hartmann can honestly claim "unjust neglect," if this release is anything to go by. Here is a solid hour and a quarter of very fine chamber music, expertly played and nearly flawless in design.

The obvious comparison point is Felix Mendelssohn, and not just because Hartmann was Niels Gade's brother-in-law, though obviously it doesn't hurt. Hartmann seems especially Mendelssohnian in the G-minor Piano Quintet, Op. 5, partly because the piano allows him light touches his strings-alone writing doesn't seem to contemplate, but also because certain overt resemblances come to the fore.

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The Scherzo shares its mien and even a good bit of its thematic material with Mendelssohn's First Piano Trio, while the finale has an episode involving a chorale, just like Mendelssohn's Second Trio. For that matter, the whole texture—flying keyboard, eagerly assisting strings—is Mendelssohnian. All the same, the keyboard can't exactly dominate a string quartet as it can a violin-and-cello duo; the piece becomes a sort of mini-concerto, or a squaring-off between equal partners (or antagonists?). Here the texture is close to Mendelssohn, which in piano-quintet terms means it's a few decades out of date; Schumann and then Brahms had upended a genre formerly dominated by people like Boccherini.

The succeeding two string quartets continue to waft Mendelssohn, with occasional overtones of Schumann. Op. 14, in A minor, is the jollier of the two, if we can use that word in describing a release consisting entirely of music in the minor mode. Indeed, the flow and the general idea of the music suggests happiness rather than melancholy, and the performers follow suit. The following quartet, in C minor (Op. 37) hasn't the same buoyancy and occasionally threatens to bog down.

There remains the Andante and Allegro in A minor, Op. 12, which is for violin and piano and is just slightly too long. I like the piece, but towards its end it does seem to become clotted with technical difficulties that needn't be there.

All of these recordings are world premieres, and it's frankly astonishing how good they are. May we all have such people to watch over our legacies.

THOMSON

HARTY: *Songs*

Kathryn Rudge, mz; Christopher Glynn, p
Somm 616—71 minutes

Sir Hamilton Harty (1879-1941) was respected as a pianist, composer, and conductor of the Hallé Orchestra and the London Symphony. As a teenager before I knew anything about him I often heard his name on classical radio when recordings were broadcast of Handel's *Water Music* or *Fireworks Music* "arranged by Hamilton Harty".

Although he is best known today as a composer of orchestral music, Harty was also a fine song composer. This release of 23 songs and 2 piano pieces includes 17 world premiere recordings, 5 in new editions created from original manuscripts by Harty's biographer

and music authority Jeremy Dibble of Durham University. Most of the texts are by Irish poets. The songs are new to me and sound a lot like British parlor songs of Arthur Sullivan or others of that period. This seems to be the first recording devoted to Harty's songs.

The songs show considerable variety. Some have a modal quality. Some are more dramatic, especially 'Sea Wrack', a ballad of two men at sea harvesting seaweed, one of whom accidentally dies; 'To the Gods of Harbour and Headland' with its rousing piano writing capturing a turbulent sea; and 'The Lowlands of Holland', Harty's snappy setting of a British folk-tune. Other songs are tender (such as 'A Cradle Song' and 'Lullaby'). One of the finest songs, 'The Stranger's Grave', is a pensive and solemn reflection on mortality. All are worth hearing for their romantic melody, chromatic inventiveness, and descriptive piano writing.

Harty claimed that he transcribed 'Adieu, Sweet Amaryllis', the final song of the program, from "an old manuscript in the possession of John Broadley, Esq. of Bristol" by John Dowland. No such manuscript is known to exist, and Dibble concludes that Harty wrote both the words and the music. The melody is in the Dowland style, but the accompaniment is a harbinger of what Britten did in his "realizations" of Purcell songs.

Kathryn Rudge has a warm and sumptuous voice and uses it exceedingly well whether in the dramatic songs or the quieter ones, coloring it effectively. Her voice brought to mind the rich sound of Kathleen Ferrier. Her attention to the text is exquisite. Her diction is impeccable, especially her enunciation of consonants at the end of words. Texts are included but they're hardly necessary. It would help to have some of the Irish texts footnoted to explain words and phrases that tend to be unfamiliar to North Americans (e.g. "lovesick lenanshee" or "alanniv asthore").

Christopher Glynn offers nimble and skillful collaboration and performs two unpublished solo piano pieces from early in the composer's life. As a leading pianist of his time Harty always identified his role in song recitals as collaborator rather than accompanist. He called his songs duets for voice and piano and explicitly listed his Five Irish Sketches that way. Glynn can claim the same title—and the recorded sound strikes an ideal balance between voice and piano.

Harty's songs may never find a major place in the English song tradition, but they deserve

to be much better known. It is hard to imagine a more convincing account of these works. Perhaps with such a fine performance they will see new life. Informative liner notes by Jeremy Dibble and full texts in a nicely designed booklet.

R MOORE

HAYDN: *Quartets, op 33*

Doric Quartet—Chandos 20129 [2CD] 128 min

Sigh. There goes the Doric Quartet again, demonstrating anew, as it has several times before (with Opp. 76, 20, and 64), that it probably plays Haydn better than any other ensemble on the planet. My joy at this release is tempered, just slightly, by a tinge of regret that they haven't yet miscalculated *anything*, so far as I can tell. It's all ideal.

By "ideal," I don't mean cold or regular or pristine; quite the contrary. This Haydn is, above all, intensely alive. It has a feline way of leaping, scampering, tearing madly around and then shifting suddenly into deep repose. Catlike, too, is the way it handles the tactus. If your idea of Haydn involves anything like a priggish steadiness of tempo, you'd best drop it. This Haydn stretches, yawns, curls itself up into a little ball and then strikes out with a fury of spirited scratches. Once or twice I *nearly* thought they overplayed it—the development of the first movement of Op. 33:2 practically halts altogether for a second—but it's part of their conception of the Haydn string-quartet animal that it's the play of motifs and textures that *create* the tempo. And they do bring it off, infallibly. It's that conception of energy—kinetic energy and potential energy, but also with the idea of a living mind constantly behind it all—that makes it such exhilarating music-making.

Another part of it is that, though the four players aren't deliberately different in sound from each other, neither do they try to play "as one." They try, in fact, to play as characters in a drama, where the parts are all distinct, all acting in consort, and yet all reacting in real time to each other's actions. This is, indeed, exactly the conception of Haydn's quartet texture laid out by the excellent New Zealand-based musicologist W. Dean Sutcliffe, who all through this series supplies the program notes. I cannot but think he is their artistic advisor as well as their annotator, so closely does their conception of the music hew to his own.

Articulations are crisp in the fast movements, gentle elsewhere. Tempos are on the

brisk side, sometimes dauntingly so (the finale of Op. 33:3 was a bit much for my husband, though he loved the also nimble one to Op. 33:2), but the slow movements strike me as just right: not dreamy so much as quiet and unhurried but always alert. That includes, incidentally, the scherzo of Op. 33:3. No. 4 (*pace* Hans Keller, who hated it for some reason) gets positively goofy in its finale, as it should.

Ah, well, I suppose we just wait for the next opus. Which will it be? I vote for Opp. 54 and 55, but any will do.

THOMSON

HENRIQUES: Violin Pieces

Romance; Nordic Dance; Erotikon; Mazurka; Romance; Witch's Dance; Religious; Wiegenlied; Kleine bunt Reihe; Canzonetta; Grief; Ballerina; Novellettes; Petite Valse; Berceuse

Johannes Soe Hansen, v; Christina Bjorkoe, p

Dacapo 226151—77 minutes

I once knew a woman who seemed remarkably innocent, naive, and simple; she never spoke a negative word about anyone or anything, glazing over when conversation turned critical or divisive; she deftly reframed horrific situations into positive opportunities. She seemed ignorant of the world or perhaps too foolish to see its troubles. Later I discovered her failure to descend into polemics against the injustices of the world was not out of inability, but unwillingness; she preserved and pursued thankless good will in a bitter and spiteful world.

I find the same qualities in the music of Fini Henriques, whose romantic miniatures are overwhelmingly charming, optimistic, and deliberately naive. Even the most sober music is undergirded with purity and religiosity, a world view demanding careful introspection before extrospection, preferring peace over discontentment, joy over fatigue, and beauty over subversion. Only good music can supply such therapy.

This is a digressive of violin encores. Out of 23 tracks, only 3 exceed four minutes; many follow a standard ABA format. They are delightfully easy on the ears and on the sensibilities. Nothing much needs to be said about the performers; they do not get in the way of the music; in other words this is a performance of beauty and artistry and one of the finest I have heard this year. Listeners will not be disappointed.

KELLENBERGER

HERRMANN: *Whitman; Psycho; Souvenirs de Voyage*

William Sharp, narr; Netanel Draiblate, Eva Chao, v; Philippe Chao, va; Benjamin Capps, David Jones, vc; Post-classical Ensemble/ Angel Gil-Ordóñez—Naxos 559883—71 minutes

These three Bernard Herrmann works include the world premiere recording of music for the 1944 radio play *Whitman*. Radio plays were popular and often produced through the mid-1950s. Bernard Herrmann was the music director of CBS when he was commissioned to write *Whitman* for the radio network. He was already well known for his film scores to *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *Jane Eyre* (1944) and would write many more outstanding film scores. He was also conductor of the CBS Radio Symphony, where he introduced many listeners to several 20th Century composers.

The text for *Whitman* is poems by Walt Whitman arranged by writer Norman Corwin. Corwin was known for his radio plays, and in *Whitman* he used the poet's text verbatim, only arranging the poems to emphasize the war-time issues facing the country. Corwin, who also worked for CBS, asked Herrmann to write the music for his first text-with-music radio play. It was performed only once. The piece was restored in 1964, but not performed again until 2016.

Whitman is a compelling work, and it's easy to understand the effect it must have had on war-time audiences. Although some of the sentiments may seem cloying to today's audiences, the poems are used effectively, the messages are clear, and Herrmann's contributions (mostly background) expertly supports the text. Corwin weaves the poems into a meaningful presentation of American spirit. He used a narrator to convey Whitman's poetry, and Mr Sharp reads these poems with the gravity and importance of the subject matter.

The *Souvenirs de Voyage* (1967) is a 3-part suite for quintet using themes based on Herrmann's movie score to Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. If you're familiar with that film score you'll recognize the music to the seven-minute love scene; it is hypnotic and compelling—one of the great film scores. Herrmann reuses the love theme interwoven with other motifs to construct one of his most absorbing concert works. It's hard not to like this piece, and the quintet plays it excellently.

The third work is *Psycho: A Narrative for String Orchestra* (1968+1999)—a reconstruction of the film's themes by John Mauceri. If

you're expecting a suite you'd be wrong. Mauceri has expertly constructed a concert work that uses some of the film's familiar themes, including the famous "slashing violins" shower sequence. The piece is consistently interesting as a stand-alone concert work.

This is definitely worth your time, and if you're a Herrmann fan the *Whitman* radio play is required listening. The orchestra, quintet, conductor, and sound are excellent.

FISCH

HINDEMITH: *Kammermusik 4-7*

Stephen Waarts, v; Timothy Ridout, va; Ziyu Shen, va d'amore; Christian Schmitt, org; Kronberg Academy Soloists; Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra/ Christoph Eschenbach

Ondine 1357—73 minutes

A bit over a quarter century ago, two sets of Hindemith's complete *Kammermusiken* appeared almost simultaneously on the CD market: one by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Riccardo Chailly, the other by Ensemble Modern under Markus Stenz. They bespoke a sudden interest in music previously only intermittently (and indifferently) remembered. Other releases followed—I think the Berlin Philharmonic did one—and now there is this newest cycle, from the Kronberg Academy Soloists and the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra under Christoph Eschenbach.

The *Kammermusiken* are chamber concertos—and there are only solo parts, though after the first work in the series (the famously bratty *Kammermusik 1* of 1920-21, with its raucous foxtrot finale ending in a siren scream), there is one very definite primary soloist. Here all the solo work is very fine. The standouts for me are Stephen Waartz in No. 4 and Ziyu Shen in No. 6. The former has one of Hindemith's knottier violin parts to cope with, and does it spectacularly—right down to the extraordinary finale, an unending stream of rapid notes as lithe and whippy as a grass snake, around which the orchestra adds little punctuations: a note here, a percussion rattle there, a whiff of waltz time somewhere else. Shen handles the viola d'amore part as well as I have ever heard it done, and with capacious sound, too—despite the sparse instrumentation, the instrument is still often in danger of being drowned out. I would love to get a look at his (or her) instrument.

The music is 20s Hindemith, with all that implies, not excluding the sometimes juvenile sense of humor. Hindemith had a sort of tic

involving brass-band, military-style music, and there's some of it here, including a whole movement of No. 5, the viola concerto. There's nothing to top No. 1's siren in the finale (or for that matter the finale of the Fourth—now Fifth—Quartet, which sits on a C pedal for several minutes before resolving it into a resounding D-flat-major chord: Ta-da! The End!), but there is quite a lot of clumsy jollity nonetheless. It's a thing one comes to miss in later Hindemith, where the skill has become at once more refined and somehow duller.

THOMSON

HOFFMEISTER: *Flute Pieces 1*

Boris Bizjak; Lana Trotovek, v; Piatti Quartet
Somm 620—71 minutes

The program consists of a duet, two trios, a quartet, and a quintet, all for flute and strings. Like Telemann, Franz Hoffmeister (1754-1812) studied law before embarking on a career in music; he is remembered today for his publishing (based in Vienna) as much as for composing. He is also the namesake for the Hoffmeister Quartet, which has appeared in these pages several times. If you enjoy music from the late 18th Century you ought to appreciate his chamber output. It's like a Germanic analog to Devienne.

London-based Slovene performer Boris Bizjak plays a modern Yamaha flute made from grenadilla or African blackwood. He has a clear sound deployed here with little vibrato and lots of elegance. No matter what he does, the instrument sounds with ease, never giving the impression that the playing is pushed or restrained. Tempos seem well chosen and balances are superb. The string players who collaborate deliver stylish interpretations that match perfectly. Such refinement can charm and enchant you to relish what you hear.

We missed his recording of pieces for two flutes on the Hedone label and his solo album. The Bizjak sisters who perform as a piano duo are Serbian and not related.

GORMAN

HONEGGER: *Sonatina*; see KODALY

Symphony 3; see CHAUSSON

HOWELLS: *Requiem*; see Collections;

with anthems; see STANFORD

HUMMEL: *Piano Sonatas 4+6*

Antonio Pompa-Baldi
Centaur 3812—59 minutes

Pompa-Baldi has released the third volume of
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his Hummel series. Sonata 4 is technically challenging, with octave runs, 16th notes, running thirds, and lyrical passages. It is full of expression, and he executes the passages flawlessly, with articulations true to the markings. Staccatos are precise, and not pedaled. Sonata 6 is even more technically oriented, with double thirds everywhere and jumps. There is a beautiful cantabile in III. Some of the more expressive parts of the movement, especially in the upper register of the piano, seem a bit thin and almost borderline out of tune.

KANG

HVOSLEF: *Piano Concerto; Traumspiel; Barabbas*

Leif Ove Andsnes; Bergen Philharmonic/ Edward Gardner, Eivind Gullberg Jensen, Juanjo Menja
Simax 1375- 79 minutes

Norwegian Ketil Hovoslef (b. 1939) writes in a free and unpredictable style. His music is completely original in conception and defies description with conventional terminology. The Piano Concerto (1995) is in the usual three movements, though they do not seem coherent thematically. There is a dreamlike aura in all these works. The piano writing is sometimes concerto-like but often devolves into quiet simplicity. In the faster music I was reminded of Bartok, but the slower music is often more celestial.

Ein Traumspiel (Dream Play, 2009) drifts through his unconscious (there is even a waltz drifting in). Coherence is kept at a minimum, but if you can keep your attention it is both puzzling and interesting.

Barabbas (2004) is written as an "opera without singers". Its text is from a version of the biblical story by Norwegian playwright Michel de Ghelerode. It is said to be descriptions of the prison, Pilate's mansion, and Calvary; but the musical connection is anybody's guess.

All told, this is like nothing you've ever heard before; snap it up if you are curious. Notes by the pianist and composer.

GIMBEL

IDENSTAM: *Metal Angel*

Gunnar Idenstam, org—Toccata 495—73 minutes

I usually let you know right off the bat what I think of a recording. Here is one that thrilled me beyond words. Yet it's all by a living composer, and it could not have been written 70 or 90 years ago.

Gunnar Idenstam was born in Lappland (Sweden) in 1961. *Metal Angel* consists of 19

pieces for large symphonic organ, each associated with a different angel “in a fantasy Gothic landscape”. He has made 3 suites of 5 pieces for this recording, but he also hopes that individual pieces will be played in organ recitals. (The Toccata in Suite 1 is a good candidate.)

He acknowledges the influence of the French school. (“Many pieces could most suitably be described as French toccatas.”) One or two pieces started life as piano improvisations and were later rescored for the organ. Many are theme-and-variations in style, and tunes are repeated a lot, as in minimalism—but on an organ you can vary the registration endlessly, so it never seems dull. And you can build the registrations into something quite remarkable.

Some pieces are rather hymn-like—you can almost hear an angelic choir. Each piece has a written description. The overall idea is, “What if there are angels all around us, living in a parallel world, who try to communicate with us and guide us?” He tells us that the music also reflects our time of conflict and climate change and worldwide disease. It was composed from 2013 to 2019.

This is a wonderful journey in glorious sound. “This instrument has everything I want from an organ.” It also has everything I want. The listener need not make the whole journey at once, but you should at least once. And almost anything you sample will thrill you with the sheer sound. You may be moved to tears, as the composer admits he was. (That is an interesting subject; I have seen other living composers in tears listening to their music. It must be something like giving birth.)

Let us be grateful that there are still a few composers who can move us deeply—and that there are audio engineers this brilliant.

VROON

IRELAND: *Songs*

Mark Stone, bar; Sholto Kynoch, p
Stone 80260—67 minutes
81007—62 minutes

Mark Stone is a stalwart advocate for English songs and has been doing a great service for lovers of this literature. He has recorded all the songs of George Butterworth, Havergal Brian, Frederick Delius, Ronald Corp, and Charles Wilfred Orr on his own Stone label. He has recorded all the songs of Roger Quilter, and the 4th and final volume is awaiting release. He is halfway through a survey of all the songs of

John Ireland. When finished it will be the first complete recording of them all.

Volume 1 makes a strong start with three Masfield settings, beginning with probably his best-known song, ‘Sea Fever’. The patriotic ‘Here’s to the Ships’ mirrors similar songs by Elgar, his teacher Stanford, and others from around the time of The Great War. Many of these songs are settings of texts by A.E. Housman: his cycle of five poems from *A Shropshire Lad* on the shortness of life and another three-song cycle on the theme of finitude, which ends with a song without words for piano solo.

The program includes a sequence of war poetry settings of Housman, Rupert Brooke, and Eric Thurkell Cooper before concluding with five popular ballads he composed under the pseudonym of Turlay Royce. These final songs sound like they come from the era of parlor songs by Arthur Sullivan and others of that style; they are in marked contrast to almost everything we’ve heard previously.

Volume 2 includes two songs cycles, *Songs of a Wayfarer* and *Marigold*. These and other songs have texts by William Blake, Shakespeare, James Vila Blake, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Ernest Dowson, Arthur Symonds, and Emily Bronte. The variety and breadth of these songs is impressive, from simple to complex, including the impressionist ‘Penumbra’ and the sweet lullaby ‘Slumber Song’.

Mark Stone studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He is a recipient of the 1998 Decca Prize at the Kathleen Ferrier Awards. In addition to a distinguished career as a song recitalist, he has a commanding career on the opera stage in Mozart and Strauss roles. After studying mathematics at King’s College, Cambridge he worked as a Chartered Accountant and as an investment banker before the sounds emanating from the nearby Guildhall School of Music and Drama (in London) lured him. In an interview with the *Oxford Mail* he says, “Eventually I walked in, auditioned, and found myself on their (outstanding) opera course.” He studied singing at Guildhall from 1995 to 1998 and founded his own label, Stone Records, in 2008 “as a vehicle for my own projects” and discovered that it also supplied a means for others to record.

Stone’s performance is excellent. He brings all the right affect to each song. His voice is warm and elegant. His legato style is attractively flexible, with both sweetness in softer passages and drama in others. With impeccable diction and careful control over dynamic

shading, these are performances of distinction. His fine partner for these program is Sholto Kynoch, founder the Oxford Lieder Festival about 10 years ago, who is particularly nimble in passages that depict the sea.

Stone's introductory notes give a clear and concise account of Ireland's life. His notes about each song are valuable. His attentiveness to the nuances of these songs comes through in performances of great commitment.

R MOORE

KALAFATI: *Symphony; Legende; Polonaise*
University of Athens Choir; Athens Philharmonia/ Byron Fidetzis—Naxos 574 132—82 minutes

Though of Greek descent, Vassily Kalafati (1869-1942) spent most of his life in St Petersburg. He studied at its conservatory under Rimsky-Korsakoff and eventually taught there, and Stravinsky was one of his pupils. He died during the Nazi siege of Leningrad. His symphony (1912) was his dissertation project in composition at the conservatory. That accounts for its traditional musical language and no doubt its solidity of form. Insofar as one hears any Russian influence in I, it's reminiscent of Rubinstein rather than the Russian nationalists. Its developments tend to be by the book, but are quite compactly put together. The scherzo uses a lighter touch in its scoring, with pleasing touches of whimsy. The slow movement has a somber English horn melody with pointed woodwind accompaniment. His development of its material is long on beauty, rising to Tchaikovskian heights of passion. IV is a good and proper finale, alternating three fugal segments with lyrical relief episodes. All this ingenuity leads to a festive conclusion.

The symphonic poem *Legende* (1928) was a runner-up in the Russian division of Columbia's Schubert Centennial contest. That event also embraced entries like Brian's *Gothic* and Schmidt's Third symphonies. The piece supposedly uses three Schubert themes. I'm no Schubert maven, and I didn't catch any of them. It skillfully incorporates a wordless chorus, and the scoring shows the influence of Stravinsky of the *Firebird*—a case of the teacher now learning from the pupil. The music is consistently pleasurable—I'm a sucker for orchestra and vocalise choirs—but so lax in structure as to suggest a paste-up of Russian excerpts. It could make an effective ballet, where the musical logic can be more casual.

The Polonaise (1905) is from the family

tree of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. It's a spirited piece that would be a great encore or pops concert item, should the latter ever revive the custom of playing real music. The Athens orchestra and chorus handle their work ably, with Fidetzis's conducting to match. If you like the music of, say, Glazounov, you'll find this recording enjoyable.

O'CONNOR

KAPUSTIN: *Cello Concerto 1;*

SCHNITTKE: *Concerto 1*

Eckart Runge; Berlin Radio/ Frank Strobel
Capriccio 5362—70 minutes

"Transition" is the title of this program. But what does that mean? Well, as quoted in the liner notes from Der Tauespiegel, "Eckart Runge embodies a magical mutability beyond all musical stereotypes and boarder lines." But who is the boarder?

Nikolai Kapustin (b. 1937) writes in a modern jazz idiom that turns this listener on and clearly does the same for Runge and his colleagues. Runge has run over Kapustin before with his Sonata No. 2 and three more of his pieces (Genuin 89150: July/Aug 2010) played with Jacques Ammon on the piano. I liked that one, and the present Concerto, written in 1997, is well worth hearing.

Alfred Schnittke (1934-98), wrote Concerto 1 in 1986; it has been recorded several times. It is a huge work in four movements, lasting well over 40 minutes in this dramatic, thoughtful performance. Torlief Thedeen recorded it effectively with Leif Segerstam and the Danish Radio Orchestra (BIS 507: May/June 1991). Arved Ashby liked Natalia Gutman's recording with Kurt Masur and the London Philharmonic (Jan/Feb 1993). Mr De Jong liked the even earlier one with Gutman and the USSR Symphony under Gennady Rozhdestvensky (Melodiya 67: July/Aug 1992). A little later, I heard Maria Kliegel with Gerhard Markson and the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony (Naxos 554465; March/April 1999). All these are important releases, but the new one stands up to them well.

Runge plays with great variety of approach. That is what this highly contrasted music asks for. He was cellist in the Artemis Quartet for the last 30 years. He will play the premiere performance of the Kapustin next year, and more is coming. He studied with Edmond Baert in Brussels and David Geringas in Lubeck. I enjoyed this.

D MOORE

KASTALSKY: *Requiem for Fallen Brothers*
Anna Dennis, s; Joseph Beutel, b-bar; Cathedral
Choral Society, Clarion Choir, Saint Tikhon Choir,
Kansas City Chorale; Orchestra of St Luke's/
Leonard Slatkin—Naxos 774245—64 minutes

Don't confuse this with *Memory Eternal*, which also was composed by Alexander Dimitrievich Kastalsky in tribute to the fallen heroes of The Great War. After much ado, that work became an a cappella affair crafted with an eye to the strict rules of musical engagement set down by the Russian Orthodox Church. Steven Fox's Clarion Choir—one of the ensembles in action here—brought that remarkable work to us in a Naxos recording (573889, Jan/Feb 2019).

Kastalsky's Requiem, though, is a very different affair. He began planning a tribute to the Fallen Brothers of The Great War early in the conflict, picturing (as the notes say) a "musical collage" incorporating the liturgical traditions of the original allied powers. This would mean that sacred music from Orthodox Russia and Serbia, Catholic France, and Anglican Britain was on his mind at the outset. Before long, of course, the European war exploded into a global conflagration as imperial possessions joined their mother countries on the battlefield, Italy pivoted and declared war on Austria, and America joined up to administer an 18-month coup-de grace to Germany. Through it all, Kastalsky kept writing, winding up with a multi-national, pan-theological memorial spanning 17 movements. He enriched the Roman Liturgy for the Dead with an opening prayer spoken in Italian, with *Znamenny* chants, Orthodox hymns and bits of Tolstoy representing Mother Russia, and with melodies redolent of Serbia and Romania. He also used Anglican hymns and texts, Gregorian chant representing Catholic France, 'Rock of Ages' from America's Protestant hymnal, and an instrumental 'Hymn to Indra,' the Hindu God of the Heavens. (India, after all, came in with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and several African colonies to support the Brits. They didn't call it a World War for nothing.)

This over-the-top diversity might have exploded into musical gibberish had a lesser composer been on the job. Yes, his Requiem is an episodic work as the various languages and melodic references come and go; but there is poignant, majestic music, and the effect of the whole thing is moving, if not downright devastating.

The liturgy commences amid the ominous tolling of bells. The Kyrie churns but also uplifts, the 'Rex tremendae' is majestic to a fault, and the 'Confutatis' (with Tolstoy's words echoing) hits like a ton of Slavic bricks. There's a glorious Sanctus reminiscent of The Russian Five and a 'Domine Jesu' that links the Roman liturgy with Russian chant and a text extracted from the Anglican hymnal ("Now the labourer's task is o'er"). The bass-baritone sings that handsome arioso, and it's wonderful.

I can't quibble with any element of the performance. Each of the choirs has a history of excellence in the Russian repertoire, and they sound wonderful mixed altogether. The Naxos engineers were able to turn Washington's cavernous National Cathedral into a glamorous backdrop for clear and full-bodied sound. This "World Premiere" performance of Kastalsky's Requiem was recorded in October, 2018 as part of the centennial commemoration of The Great War. Without question, the work was—and is—a worthy and resounding tribute to the untold millions whose deaths will forever symbolize the grand futility of armed conflict.

GREENFIELD

KhACHATURIAN: *Spartacus Adagio; Clarinet Trio; Dance; Sabre Dance; Lullaby; Violin Sonata; Song-Poem*

Mariam Kharatyan, p; Adam Gruchot, v; Leonardo Sessena, vc; Stig Nordhagen, cl

Simax 1373—58 minutes

Confronted with an entire album of Khachaturian, the question arises: will his two greatest hits be included? Definitely. Don't be fooled by the heading "Chamber Works", because the Adagio from *Spartacus* appears in an arrangement for piano trio. It is weak and too sweet, a poor choice to open the album. The trio transcription of 'Sabre Dance', however, does work. The lone Armenian in this Nordic ensemble, pianist Mariam Kharatyan, and violinist Adam Gruchot bring a gypsy jazz flavor to it, and I would favor it over the usual orchestral version any day.

On the Violin Sonata, the energy level flags a bit, and we are dangerously close here to New Age music. In III the pace picks up and it becomes more like violin recital fare. Again the word "fiddling" comes back to me, and the individual listener will have to decide whether that is positive or negative.

The Clarinet Trio (with violin and piano) is

melodic and occasionally conjures a mood, but this is simple chamber music. The piano parts almost sound like the work of a competent jazz or blues accompanist trying to lay down a basic rhythm for an unfamiliar soloist. More to the point, the parts just don't go together. Gruchot is expressive, and he works hard to redeem the piece. On the brief Dance for violin and the 'Lullaby' from *Gayaneh*, he again gets to show some flair. Ending the album, the Poem for violin and piano is a lovely six-minute lollipop.

This is one of those cases where perhaps the compositions could have been placed in a more effective sequence. I come away unconvinced that Khachaturian was even comfortable with chamber music, despite some flashes of fire from these musicians.

DUTTERER

KIRSCH: *Isles of Dreams; Elegie; 2 Impromptus; Trio Pastoral; One Summer Day; 3 Nocturnes; Pastorale*

Rachel Talitman, hp; Marcos Fregnani-Martins, fl; Dirk-Michael Kirsch, ob; Heike Steinbrecher, Eng hn; Laurent Houque, va; Carolina Prieels, vc
Harp 505043—76 minutes

This is one where the cover art put me off listening for some time, but when I did listen I found myself pleasantly surprised, and my delight grew as the program went on. The cover art shows a fantastic island scene; one woman strums the harp while the caryatid sometimes built into a harp's column turns out to be another, dancing woman, twirling with her arms to the sky. Blues, greens, and yellows are the predominant colors. The label, Harp & Co., apparently specializes in harp music and is based in Belgium. The list of performers starts off with flute (ye Gods, over an hour of flute and harp, thought I) and ends with the harpist. My apologies to the designer, but the general mien of the thing rather yelled "twee" at me.

The composer isn't the harpist but the oboist, and his inclusion of oboe and English horn (and viola and cello) in several of the works here bespeaks a stronger and sometimes sterner compositional personality. The *Isles of Dreams* are the nine Portuguese Azores, one movement to each. (The middle five, the "grupo central," get one instrument per island, the others accompanying; the other four are full ensemble.) I like the piece very much; there is all manner of textural fun in there, and some hard noises too (from viola,

cello, and English horn). Mr Kirsch expects the piece to be played alongside the Ravel *Introduction and Allegro* (for flute, clarinet, string quartet, and harp), and therefore offers a clarinet alternative to the English horn. But I prefer the original.

The other pieces are all smaller, but not negligible. There's a solo for English horn (no harp at all) and two flute-violoncello-harp trios, the longer of them with alto flute. There's a small work for oboe and harp, a piece for flute and harp, and two for harp alone. The last couple are most in danger of falling into the flute-and-harp stereotype, but they never really do, though they certainly do trip about its edges sometimes. This is serious music, though also predominantly tonal and attractive.

At the end, out from behind the curtain steps the composer himself, to play his Op. 3 Pastorale, very nicely indeed.

THOMSON

KODALY: *Duo*

with **HONEGGER:** *Sonatina*;

SKALKOTTAS: *Duo*;

XENAKIS: *Dhípli Zyla*

Jonian Ilias Kadesha, v; Vashti Hunter, vc

Avi 8553017—66 minutes

with **XENAKIS:** *Dhípli Zyla*;

VASKS: *Castillo Interior*; **RAVEL:** *Sonata*;

BARTOK: *Romanian Folk Dances* (arr)

Marc Paquin, v; Orfilia Salz Vega, vc

IBS 92020—73 minutes

with **KODALY:** *Solo Cello Sonata*;

LIGETI: *Solo Sonata*

Hellen Weiss, v; Gabriel Schwabe, vc

Naxos 574202—65 minutes

KODALY: *Solo Cello Sonata*;

LIGETI: *Solo Sonata*;

EOTVOS: *Poems to Polly*;

KURTAG: *Faith; Janos Pilinszky: Gerard de*

Nerval; Shadows; John Cage Homage; Hilary Jig;

SZABO: *Solo Cello with Cowbells*

Ildiko Szabo—Hungaroton 32813—75 minutes

Welcome to Kodaly month for violin and cello! Both his duo and his sonata are about half an hour long and they are beautiful virtuosic romantic works written in 1914 and 1915. I couldn't resist piling all four of these recently-recorded discs into one review.

Kadesha is from Greece and Albania. He lives in Berlin and has a fine history for one so young. Hunter is from London and has an impressive reputation. They are both members of the Trio Gaspard and are thus used to

working together. They begin their present journey with Iannis Xenakis's 'Dhipli Zyla,' written in 1951, a short experiment in sound and fury alternating with questions and answers taken here with an amusing flavor alternating argument and total agreement. Clearly these two players are out to enjoy themselves in the underbrush. The Kodaly Duo follows, played here with love and detail and a silliness that suits it well. Arthur Honegger's 15-minute Sonatina creeps in quietly as the players whisper together and then knock their heads together as the music directs them. Finally we have a 20-minute Duo by Nikos Skalkottas (1904-49) written in 1947—another curious and emotionally eventful work powerfully played. I like the beautiful way their minds work together in performance and their highly informative liner notes. All in all, this is a program to be strongly considered.

Paquin and Vega have a more serious approach—also effective, but a little less friendly in recorded sound. They also begin with 'Dhipli Zyla' followed by the Kodaly Duo, both played with fine style but so dramatically that you'd better keep the volume down or you'll get hurt! Now we meet Peteris Vasks (b. 1946) inside a castle, presumably in his native Latvia where we are whispered to until we hear worldly noises outside. It is a work of contrasts, to which the following Ravel sonata comes as a somewhat welcome return to reality. Or is it? It is a curiously otherworldly piece that fits perfectly here, but is scary sometimes. As a relief from all of this, the players have arranged Bartok's Romanian Dances, originally written for piano and later arranged for orchestra by the composer. They work well for violin and cello alone, and they conclude a sensitive and powerful program played with passion and fervor.

With Weiss and Schwabe, Kodaly takes over with not only the Duo but his Solo Cello Sonata, leaving only space for Gyorgy Ligeti's (1923-2006) little 8-minute Solo Cello Sonata to separate the two gigantic monsters. The two players work so dramatically well together in the Duo that we miss Hellen when she leaves. Ligeti sounds so lonely without her. He slithers up and down in pizzicato chords and calls out passionately from the stratosphere in his 'Dialogo'. Then he gets adjusted in the Capriccio, and that warms Schwabe up to tackle the incredible Kodaly solo sonata, for which he needs to lower the two lower strings a half-step. Now you have to play what you see, not what your eyes tell you is on the page. It's a tough game, and he plays it with accuracy and

determination, though it should be mentioned that there is a surprising change in the recorded volume halfway through the first movement. Otherwise this is a fine release.

Ildiko Szabo takes over now, all by herself. Her program begins with the Ligeti Solo Sonata in a more leisurely reading than Schwabe, though not less exciting. Now we meet Peter Eotvos in 'Two Poems to Polly,' and suddenly he (through her) speaks words to us. But do we understand them? Yes, if the language is yours. It's not mine, and I wish there were a translation. But some of it is in English! But where are we going? I never find out, but it is beautifully done and you'll enjoy it as it is. Back to the cello alone, we have Gyorgy Kurtag (b. 1926) with a weird collection of short pieces dedicated to different colleagues, ending with a World Premiere Jig. The considerable 14-minute suite by Csaba Szabo (1935-2003) comes in with varied bow-strokes and strangely arranged pitches, after which the entrance of a cowbell is almost a relief. But then his granddaughter Ildiko gets to sing again! Can we take it? Between that and the retuned cello, we're off into a strange world, after which Kodaly appears as a welcome guest. This is the weirdest of the four programs presented here, but it is played with polish and good recorded sound.

As you see, these all are worth hearing. To play either of the Kodaly works, you need fingers of steel and musical depth—and all these musicians have both.

D MOORE

KOECHLIN: *Songs of Nectaire*

Nicola Woodward, fl
Hoxa 190207—71 minutes

In case you might not be especially familiar with Alsatian French composer Charles Koechlin (1867-1950)—quite an unfortunate circumstance—check our Index for recordings of his *Jungle Book* and *Persian Hours*. The character Nectaire appears in Anatole France's *Revolt of the Angels* published in 1914 and translated to English that same year. He is a market gardener in Paris who has a boxwood pipe he plays when visited by two angels—Arcade, who is male, and Zita, who is female. It was common for stage names in the late 19th Century to begin with the letters A and Z. The angels say, "play to us on your flute, if you are not afraid that the Earth and Heaven will be stirred to their depths thereby." The historical basis for the character was Nectarius of

Auvergne, a Christian missionary and martyr in the 4th Century.

Between April and September of 1944, Koechlin wrote 96 *Songs of Nectaire* in 3 sets of 32. They amount to the largest-scale unaccompanied work in the flute literature. The best way to describe them is to quote a passage: "Wielded by dextrous fingers and filled with the breath of creation, the rustic pipe resonated like a silver flute. The music told of love, fear, vain quarrels, triumphant laughter, the serene clarity of intelligence, and the arrows that pierce the monsters of ignorance and hatred. The music also spoke of joy and pain bending their twin heads over the Earth and of the desire that creates worlds..." That last phrase became No. 26 in this set.

In 1996 Alexa Still recorded some of all three sets for Koch International (7394). Also that year Brazilian flutist Jose Ananias Souza Lopes made the first recording of 'Play of the Light' (Op. 198:3) along with three others on Paulus 11418 produced by the Society of Saint Paul in Staten Island, New York. In 1997 and 98, the eminent Pierre-Yves Artaud, who specializes in avant-garde playing, recorded the entire set; later, so did Dutch flutist and broadcaster Leendert de Jonge on Basta 3091552 (not reviewed), which has a 32-page booklet. In between, American flutist Francesca Arnone made the *Songs of Nectaire* the subject of her doctoral thesis at the University of Miami. In the autumn of 1997, Christina Singer recorded some of all three for Bayer (100106, July/Aug 1999). Michel Debost recorded a few pieces on *Flute Panorama 3* (Skarbo 1993, Jan/Feb 2000: 197). Arnone included a significant portion of Opus 198 on her debut recording named after one of the pieces, *Games of Light* (MSR 1457, July/Aug 2014: 169).

Nicola Woodward has been placed in a very resonant space. Her sympathetic renditions merit attention. She can accent and honk as well as taper and whisper. Her very full sound is a pleasure to hear, and her deft fingers never seem to err, even given a workout representing victorious laughter. On Bayer, Christina Singer has been placed in a sound space just as resonant, and her sound is if anything lovelier. I also like Francesca Arnone on MSR, both when she is big and blowsy and soft and intimate. In his brief contribution, Jose Ananias Souza Lopes has a sound so vibrant it's almost unbelievable.

It is unfortunate to have so little documentation accompanying this release. The notes

place this composition in the wrong year, 1945, and state that the songs were written over 4 months rather than 6. The time span requires clarification. Both of the first two books were completed in the spring; writing the third went through the summer into September.

The notes could have mentioned that this work was for Jean Merry-Cohu (1897-1983), an electrical engineer and performer whose first wife, Eleanor Forster, was the sister-in-law of Roger Sessions. Merry recorded the *Songs* on 5 long-playing records for the Hachette Sound Encyclopedia.

Morton Feldman's "dedication" pieces *For Philip Guston* (1984) for flute(s), piano or celeste, and percussion and *For Christian Wolff* for flute and piano or celeste are similar in scope though not solo and exist in one large glob, not as a set of miniatures. Anyone who might like the Koechlin or Feldman simply must have the recording Marieke Schneemann made of solo flute works by Eugene Bozza on Brilliant (Nov/Dec 2018), too.

GORMAN

KOMITAS: *Divine Liturgy*

Agate Burkina, s; Armen Badalyan, Janis Kursevs, Karlis Rutentals, t; Gundars Dzilums, bar; Hovhannes Nersesyan, b; Latvian Radio Choir/ Sigvards Klava—Delos 3590—80 minutes

Sghomon Sghomonian (1869-1935), commonly known as Komitas, was a force in the world of Armenian music. He was the composer, ethnomusicologist, conductor, arranger, and priest who embraced the folk traditions of his homeland and, as the notes put it, "detected the tectonic kinship of folk music to the music of the Armenian church". His take on Orthodox liturgy was completed early in 1915, just weeks before the Turks unleashed the horrors of genocidal murder on the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire. Komitas survived the killing fields but was gutted emotionally with a severe case of PTSD that never abated. He spent the last two decades of his life in psychiatric facilities near Paris.

In 2019, the 150th anniversary of the composer's birth, these singers became the first-ever non-Armenian choir to perform and record the Komitas *Liturgy*. Maestro Klava and his choir made use of a new arrangement by Vache Sharafyan who added women's voices to the all-male original and streamlined the score to make it more amenable to the concert hall. Even with these changes, I suspect Komitas remains better suited to the cathedral. I say

this not just because the interpolations from the Deacon and Priest interrupt the choral flow on occasion, but because a lot of the writing comes in short bursts that don't always settle in as full-scale choral masterpieces.

The ineffably beautiful Sanctus is a true stunner that runs for 4 minutes, with the bass soloist (Priest) appearing briefly at the end. 'Who is the Lord Our God' for the choir and solo tenor takes a little less than 3. I could see both works gracing any choral concert anywhere. But most of the other interludes are either much shorter or intensely collaborative affairs with the priest or deacon interacting with the choir. What can I say? To me, it felt much more like a church service than a concert.

The choir is wonderful, with the modal shakes and squiggles of the Armenian style sounding exotic and spiritually charged. I also admire the soloists who are strong, but lyrical enough to spin out lines of Armenian chant without wobbling out of control. For some reason neither my Onkyo player nor the family Bose would accept the digital coding on this disc, which played on the car stereo only.

GREENFIELD

KOZELUCH: *Trios 3*

Trio 1790—CPO 555096—58 minutes

Given a name like Trio 1790, you can be assured of period instruments and little-known composers, and these veterans are in their element completely with Kozeluch, a Czech admirer and rival of Mozart. I reviewed Kozeluch's so-called *Scottish* Trios by the same ensemble (N/D 2018), finding them to be a fine stylistic bridge between Mozart and Beethoven; the works here are in the same mold.

Published in the 1780s (when such works were still a bit of a novelty), Trio in A (P.IX:8) is a fairly standard Viennese School piece. All three musicians are up to it, but Harold Hoeren stands out with his robust tone on the fortepiano, which is hardly usual for this instrument. In Trio in C minor (P.IX:11), he is perhaps a bit too dominant, though that is also how pieces like this were often written in those early days—keyboard-heavy, with strings in the background. This is a graceful composition, stylistically impressive, especially the closing Allegro. Based on the trios, he was perhaps average at melody, and better than that at flair, though there are no nuances or dynamic surprises to speak of.

In fact, by the time a third trio comes along, the one in F (P.IX:12), you already know what to expect: affable chamber music with keyboard fireworks. Kozeluch was popular in his day, and it's easy to hear why. If Trio 1790 intends to go further, I'm hoping that the Czech has a curve ball of some sort.

DUTTERER

KRIEGER: *Harpsichord & Organ Pieces*

Alejandro Casal

Brilliant 95873 [2CD] 136 minutes

This is Johann Krieger (1652-1735), not his more prolific older brother, Johann Philipp Krieger (1649-1725). He published his two books of keyboard music in 1697 and 1699. Book 1 is mostly six partitas (dance suites), plus a handful of extra dances. Book 2 has ricercars, fugues, toccatas, and preludes. The last two pieces in the 1699 book are the most ambitious: a nine-minute chaconne as a continuous variation set, and an organ toccata with an athletic pedal part.

As one might expect from turn-of-the-century music in Germany, this sounds like Pachelbel or Kuhnau. (Krieger and Pachelbel had the same teacher.) Krieger's signature tic is to use chromatic scales as melodies.

Casal plays fittingly and cleanly. To break up the sameness of pieces in Book 2, he switches to organ for about half of them and plays it with a similar efficiency. This organ in a Portuguese cathedral has Herbert Kellner's temperament from the 1970s. Casal's harpsichord temperament for everything else is a regular 1/6 comma, but adjusting the sharps and flats as needed.

In Book 1 he sometimes pauses so long between phrases that the meter becomes ambiguous, perhaps in an attempt to make the music more artful than it is. The Corrente of Partita 3 should flow in a more obvious dance meter. My body wants it to flow as a simple dance without any interruptions. Overall, though, this is a minor complaint, and I didn't notice any of those extra-long pauses happening in Book 2.

We have heard Alejandro Casal before, in his set of pieces by the likewise neglected Sebastian Albero (Sept/Oct 2016). I don't know of any competition in Krieger's keyboard music, except for one fugue that Edward Partemtier recorded (Wildboar 9202, May/June 1999: 177).

LEHMAN

KUHNAU: *Sacred Pieces 5*

Gott Sei mir Gnädig; Ich Habe Lust Abzuscheiden; Erschrick, Mein Herz; Weicht, ihr Sorgen; Singet dem Herrn

Opella Musica; Camerata Lipsiensis/ Gregor Meyer—CPO 555 260—68 minutes

Johann Kuhnau (1660-1722) is probably best known today as JS Bach's predecessor as Thomaskantor in Leipzig, a position Kuhnau held for 21 years. His obituary suggests a voluminous output of original sacred vocal compositions, possibly more numerous than Bach's, but only a small fraction of them—a little over 30 pieces—survive today. Some of them have conflicting attributions. This is the fifth volume in a project to record all of his sacred vocal works.

In his notes to this recording, Michael Maul points out that Kuhnau holds an important place as a transitional figure. He inherits the tradition of the early baroque sacred concerto with its free-flowing, multi-sectional structure oscillating between declamatory and lyrical delivery by solo voices and ensembles with instrumental accompaniment. He also left examples of cantatas after the model of Erdmann Neumeister, whose cantata text cycle *Geistliche Cantaten Statt einer Kirchen-Music* was first published in 1702 and advanced an ideal of a multi-movement work with choruses, recitatives, arias, and chorales. These five pieces represent different stages in the transition.

Gott Sei mir Gnädig, a penitential work based on Psalm 51, displays the heritage of the sacred concerto; *Ich Habe Lust Abzuscheiden* has the ingredients of a Neumeister cantata. After an opening instrumental sonata, *Erschrick, Mein Herz* consists of a series of alternating recitatives and arias for solo bass followed by a chorus. *Weicht, ihr Sorgen* has a similar sequence of recitatives and arias for solo soprano, but no opening instrumental movement or concluding chorus. *Singet dem Herrn* is an exuberant setting of Psalm 98 with a pair of trumpets and timpani in addition to the strings and continuo. The final movement is a concerto-like composite of solos and choruses. Kuhnau's recitatives tend to have a stronger melodic profile than what we normally associate with secco recitatives of the 18th Century.

The recording was made at St George's church in Rötha using the 1721 Gottfried Silbermann organ. Kuhnau himself took part in

the inauguration of this instrument the year before he died. It has a more substantial tone than most of the cabinet organs often used for baroque continuo. The vocal ensemble Opella Musica was founded in 2011, and here they sing one voice to a part with instrumentalists of Camerata Lipsiensis. These are highly polished and poised performances with few if any rough edges. The lowest bass notes are uncomfortably low for the singer and barely audible, but apart from that one cannot find serious technical fault with these performances.

Three earlier recordings in this series have been reviewed. Lindsay Koob reviewed the first volume (CPO 777 868; M/J 2015), Peter Loewen volumes 2 and 4 (555 020; J/A 2017 & 555 190; J/A 2019). It is reassuring to be so much in agreement with my colleagues as to the worthiness of the music and the beauty of the performances.

GATENS

KUNC: *Quartet 14;*

LHOTKA: *Elegy & Scherzo;*

SLAVENSKI: *Quartet 4*

Sebastian Quartet—CPO 555 297—56 minutes

There will be aficionados who see these composers' names and grunt with recognition, but not me. Still others might shrug and move on, but unfamiliar 20th Century chamber works make me curious. For that matter, the somewhat psychedelic landscape on the cover is so unexpected, so incongruous really, that it makes the whole package impossible to ignore—which is a good thing.

The brother of soprano Zinka Milanov, Bozidar Kunc (1903-64) was a Croatian transplant to America. If Bartok is your limit in modernism, not to worry; Kunc is on your side of the line, and with his danceable rhythms and colorful style he bears a superficial resemblance to the Hungarian composer.

The 1931 Quartet in F is his only foray into the genre, but it is a worthy one. Its swirling *Con molta vivacità* is a charmer, and II is a tearjerker in the manner of Shostakovich. III is as long as the two preceding movements combined; it is a tour-de-force of folk rhythms blended with a European cosmopolitanism. It's almost hard to believe that a quartet can sound so busy and orchestral.

Fran Lhotka (1883-1962), a pupil of Dvorak, moved to Croatia to make his mark there, above all as a teacher and as the composer of the 1935 ballet *The Devil in the Village*. The

1931 Elegy and Scherzo is an overlooked gem. The elegy half is a melodic, slightly shrill 8-minute movement that reminds me a bit of Janacek or Pavel Haas. Melodramatic but effective, it would lend itself to a movie—not from the 30s, but perhaps the European cinema of the 50s. The vaguely oriental Scherzo is a pizzicato showcase, and its mood swings keep it interesting.

Josip Stolcer Slavenski (1896-1955) is not a name you hear every day (though our Editor has Slavenski LPs). His fourth and final quartet dates from 1938, and at 15 minutes it is all too brief. The movements are distinct, and his ideas are fresh. It is ethnic, creative, and mysteriously joyful, and I am again reminded of Haas. The ending is so abrupt that I can't help going back to it to savor it.

Founded in 1982 as the Zagreb Youth Music Quartet, the Sebastian Quartet has rendered Croatian music a major service with this album. These artists play these pieces like they are eminent parts of classical repertoire, which is a compliment that the composers deserve. The liner notes are average, and so is the sound quality, but the music speaks for itself.

DUTTERER

KURTAG: *Solo Cello Pieces*; see KODALY

LANG: *Prisoner of the State*

Julie Mathevet (Assistant), Eric Owens (Jailer), Alan Oke (Governor), Jarrett Ott (Prisoner); Concert Chorale, New York Philharmonic/ Jaap Van Zweden—Decca 32107—65 minutes

David Lang's *Prisoner of the State* (1999) is a rewriting of the text of Beethoven's *Fidelio* to illuminate some of the subsidiary characters that Lang feels are underdeveloped: the feelings of the prisoners and their plight, the Jailer, Governor, his young assistant, and the prisoner himself. Machiavelli, Jeremy Bentham, Rousseau, and Hannah Arendt are quoted. Lang's setting is tonal and not minimalist, the style he is most known for from his *Bang on a Can*, much faster *Marina Marina* days. The operas of John Adams come to mind, but Lang's work is simpler and more "operatic," as in American operas of the 40s and 50s (Jack Beeson, for example). His text wants to fill in what Beethoven left out, and music he might have written. The project is effective enough, but this update is clearly not more than an appendix in modern terms. The result is easy to follow, since these performers' English and

their enunciation is flawless. Libretto and notes are included.

GIMBEL

LA TOMBELLE: pieces

Fantasy; Impressions Marinales; Livre d'images; 3-Cello Suite; Piano Quartet; 5 choral pieces; 10 songs; Andante espressivo; Cello Sonata; Fantaisie-ballade for Harp

Hannes Minnaar, David Violi, Jeff Cohen, Pascal Amoyel, p; François Salque, Hermine Horiot, Adrien Bellom, Pauline Buet, Emanuelle Bertrand, vc; Guillaume Chilemme, v; Marie Chilemme, va; Yann Beuron, t; Nabila Chajai, hp; Flemish Radio Choir, Brussels Philharmonic/ Herve Niquet—Bru Zane 38 [3CD] 200 minutes

This belongs to an extravagant, lavish series of books-with-discs hailing little-known French composers of the late 19th Century. The presentation really is stupendous: essays on all the music and on the composer in French and English, many finely reproduced engravings and photographs, texts and translations—all bound up in an actual book to which the mere CDs seem almost an afterthought. If that's what passes for neglect in France, count me in.

Fernand de la Tombelle seems to have been close to many French musicians of the late 19th Century, as well as some outside of France; but his enthusiasm for them appears not often to have been reciprocated, which is an honest pity. The music here is extremely wide-ranging: piano and orchestra, a couple of orchestral suites, choir and solo voice, a suite for three cellos, a cello sonata, a piano quartet, a largish work for solo harp.

The man had range, and at his best used it sparingly and well. That three-cello suite, for example, does not overreach itself, but sits just where such a work ought to, fetching and charming and, in the finale, sufficiently virtuosic to make listeners sit up and take notice. In the same way, the cello sonata (played here by Emanuelle Bertrand and Pascal Amoyel, as is the *Andante espressivo* preceding it) is designed so as to be brilliant without gaudiness. The 10 *melodies* (6 songs with La Tombelle's own verse, plus 4 additional ones) are most capably sung by Yann Beuron, Jeff Cohen accompanying. The choral works fare less well, but I can't help but love the opening 'Le Furet' (The Ferret), where the choir metaphorically casts its eyes about avidly seeking the little furry beast.

The orchestral music is a mixed bag. The *Fantasy* with piano is all right, but the suites

following it seem wan, washed-out—"atmospheric" music with insufficient air. This is despite every care having been taken to supply variety and light; I admire the delicate writing for woodwind, including the English horn in *Impressions Marinales*, but it still doesn't make for really robust music.

The piano quartet is actually one of the stronger things here, music that can stand up well to what French competition there is (at least, before Fauré); and the harp Fantasy-ballade is for once worthy of that overwrought title. Performances are first-rate, some troubles in the choir and in the orchestra apart; and in general the enterprise stands up well to the absurd standard set by its externals.

THOMSON

LEHAR: *Cloclo*

Sieglinde Feldhofer (Cloclo), Gerd Vogel (Severin), Daniel Jenz (Maxime), Suzanna Hirschler (Melousine); Lehar Festival/ Marius Burkert
CPO 777708—122 minutes

Cloclo is a rarely performed Lehar operetta that is an absolute treat. The music is wonderful, and the racy comic story is entertaining if somewhat far-fetched. Cloclo is a Paris dancer who is visited by Severin Cornichon, the mayor of a small town. Cloclo tells him that she is in need of money and has already sent a letter to his home asking for the money. Cornichon tries to prevent his wife Melousine from seeing the letter, which is addressed to "My Dear Daddy". But she does see it, reads it, and thinks that Cloclo is a little girl and possibly an illegitimate child of her husband. She is thrilled to have this unexpected addition to her family, since she and Severin are childless. Melousine happily invites Cloclo to their home.

Cloclo is in a hurry to leave Paris, because she is about to be arrested for slapping a policeman. Surprised to see Cloclo in his house (he thinks he has seen a ghost) Severin fumbles an introduction, but Melousine enjoys having Cloclo there and calls her Babette. Cloclo is quickly bored with small-town life, but her ex-boyfriend Maxime arrives to profess his love. During a presentation ceremony for the mayor, the police enter his house and arrest Cloclo. To diffuse the scandal, Melousine accepts that her husband has only strayed and she will forgive him. The mayor reprieves Cloclo for the slapping incident, and Cloclo and Maxime become engaged.

Cloclo was written in a very busy period for

Lehar. He was in the midst of writing the operetta *Libellentanz* (1923) and the Berlin premiere of *Frasquita* (1924), leaving only a month to complete the score before the planned March 1924 Vienna premiere. The Cloclo character was fashioned after the flappers of the 1920s who lived a "free" life. The operetta was a success and won rave reviews from the critics. But later and international productions were not well received, possibly owing to the racy storyline. The operetta vanished until 1971, when it was presented in Dresden.

The show has one of Lehar's best contemporary scores with shimmys, two-steps, and blues numbers—song styles you normally would not attribute to Lehar. There are also the ballads and waltzes, but the whole show is designed to be up-to-date, with the latest musical styles. *Cloclo* points up his adaptability, craft, and showmanship. Based on this wholly enjoyable performance, it should be revived more often.

Sieglinde Feldhofer has appeared in many of these Lehar Festival recordings, and she continues to improve. Her voice is beautiful and she is a good actress. She knows the meaning of the songs and performs them with conviction. Gerd Vogel is an enjoyable, bumbling Severin, and Daniel Jenz an affable Maxime with a handsome tenor. The rest of the cast is skilled; orchestra and chorus are excellent. Marius Burkert leads a spirited performance. The recording is better than in some other shows from this source. The stagy sound balance and miking has been corrected and stage noise reduced to the point where, except for audience applause, this could be a studio performance. There is an interesting German and English booklet describing the show's history. It includes performer biographies. There is no libretto.

FISCH

LEMAITRE: *Orange & Yellow II; Thot; Stances; Mnaidra, Plus Haut*

Dan Barrett, Stanislav Orlovsky, vc; Michiyo Suzuki, cl; Jed Distler, p
New Focus 276—44 minutes

Dominique Lemaître (b. 1953) is new to me and apparently to ARG as well. He studied musicology at the University of Rouen and composition with Jacques Petit. He has written more than 100 works and has a fine reputation and several recordings already.

Brace yourself! This recording is extra-

gant in sound. The echoes suggest more instruments than are actually playing. It opens with a transcription of a work originally written for two violas in 2009, here heard with two cellos, written in homage to Morton Feldman. There are lots of sound effects and suggestions that we might be going somewhere, but though the cellos chase each other about and join each other in varied ways, they are really out there to surprise and shock us, not to play music.

A clarinet enters for *Thot*, notably pure in sound, then joined by cello harmonics, etc. The sound is fascinating. The world comes in from outer space. Dan Barrett is left alone by himself in *Mnaidra*, where he plays and plucks. There are lots of sonorous harmonics and whispers and exclamations, but we're going nowhere. In comes a piano, moving the cello away from the microphone for *Stances*. Here we become engulfed in "pitch reservoirs," as the liner notes inform us, for nearly 14 minutes. It's all sound, though no fury; harmonics, scalar passages, harmonic discrepancies, and occasional noses in the grindstone, inspiring criticism but not real enjoyment. Finally, we're back to lonely cello in *Plus Haut*, a 10-minute piece that tries first to put us to sleep, then shocks us awake. Finally it deafens us with an endless high-register note, after which we are out of danger, I hope!

If this seems less than positive, don't let me discourage you from it just because I found it more sonoric than musical. It is recorded with clarity and played with conviction. Perhaps it is significant that it is presented by International Street Cannibals.

D MOORE

LESCHETIZKY: Piano Pieces

Tobias Bigger—BIS 2518—59 minutes

Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915) is rarely played today. Mr Bigger found his music through an interest in Ignaz Friedman, a pupil of Leschetizky. As he started to learn about Leschetizky's students, he released a 2009 recording and learned through the German Leschetizky Society about the "shadowy existence" of his works. The liner notes tell us that this composer started teaching at 14 years old, and was mostly known as a skilled teacher and director of the piano faculty of the St Petersburg Conservatory. He had many students, which may have led to his composition career taking a back seat.

Yet there are many "treasures" here—as

Bigger describes them. The playing captures the romantic language of these works and does not compromise on the technical demands. 2 Piano Pieces are buttery smooth with lovely cantabile playing. The 4 Pieces are sentimental.

The pianist brings out the different character of each piece. Some are more fluffy, such as the *Pastels*. All are well played. These pieces would also make excellent teaching tools.

KANG

LHOTKA: Elegy & Scherzo; see KUNC

LIGETI: Etudes; Horn Trio

Adam Unsworth, hn; Eric Huebner, p; Yuki Numata, v—New Focus 269—64 minutes

These transcendental etudes (1985-94) outdo his compatriot Liszt's in modern terms. The 14 studies blow the mind and fingers to the fullest possible extent, but are thrilling to listen to individually or as a sets (two books). They are filled with dizzying polyrhythms and touches of jazz, breathtaking scales, folk-like fragments, and sumptuous harmonies. Mr Huebner shows impeccable technique and musicality.

The Horn Trio (1982), inspired by the Brahms, continues the hair-raising piano writing of the etudes and adds challenging parts for the violin and horn, especially the latter, which can become trying in Mr Unsworth's grappling. The final 'Lament' brings the piece to a mournful close.

There are now a number of recordings of the etudes, so check couplings.

GIMBEL

LIGETI: Solo Cello Sonata; see KODALY

LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsodies (15)

Martin Ivanov, p
Gramola 99222 [2CD] 114 minutes

If you are thrilled by anything Liszt wrote for piano, here is one of the rare recordings of all the Hungarian Rhapsodies. Well, one needs to explain that these were published as a set in 1854. Many years later—about 30 years later, in the 1880s—he wrote 4 more. Mr Ivanov says they are a different animal and they bore him. Their presence here would also be "jarring," says the writer of the notes. Their style is mostly too different.

Well, I have never been a Liszt Com-pleatist, and I always prefer recitals with pieces from various Liszt collections. I have never had

the patience to listen attentively—to really hear—all the Hungarian Rhapsodies on the piano. 6 of them were orchestrated, and those are very pleasant. I have a piano recording of 8 of them by Balint Vazsonyi that I still treasure. It's a bit rough, not over-refined but quite folk-like; and it's 55 minutes. It has all the ones that I like on the piano, and stirringly played. But I have no idea whether you can find that very Hungarian recording these days. (It was issued on CD, but in 1988.) Other pianists have recorded the rhapsodies, and I think most of them are rather generic—general musicality. They are even sometimes genuinely Lisztian, but almost never very Hungarian. I have at least four other recordings of individual rhapsodies on the piano; all are better than here.

So you have here the entire first set of Hungarian Rhapsodies (and you don't need the other 4), and they are expertly played; but they become tiresome after a while, and they don't have much Hungarian flavor. (I made chicken paprikas twice this week; I know Hungarian flavors! I have also been to Budapest a few times and been a friend and neighbor to Hungarian immigrants. I say this only because a reader might reasonably question whether I have any idea what I am talking about!)

By the way, No. 2 is the best known. Also, the numbering of the orchestral versions does not always match the piano ones. That had me confused for years! Orchestral 1 is piano 14, 2 is 2, 3 is 6 on the piano, 4 is 12, 5 is 5, and 6 is 9. All of them are very effective either way.

VROON

LISZT: *Piano Transcriptions from Donizetti, Lassen, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Weber*
Andrey Ivanov—Naxos 574149—81 minutes

This is Volume 55 of Naxos's complete edition of Liszt's piano music and includes the debut of Ivanov.

With Liszt there is no faking it. You either have the technique and the guts to go with it or you don't. Not all of these transcriptions require technical acrobatics. The most interesting of them is by Eduard Lassen (1830-1904), a Belgian-Danish composer who wrote incidental music to Hebbel's *Nibelungen* and Goethe's *Faust*, both of which Liszt combines into the 25 minutes of music here. Fascinating stuff, and clearly influenced in part by Wagner. Some of that might be from Liszt's treatment, some a result of Lassen's many years as conductor in Weimar.

Two of the tracks are fragments. The

Meyerbeer lasts a mere 15 seconds. The balance is of more substance, though that would really depend on whether one likes Liszt or not. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* selection is a spellbinding amalgam of the Wedding March and fragments of the Fairies Dance.

This is probably of greatest interest to the dedicated Lisztian, but Ivanov is well up to the task and supplies the requisite thrills and chills. The timing is generous, and Keith Anderson's notes are good but in minuscule type.

BECKER

LULLY: *Armide 1778*

Veronique Gens (Armide), Reinoud Van Mechelen (Renaud), Tassis Christoyannis (Hidraot, La Haine), Chantal Santon Jeffery (Phenice, Lucinde); Le Concert Spirituel/ Herve Niquet
Alpha 973—137 minutes

This interesting recording is the 1778 version of Lully's 1686 opera. About the time of French Revolution there was a reconsideration of the older French baroque operas. Although *Armide* was still occasionally performed, a major revision was considered necessary to appeal to "modern" audiences. For the 1778 version, the opera was updated by several composers. Interpolations and ballets were added, the orchestrations were expanded for a larger orchestra, the harpsichord was eliminated, and the spoken recitatives were sung. With all the effort made to update the opera, the 1778 version was never performed—this recording is its premiere.

The basic plot, based on Tasso's *Gerusalamme Liberata*, concerns the love of Armide, an enchantress, for the Crusader knight Renaud. Armide lives in a magic palace in Damascus. Renaud has invaded the city. At first Armide hates Renaud and attempts to kill him, but on seeing him falls in love. Renaud is not interested. Armide tries to rid herself of romantic feelings by consulting with Hades, who will tear out her heart. Armide relents and has herself and Renaud transported by her fairy retinue to her palace. Hades predicts a dreadful fate for her. Renaud is rescued by his cohorts Ubalde and the Danish Knight after they have fought off various demons and dragons to gain entry to the palace. Armide professes her love for Renaud and tries to bar the three soldiers from leaving, but Renaud will have none of it. After they leave, Armide orders her palace destroyed by the demons as she vanishes in the air.

There is really no standardized version of Lully's 1686 score. By the time of the 1778 makeover, the score and libretto had been altered several times with other Lully music or other composer interpolations owing to performers' requirements and audience tastes. 18th Century audiences expected spectacular sets, unusual characters, and ballets. As this was also Lully's last opera (he died in 1686) and he left the fifth act incomplete, other composers and stage directors could take liberties with the score. The staging gave designers ample opportunity to show off their skills.

In modern recordings conductors or directors have also made various additions, cuts, and alterations to the opera. John Barker summarized four of the recordings (S/O 2017), including a then-new recording (Aparte 135) led by Christophe Rousset.

Unlike other Palazetto Bru Zane sponsored recordings, the lavishly illustrated booklet doesn't supply information on the original Lully score or alterations, or where they occur.

Mr Barker liked the Rousset with its excellent cast and emphatic performances. Although the singing and acting in this new version are very good, this is not as good as the Rousset performance, which I acquired based on Mr Barker's recommendation. The added ballets are a pleasant diversion, and the larger orchestra offers more color than in other recordings.

FISCH

MACMILLAN: Organ Pieces

Kenga & Krushqve; Gaudeamus in Loci Pace; St Andrew's Suite; Offertorium; Tombeau de Georges Rouault; White Note Paraphrase; Meditation; Wedding Introit; Toccata

Stephen Farr—Resonus 10266—57 minutes

James MacMillan is primarily known for his wonderful choral writing, but his organ pieces occupy a small but significant part of his output. He has written for the organ all through his career, from early experiments with traditional Scottish music to substantial virtuosic fantasias from the past decade. Many of these pieces were written as gifts for family and friends, or on commission for specific occasions such as weddings. The style is a mixture of Bachian contrapuntal rigor and the language and color of Messiaen, with infusions of plainsong and Scottish folk song.

The most substantial work is the homage to Rouault, written for Thomas Trotter in 2003. This spiky, virtuosic piece takes its inspiration

from the dark-hued and basest elements of contemporary society as portrayed by Rouault: "the work alludes to prostitutes, clowns, and indignant judges, amidst a pantomime of other characters and personalities, all seemingly longing for the presence of Christ to bring order to the chaos". Of particular use to organists is the 2019 *Toccata*, based on the plainsong *Pange lingua*.

Farr delivers clean, business-like performances on the 1992 4-manual, 57-stop Rieger organ in St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh. Notes on the music, photos, and specification.

DELCAMP

MAHLER: *Das Lied von der Erde*

Sarah Connolly, mz; Robert Dean Smith, t; Berlin Radio/Vladimir Jurowski

Pentatone 5186 760 [SACD] 63 minutes

Lucile Richardot, mz; Yves Saelens, t; Het Collectief/ Reinbert DeLeeuw—Alpha 633—61 minutes

:With so many fine recordings of what Bernstein called "the greatest of Mahler symphonies" you have lots of choices. Do you want tenor and mezzo soloists or tenor and baritone or one soloist for all six movements? Do you want the full orchestral version as Mahler wrote it or a chamber ensemble version that makes it playable by smaller groups?

I always return to my first discovery of this amazing work, Bernstein's riveting recording with James King and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. I also turn to Klemperer's recording with Fritz Wunderlich and Christa Ludwig.

Here are two of the latest entries, both with tenor and mezzo, but one with full orchestra and one with chamber ensemble. I don't really know why anyone would want a chamber version of the work.

Right from the start you notice the pale entrance in 'Das Trinklied' with just one horn rather than a robust full section. You hear some of the key solo instruments and miss others. You hear a piano. The differences are most pronounced in the robust songs assigned to the tenor. In the quieter songs and the long final 'Abschied' those differences are less pronounced.

Reinbert DeLeeuw used Schoenberg's 1918 chamber version and added instruments; the most obvious is a contrabassoon in 'Der Abschied'. This was his last recording; he died two months later. The tenor, Saalens, sounds a bit coarse, but Richardot's lighter-voiced mezzo is quite lovely and ethereal. Her sensitive singing is the best thing about this produc-

tion. The smaller performing forces create a quieter and more intimate ambiance much of the time but still rises to some forcefulness when needed. This version allowed me listen in a new way to the work—but I won't listen to it again.

When I turned to Vladimir Jurowski's performance at the Philharmonie in Berlin on October 14, 2018 I was surprised at first to hear what seemed like a muted performance with soloists sounding offstage; it was like seeing a photograph that had faded from being left in too much sunlight. It took me a while to adjust to the sound, and I soon came to appreciate Jurowski's carefully articulated reading. The finely shaped details come through clearly in exceptionally good SACD sound. It would be hard to find better recorded orchestral playing than this. The sound is not only warmly natural; it is vivid and beautifully clear. Best of all it gives a sense that I was at the concert with singers and principal players creating a sonic landscape. This is one of the best of the many recordings I've heard of *Das Lied von der Erde*.

The singers are terrific. Any tenor faces a challenge with the difficult high tessitura of 'Das Trinklied'. Robert Dean Smith, who has triumphed in Wagnerian roles, is able to offer a clear and unforced delivery that has sweetness as well as steel. Best of all is Sarah Connolly, in a performance of gripping poignancy. Her reading rates as one of the best, joining Christa Ludwig and Janet Baker. The crystal-clear intimacy of the sound makes the gentle fading of "Ewig" at the end of 'Der Abschied' very powerful.

The liner notes include Jurowski's philosophical understanding of the work, remarking that conducting it was shaped by his conviction that Mahler found a new "lyrical" approach that shares something with Schubert in contrast with the "heroic" path of Beethoven. Jörg Peter Urbach offers a further illuminating essay about the work. Texts and translations are included, but fail to indicate Mahler's adaptation of Bethge's texts and completely omit the final section of the text to 'Der Abschied' that follows the long orchestral passage.

R MOORE

MAHLER: *Symphony 3*

Oslo Philharmonic/ Mariss Jansons
Simax 1272 [2CD] 95:35

We reviewed the same conductor's later recording of this symphony with London's Royal Philharmonic (Nov/Dec 2011), and we

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rather liked it; but in general none of our reviewers have thought of Jansons as one of the best conductors of anything—let alone Mahler. And this is probably my favorite Mahler symphony; I am inclined to play it every year on my birthday.

This 2001 recording seems rather rigid and on the fast side (it is around 4 minutes faster than the RPO recording, and many recordings of this symphony take 100 minutes). But it is the rigidity that I cannot stand. There is a world of feeling in any Mahler symphony; but this conductor is, as usual, determined not to let feelings enter into it. Why bother with something like this when we already have so many excellent recordings?

VROON

MAHLER: *Symphony 4*

Turku Philharmonic/ Leif Segerstam
Alba 454—61:40

This is Mr Segerstam's second recording of this symphony. The first was in the 1990s with the Danish Radio Orchestra on Chandos (much favored in our Overview in July/Aug 2001). I liked the sound of that one much better. This one sounds dry, with no sense of place or reverberation. I have been to Turku, but I mostly remember the cathedral, which has abundant reverberation!

In interpretation I hear essentially no difference between the Chandos and the Alba. The timing of III listed on the cover of this one is ridiculous; it's actually 8 minutes faster (21:39, not 29:50). Still, Segerstam is among the slowest.

The singer in IV is Essi Luttinen; I don't like her at all. There is something hard and sophisticated about her that doesn't suit the text.

If you can find the Chandos you will get his warm, sensitive reading in better sound than this. The orchestra even sounds fuller, but it may not be bigger; the Turku Philharmonic is 74 players. Their strings don't sound full enough for me, and the sound is also a bit distant. Olli Mustonen has just replaced Segerstam as their Artistic Director—a miserable setback for the orchestra, which is the oldest in Finland.

VROON

MAHLER: *Symphony 7*

Lille Orchestra/ Alexandre Bloch
Alpha 592—74 minutes

This is the first recording of this work that I

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have come across with a French orchestra and conductor. Lille is found in the north of France on the Belgian border. Alexandre Bloch has been its orchestra's music director since 2016. This concert recording is from what appears to be a Mahler cycle. It raises the question of what happens when Mahler is asked to take on a French character. The answer is entertaining.

The opening is very deliberate, with pronounced downbeats and an eloquent tenor tuba, though balances are a bit odd when the trombones are lost in the texture of their first big entrance. More obvious is that the violins are on the bright side, woodwind solos are too, and the march rhythms are cleanly defined. The opening after the eloquent tenor tuba solo is stately, bold, and slightly aggressive, with clear phrasing and well-marked rhythms and downbeats. Before the first slow, yearning passage, the violins seem to be in a dialog with the rest of the orchestra. 'Moonlight' is slow and still marked in style, but it soon picks up like a mood change. The trumpet fanfares are well done, and the passage with horns and trombones is bold and eloquent. Through all this, Bloch reveals himself to be a bit of a prober, peeking into corners to hear what he can find. Some of it seems exaggerated but well within limits; it makes the music sound somewhat modern.

The horns, one seeming to be placed close and the other distant, are very good in II, and the middle strings do well with their lyrical passages. The march character remains strong, and an effective mood change occurs over the walking low strings. In this performance, the bassoons play a prominent accompaniment role to their woodwind brethren to good effect, especially in their passage with English horn near the end.

Until now, this is a good solid performance, French in character with clarity, bright strings and woodwinds, and clean rhythms. Where it takes off is in what may be the best reading of the Scherzo that I have heard. This movement is often described as "spooky". In this reading that term is well earned. The French characteristics noted above plus the silences between notes so expressively observed and the notes themselves so clearly articulated, take us from spooky to startling and scary—effects I do not recall hearing anywhere else to this extent. Gestures are sudden, those bright strings shriek with fright, and the sneaky stuff works very well—for instance, the great bassoon pops near the end. Bloch pulls out all the stops in this movement with bright-

ly lit, bold urgency; and the close recording helps.

Nachtmusik II sometimes seems long to me, but not so here, partly but not entirely because of the fairly fast tempo. To an extent, it carries over some of Bloch's approach to the Scherzo. Again, everything is clear, bold, and interesting. Some parts are mysterious, the lyrical tune is warm and rich in tone, and the bold horn supplies excellent contrast. There are some effective exaggerations here and there, particularly in some nice swells. The passage with harp arpeggios over quiet strings is effective and surprising, and the agitated music is really agitated. This is not always "night music" *per se*, but the energy and variety clear away the sense of *ennui* I sometimes hear in this movement.

Ennui is the last word one would apply to the finale, which is a real *tour de force*. The drums in the opening are as prominent as I have heard them, and they will be unusually prominent later on, always to good effect. The opening tempo is fast and furious; what follows is fast and bold with solos clearly defined with a lot of personality. The character changes are very clean, as Bloch treats the whole piece like theater, throwing in everything but the proverbial kitchen sink, all in great fun, and those prominent drums help. Speaking of theater—or in this case, the theatrical—he slows way down toward the end, allowing the drums, brass, and bells to have a field day. Then he picks the tempo right back up, turning on a dime and not for the first time. This finale is supposed to be exhilarating, and it sure is here.

In my review last issue of Osmo Vanska's recording of this work, I wrote that I had early doubts about the performance but liked it better the second time. That applies here, too. The close, cleanly defined recording fits the interpretation very well.

HECHT

MANEN: *Violin Concerto 3; Symphony 2*
Ana Maria Valderrama, Barcelona Symphony/
Darrell Ang—Naxos 574274 [2CD] 90 minutes

Joan Manen is not nearly as well known as Albeniz, Granados, or Falla; but in the early 20th Century he was a formidable force in Spanish music. He deserves to be revived, and this Naxos recording is welcome. We get two epic works, a violin concerto and a symphony, both scored for large orchestra and played with passion and conviction, if not a great deal

of refinement. Mena was not as aggressively Spanish as his better known compatriots, but these splashy, large-scale works have Iberian soul and sensibility.

Mena was a violinist, who gave over 4000 concerts and was the first to record the Beethoven Violin Concerto. Violin Concerto 3 from 1940 is full of sensuous tunes for the soloist. Manen was a full-throated romantic, and this work shows it. It is played with soaring, uninhibited passion by Ana Maria Valderama, who is definitely a violinist to watch. There is a generous amount of ravishing slow music, but the finale, a tour-de-force that is the most uninhibitedly Spanish section, offers bracing contrast. The ending, with its frantically repeated modal chords, is an exciting dash to the finish, a final workout for the soloist. Symphony 2 is more tense and suspenseful, full of struggle and contrast, making for a perfect pairing.

SULLIVAN

MANTYJARVI: Choral Pieces

Ave Maria; Stuttgart Psalms; Benedic Anima mea Dominio; Pulchra es; Trinity Service; O Magnum Mysterium

Trinity College Choir/ Stephen Layton
Hyperion 68266—71 minutes

One of the pleasures of reviewing for ARG is coming across composers I have never heard of and finding interesting and engaging music. Such is the case with Jaako Mantjarvi, a Finnish composer who has written mainly choral works, both sacred and secular. He has had several commissions from groups such as Chanticleer, the King's Singers, the Cork International Choral Festival, the World Symposium on Choral Music, and for the 700th anniversary of Turku Cathedral. He describes himself as an eclectic traditionalist who, as an active choral singer, has gained understating of choral writing. "The choir is the instrument that I know from the inside—my harmonic language is mainly very sonorous, not tonal but largely consonance-driven. I do use effects and other contemporary means as required for the text or atmosphere at hand. I used to avoid simple solutions but am less self-conscious about that nowadays. A musical idea does not need to be complex to be effective."

The pieces on this program are sacred and display a colorful and unique creative voice. I particularly like the *Ave Maria*, *O Magnum Mysterium*, and the *Trinity Service*, a complete setting of Evensong written for the Trinity Col-

lege Choir: introit, responses, psalm chant, canticles, Lord's Prayer, anthem, and final responses.

The longest and most complex pieces are the *Stuttgart Psalms*, commissioned by the Stuttgart Bach Academy in celebration of Mendelssohn's 200th birthday. Mantjarvi was assigned three of the psalms set by Mendelssohn in his Opus 78. The result is dramatic, intense, and gritty settings, which employ a number of effects both traditional and avant-garde. This is virtuosic choral writing of the highest order and not for the average church choir!

The Trinity Choir's committed, musical, and convincing performances are superb in every way and bring this vivid and strangely beautiful music to life. Long and pretentious notes about the music with texts.

DELCAMP

MARGOLA: *Mandolin & Guitar Pieces*

Raffaele La Ragione, mand; Gabriele Zannetti, g; Daniele Richiedei, v; Giacomina Ferrari, p

Brilliant 96037—50 minutes

It's common enough for a reviewer, listening to some skilled-but-woefully-dated 20th Century epigone, to grumble that the music "might have been written in the 19th Century". I've done it myself. This is the first time, though, that I've ever thought anything 20th Century sounded as though it were written in the *mid-18th*. And yet that is the impression I get of Franco Margola from this disc.

The works are mainly for mandolin or guitar, sometimes together, sometimes one paired with piano or violin; in a sort of mash-up at the end, written by violinist Daniele Richiedei after a piece by Margola, all four instruments appear at once. The harmonies are exceedingly simple and the figuration likewise, a bit like the plucked-string equivalent of an Alberti bass much of the time. The thing most obviously setting this music apart from the rococo it closely resembles is that the harmonies, while locally straightforward, don't always go quite where my ear predicts they will. They aren't wildly divergent, just not what you'd expect in a well-made pastiche, which this music (despite appearances) is not.

If it's not pastiche, what is it? I'm honestly not sure. It's certainly pleasant, ear-tickling stuff, calculated to engage your attention at a low level every so often, but otherwise almost startlingly unobtrusive. Performances seem

expert, though the music is pretty undemanding.

THOMSON

MARTEAU: *Quartet 1; Clarinet Quintet*

Jean-Michel Charlier, cl; Isasi Quartet
CPO 555 129—70 minutes

Violinist and composer Henri Marteau (1874-1934) began life at a privileged crossroads of two great European cultures, a circumstance that would develop as both a blessing and a curse. He grew up in Reims in northeast France, the son of a German mother from a wealthy Dresden family close to Robert and Clara Schumann and a French father, an industrialist who served as president of the local Philharmonic Society. He studied in Paris with the famous Belgian violinist Hubert Leonard (1819-90); and he enjoyed early success performing the Bruch Concerto in Vienna and London and the Brahms Violin Concerto in New York. In 1900 (age 26), he became the violin professor at the Geneva Conservatory, where he started a string quartet, established a concert series, and brought in renowned musicians to perform.

Even as early 20th Century music began to upend tradition, Marteau continued to believe deeply in the string quartet. He required all his students to attend his quartet class; and he wrote three quartets himself. The first one, in D-flat, seeks to elevate that dark and unfriendly key from peculiar occurrences in movements of Beethoven's late quartets. He was also an enthusiast of variations. After inviting the illustrious Meiningen Court Orchestra principal clarinet Richard Muhlfeld to Geneva and hearing him play the Mozart Clarinet Quartet, Marteau wrote his Clarinet Quartet in C minor. In both works Marteau draws on the best of French and German late romanticism: Gallic elegance and Teutonic counterpoint.

Marteau's ability to float between the French and German aesthetic meant little in geo-political circles. In 1908, following the death of violin virtuoso Joseph Joachim, Marteau moved to Berlin to fulfill a promise to his friend and take his place as violin professor at the Royal Prussian College of Music. When World War I broke out, Marteau declared his allegiance to Germany; yet Prussian authorities saw only his surname. He lost his job and spent time in an internment camp until the publicity of his situation reduced his punishment for being half-French to house arrest. After the war he moved to Sweden at the

request of the royal family, but later the Weimar Republic allowed him to return. He died in Lichtenberg, Bavaria; and today, the Hof Symphony in Bavaria manages an international violin competition in his name.

In 2009, Catalan violinist Anna Bohigas, Japanese violinist Chikako Hosoda, German violist Karsten Dobers, and French cellist Guy Danel, all residents of Belgium, founded the Isasi Quartet to record the complete quartets of little known Spanish-German composer Andres Isasi (1890-1940). Here they aim to bring Marteau into the mainstream repertoire, presenting the rarely heard Quartet No. 1 (1900) and enlisting Belgian National Orchestra principal clarinet Jean-Michel Charlier to perform the Clarinet Quintet (1906).

The performances are excellent. The Isasi Quartet plays with equal parts grace, polish, and verve; and Charlier adds a warm, covered tone, a silky legato, and nuanced phrasing. All the musicians emphasize French lightness over German somberness; but they also allow each work to speak for itself. The Quartet No. 1 comes across as Marteau's poetic farewell to the 19th Century; and the Clarinet Quintet is an exploration of post-romantic soundscapes while keeping one foot in the past. The album is an interesting snapshot of a confident composer carefully shaping his identity at a complex point in time.

HANUDEL

MARTUCCI: *Cello Romances*; see BRAHMS

MARX: *25 Songs*

Kendra Colton, s; Laura Ward, p
Albany 1836—61 minutes

Joseph Marx (1882-1964) wrote a considerable volume of music in various genres (except no opera), but was also active in Austria as an important pedagogue, critic, and writer. In his taste and philosophy he was decidedly conservative and opposed to the serialists, who were centered largely in Vienna. His songs, about 150 in all, were mostly written in the few years after 1908; they are with piano, but he also orchestrated about 20 of them. These pieces were very popular in his day, but when Marx branched out into other genres, his popularity waned.

He is most remembered for his songs. In style they are similar to Wolf or Strauss, lush and opulently romantic. They are also often difficult, requiring singers (and pianists) with more than amateur abilities. And they are

quite beautiful—certainly fine enough to be included more regularly on recitals. If I had any general criticism, I would wish for more quick songs (like ‘Warnung’ or the cute ‘Die Elfe’). Nonetheless, any lover of lieder with the courage to step outside the standard repertoire should sample Marx’s songs.

Kendra Colton, an American soprano who has appeared widely here and abroad, teaches at Oberlin. She sounds splendid here—lovely, even tone with a perfectly controlled vibrato and wonderful high notes (often ranging to B-flat in pieces like ‘Serenata’ and ‘Hat dich die Liebe Berührt’). She captures the romantic texts (many of them really over the top!) with conviction and sincerity. Some little songs like ‘Ständchen’ and ‘Selige Nacht,’ which close the recital, are the epitome of the romantic song.

Special mention should be made of Laura Ward, who tackles the often challenging piano parts. The accompaniments themselves show lots of imagination, as in the pictorial writing in ‘Windräder’ or the light-heartedness of ‘Pierrot Dandy’. Generally speaking, the pianist has to be just as fine as the singer, and Ward is excellent.

One curiosity and a complaint. The liner notes say this was recorded in 1999. Where has it been all this time? And the complaint? No texts; only English translations.

ALTHOUSE

MATTEIS: *Suites*

Alice Julien-Laferriere, v; Ground Floor
Harmonia Mundi 916117—66 minutes

The release has the title “Il Genio Inglese” (The English Genius) and the subtitle, “Nicola Matteis, A Neapolitan in London”. The program also includes music by a few other composers in London at the time of the English Restoration. After returning to the British throne in 1660, King Charles II sought musicians of the highest order to rival the splendor of Louis XIV’s court. Violin virtuoso Nicola Matteis (d 1713) was among the musicians who arrived from Italy in the 1670s following the marriage of the Modenese d’Este princess Maria Beatrice to Charles II’s younger brother James, Duke of York. Note that incorrect dates—of Matteis’s son, also named Nicola—are on the CD cover and in the booklet.

Matteis’s success helped to further establish a high level of violin playing in England, where the instrument was still quite new. A suite for guitar by Matteis is included in the

program, reflecting that “in Restoration England the guitar, rather than the lute, became a fashionable instrument for proficient amateurs, owing once again to Nicola Matteis”.

One of my favorite musical forms is the ground bass, and not only are there plenty of them here to enjoy but the term “ground” also offers the basis (pun intended) for the ensemble’s Ground Floor name. Their four very expert players (cello, theorbo, harp, harpsichord) are joined by violinist Alice Julien-Laferriere. The repertoire, which includes four pieces by Johann Schop, Matthew Locke, Gottfried Finger, and John Banister, is very well chosen and performed.

The program opens with Schop’s ‘Lachrime Pavane’. Solo theorbo leads off in a beautiful tone that is pensive yet welcoming and then the violin takes over the top voice, singing with eloquence, stretching the pitch, pausing, speeding up, slowing down, eager to be understood. The first of six pieces by Matteis follows: ‘Ground in D per far la mano’, a lively and engaging violin showpiece. Varied dance movements and expressive gestures in the suites include shimmering rapid filigree, solemn weeping, breathless exhilarating speed, and bold declamation. The players’ spot-on ensemble, though deceptively effortless, denotes complete command of the style.

C MOORE

MAYER: *Symphonies 1+2*

North German Radio/ Leo McFall
CPO 555293—64 minutes

The works of German composer Emilie Mayer (1812-83) apparently are just beginning to surface. In her own time she was subjected to the kind of prejudice that is strongly protested today; one 19th-Century reviewer wrote the following back-handed compliment: “That still other abilities and a more elevated intellect are necessary in order to probe the deepest mysteries of art need hardly be stated. That which female powers—powers of the second order—are capable of attaining, Emilie Mayer has achieved and brought to expression.”

In 2019 (Mar/Apr) I reviewed a recording of an orchestration of Mayer’s Symphony 4, of which only a piano four-hand version has been found. I offered my own back-handed compliment: “Maybe the 37-minute symphony sounds better than it is because of Stefan Malzew’s superb orchestration, depth of expression, and dynamic direction. The work might as well have been nicknamed the

Appassionato or *Dynamic*.” I had little enthusiasm for the other five works on the album.

Here we have Mayer’s first two symphonies (the composer’s own orchestration). Symphony 1 is an unqualified success—melodic ideas that lend themselves to development plus superb modulations, orchestration, and strong form. I immediately associated it with the symphonies of Mendelssohn and Robert Schumann, yet Mayer has her own solid voice. It is strongly dramatic, but so is the Adagio (II), as McFall integrates all of its various tiny meters into a natural graceful flow. The Scherzo is as substantial as the other three movements; crisp rhythms in the subordinate voices give it character, and what initially might seem like a trio section quickly becomes a substantial midsection of an ABA form. A brief Mendelssohnian introduction in the Finale leads to a powerful yet lyrical theme with Beethoven-like character. It is superbly shaped and very dramatic.

All this is helped extremely by full, ambient, warm, balanced engineering and the superb playing of the orchestra. Kudos to Englishman Leo McFall, 39, new chief conductor of the Vorarlberg Symphony in a mountainous Austrian city of 400,000. What I hear here belies an unimpressive biography (Vorarlberg?). Textures are transparent, ensemble is flawless, phrases are beautifully shaped by the depth of expression, and not a single phrase is on autopilot.

I wish I could say the same about Meyer’s Symphony 2. The construction of each movement is more sectional than integrated, with entirely too much repetition of patterns. Maybe it’s my disappointment in the composer that made me suspect that McFall wasn’t quite as “hot” here as in 1. Like 1, 2 has four movements but with the Scherzo second. There are violin and cello solos in the second theme of the Finale, where the tempo slows down. I can’t tell if that’s McFall following the score or accommodating the soloists; either way, it interferes with the overall structure and flow.

Is the glass half-empty or half-full? For me, Symphony 1 here is definitely a keeper.

FRENCH

MEDTNER: *Songs 1*

Ekaterina Levental, mz; Frank Peters, p
Brilliant 96056—72 minutes

Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951) is best known for his piano compositions, but a third of his com-

positions are for voice and are not recorded very often. Ekaterina Levental has performed all of Medtner’s songs in concert with Frank Peters and is intent on further increasing their availability and familiarity to listeners by recording them all, beginning with this first volume. All of the songs here are in Russian and were composed early in Medtner’s career.

Medtner was born in Moscow on Christmas Eve 1879, according to the Julian calendar then in use in Russia. At age 12 he entered the Moscow Conservatory where he studied with Pavel Pabst and Sergey Taneyev and won the Anton Rubinstein Prize at age 20. Instead of pursuing a career as a concert pianist he chose to concentrate on composition. In 1936 he settled in London, where he spent the rest of his life teaching and composing. His style is rooted in 19th Century romanticism with a dense and complex harmonic and melodic language. Even though his friend and advocate Rachmaninoff said, “The public will never understand his music”, his popularity has grown in recent years.

Ekaterina Levental was born in Uzbekistan and settled in The Netherlands where she studied at the Conservatory of The Hague and established herself as a singer and theatre producer. Her technique is terrific, with wonderful legato, control of dynamics, and tight vibrato—and occasionally none, to convey stillness (e.g. in ‘The Singer’). The appropriate expressive affect she brings to each song is illuminating. She commands a broad pitch range with a solid bottom and a bell-like top (e.g. her high B-flat in ‘On the Lake’).

Dutch pianist Frank Peters is a respected soloist and chamber music partner and has been a champion of Medtner’s piano works. The piano writing is full of fine filigree; it is often complex and difficult, but always engaging. Peters shows unfailing command of its drama and attentive sensitivity to its tenderness.

Medtner shows up in song programs now and then, but this is the first time the songs have been given ample attention. An earlier release of his songs (M/J 2019) was disappointing, not for the performance but for the poor recording. The performance and sound here are thoroughly satisfying. The balance between voice and piano is just right.

I have found it hard to stop listening to this album and get on to others awaiting review. Each song is a little treasure. If you are unfamiliar with Medtner’s songs, this is a chance to explore them.

Liner notes by the two artists are unashamedly promotional in their advocacy of this music. Their commitment to these songs is strongly conveyed in these superb performances. I wish the texts had also been printed in original languages instead of only in English translation. Otherwise everything about this production is commendable. I look forward to later volumes in this series.

R MOORE

MENDELSSOHN: *Piano Quartets*

Klimt Quartet—Brilliant 95532 [2CD]—98 min

There's no question that Mendelssohn made his mark with overtures, symphonies, and oratorios; but listening to his four piano quartets, it feels like the world (the music world, anyway) would be a better place if he had written more chamber music. Not even Mozart wrote music of this caliber in his early teens—nor did anyone else. That's the Mendelssohn enigma, the peerless prodigy who became a reactionary.

These pieces still astonish, and Quartetto Klimt shares a vision of them as energetic, moody, graceful masterpieces.

The forceful opening of Quartet 1 is terrific, but the Adagio is even more compelling with its palpable feeling of restraint and Matteo Fossi's cascading piano passages, which get even better in III. By IV, however, he is overshadowing the strings. It is no surprise to discover that he has often played Beethoven and Schumann on his own, for that is the flavor here.

Not quite so formidable as its predecessor, Piano Quartet 2 in F minor is nonetheless played with aplomb.

That probably would have been enough of an album, but ensembles (or record labels?) like to have complete sets. Piano Quartet 3 in B minor has a swoony Andante, but by the Finale it is all exhausting.

The seldom recorded Piano Quartet in D minor is the work of a 12-year-old, a fact which is impossible to ignore when listening to it. Although remarkable, it is often more like a piano sonata with strings added; it is not in the same league with the later works on this album.

Even though it is all well performed, this music becomes a bit redundant, perhaps in part because of the relentless use of minor keys. A teenager wrote these quartets to impress his contemporaries; he wasn't aiming for the greatest possible variety of styles or

approaches. There's no way that Mendelssohn could have imagined that one day someone thousands of miles away could sit down and listen to all four of these quartets in a row.

The cover depicts an admirable watercolor by the abundantly talented Mendelssohn, and the liner notes offer perspective on this crucial phase in his development.

DUTTERER

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphonies 3+4; Violin Concerto; Hebrides Overture; Midsummer Night's Dream Suite;*

SCHUMANN: *Symphony 4*

Henryk Szerying, v; Minneapolis Symphony, London Symphony, Vienna Symphony/ Antal Dorati—Decca 4840506 [2CD] 157 minutes

This is Eloquence's first reissue from the famous Mercury catalog from the 1950s and 1960s. The performances are in stereo except for the Mendelssohn Fourth. Antal Dorati is not usually associated with this repertoire, but from the evidence here, he has an exciting approach to it. His way with the Mendelssohn Third is standard but in no way dull, with clean rhythm and good dynamic contrast. The opening is moderate and expressive. What follows is fast, bright in tone and light in texture, with a lot of energy. The stormy passage is urgent, and the entire movement catches the dark, misty Scottish air. II is light and deft, III sad and reflective. The Finale is light in nature, dancing, quick and dashing. The main tune is eloquent, and the march is funereal. The final hymn seems a little too marked and on the slow side, but it builds well.

The *Hebrides Overture* is a strong, dramatic portrait of those rugged Scottish islands. It is dark and ominous in the slow sections and very fast and urgent in the fast ones. The London Symphony again plays very well.

The Fourth is fast in all movements and aggressive. The result may not be "Mendelssohnian", but the work responds well to Dorati's approach. I is exuberant. The Andante aspect of Andante Moderato is moderately slow, but the Moderately leans to the quick side, like a young Italian walking briskly over the countryside. Such tempos might seem hurried, but they work well here. Despite the speed, III is always lyrical, and the finale is rhythmic and urgent. This is a refreshing and compelling examination of a well known symphony, but some listeners will find it pushed. The Minneapolis Symphony executes very well at these speeds.

I do not like most romantic era concertos, and the Mendelssohn is positioned well down on my list, but this performance of it with Henryk Szeryng and the London Symphony is an exception. The tempos are not fast so much as “moving right along,” but more important is the freshness and energy they generate. Szeryng’s sweet, silvery tone could have been designed for the piece, and he plays it as lyrical and songlike rather than as a technical display.

The Overture to *Midsummer Night’s Dream* sounds dramatic with a warm string tone and dark Viennese horns. The very fast Scherzo might seem frantic if it were not so well controlled by Dorati and well executed by the winds. The March is not terribly fast but stately, and the ending is positively noble.

The performance of Schumann’s Fourth is big-boned and aggressive. I is fast, muscular, and urgent. II is bold with a nice, dark-toned violin solo. III is martial and extroverted; and the mysterious transition to IV is loud and exciting, but brassy. The brass are too prominent in the whole performance. IV is fast, aggressive, and very fast at the end.

The Mercury LPs were famous for their sound and are now sought after, though many listeners find them too bright. The ones here are pretty good, not great, and on the bright side, though they lack the punch associated with the vinyl ones. The monaural Mendelssohn Fourth has some of that punch, but it is marred by the excessively bright violin sound typical of Mercury monos. That wonderful performance comes through, though.

HECHT

MERTZ: *Fantasias*

Giuseppe Chiaramonte, g
Brilliant 95722—63 minutes

Johann Mertz (1806-56) left a substantial number of excellent works for solo and duo guitars, as well as chamber music. His compositions epitomized the romantic period in their expressiveness and used the guitar in highly technical ways. The works presented here, with an average length of 8 minutes, are all quite substantial compared to the many miniatures in the guitar repertoire.

The opening ‘Fantasie Hongroise’ is played virtuosically with romantic flair. Overall, the music is presented well, but with occasional brief moments of unclarity in the blistering sections where Chiaramonte holds nothing back.

‘Fantasie Original’ has passages of intense

passion, played with strength to the limits of the guitar’s capabilities, followed immediately by a sensitively played contrasting theme with all the sweet spaciousness a listener could want—this is romantic guitar music played by a musician who deeply understands the style. This piece also has a nicely executed two-finger tremolo which is rather unique in guitar music—most tremolo passages in guitar music use a three-note pattern.

Every piece on this recording uses the full dynamic range of the guitar, as in the operatic ‘Pianto dell’Amante,’ whose ending Chiaramonte plays with uplifting abandon. This is followed by a pianissimo introduction to ‘La Rimembranza,’ the first of three works that because of their pianistic nature earned him the accolade “the Liszt of the Guitar.” Mertz, by the way, was married to a pianist!

This is very well done. In each of these challenging works, Chiaramonte, with a musical sense of balance and contrast, rises to the occasion to take us into that passionate world of romantic guitar music from one of the most important composers of the era.

MCCUTCHEON

MESSIAEN: *Catalogue d’oiseaux I*;

GORTON: *Ondine*;

SZYMANOWSKI: *Sonata 3*

Roderick Chadwick, p
Divine Art 25209—65 minutes

The three works in this unusual program, two from the 20th Century, one from the 21st, would appear to have little in common; but there is a subtle unity. The juxtaposition between clangorous bird song and lyrical moments in Messiaen’s *Catalogue d’oiseaux*, Book I is startling, especially in the probing performance here by pianist Roderick Chadwick.

David Gorton’s *Ondine* from 2004 fits nicely with the program. Female water spirits are evoked here, not birds, but the “liquid trickle” of their laughter, registered by shimmering trills and other figurations, has a Messiaen-like ambiance. Chadwick ripples and splashes his way through the piece with precision and color.

Szymanowski’s much earlier Sonata 3, full of variety and invention, has rich polyphony but also hazy, shimmering moments and sudden juxtapositions between angularity and sensuality that anticipate the later works on the program. Rounding out the program are brief interludes and postludes played by vio-

linists Peter Sheppard Skaerved and Shir Victoria Levy—an eccentric but colorful touch.

SULLIVAN

MESSIAEN: *Turangalila Symphony*
Mannheim Theater Orchestra/ Alexander Soddy
Oehms 472—78 minutes

Messiaen's *Turangalila* is a 10-movement extravaganza that combines mysticism, Hindu and Greek rhythms, Indian scales, African rhythm, gamelan drumming, Poe-inspired terror, the Tristan narrative, and much else. Premiered in 1949, it is a "world music" hybrid long before that term became chic. It is massive and monumental, sometimes seeming to go on forever, the very definition of overwrought, requiring an uncompromising commitment from players and audience. In addition to a gigantic orchestra full of exotic percussion, it includes an electronic instrument, the ondes Martenot, and a strenuous piano part.

In this performance, the latter are played with scintillating brilliance by Thomas Bloch and Tamara Stefanovich. The entire performance has a special fizz and frisson. The National Theater Orchestra of Mannheim under Alexander Soddy plays with intensity but also with lightness and litheness. Nothing sounds ponderous: the fast music has a breathless excitement; the slow music has a tender vaporousness. The recording emphasizes the percussion, from vibrating gongs to loopy keyboard figurations. Also prominent are the orchestra's excellent woodwinds, emerging with bracing clarity in the transparent recording.

Turangalila was commissioned for the Boston Symphony by Koussevitzky, one of several major works by Ravel, Stravinsky, and Bartok (including the Concerto for Orchestra) that would not exist were it not for the Russian maestro. Koussevitzky had an uncanny ability to smell a masterpiece in the making and was unperturbed by length and personnel requirements. Because of illness, he was unable to premiere Messiaen's symphony and passed the baton to Leonard Bernstein, who conducted the first performance in 1949. The piece irritated some, excited others; it still occasions both hostility and cheers. Koussevitzky called it "the greatest composition in our century" after *The Rite of Spring*, but critics were not on board. Virgil Thomson quipped that the symphony came "straight from the Hollywood

cornfields", and the Boston Herald denounced its "appalling melodic tawdriness".

The first time I heard *Turangalila* was Boston with Ozawa at Carnegie Hall, and I instantly became a fan. Yes, I thought it was too long, but in the end I decided that the length was justified. Despite its technical difficulties and wasteful length, it seems to bring out the best in conductors and recording engineers. My first recording was Previn's with the London Symphony, a sonorous, well-paced reading. Salonen with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Chailly with the Concertgebouw are also excellent. More recent is a performance with the Finnish Radio Symphony, which I reviewed in these pages; it has a special feeling of adventure and wit. This new reading is lithe and dazzling, lightweight in the best sense. It never sounds ponderous or pretentious.

Unlike Messiaen's many overtly religious works, *Turangalila* is secular and fleshly, and that's the way Alexander Soddy and his go-for-broke ensemble perform it. As Messiaen put it, "*Turangalila* means all at the same time song of love, hymn to joy, time, movement, rhythm, life, and death." This rhythmic, joyful performance is in tune with the composer's vision.

Messiaen's works often come with otherworldly titles and explications. He called the ecstatic fifth movement of *Turangalila*, "Joy of the Blood of the Stars." He stated in a note to *From the Canyons to the Stars* that the Utah canyons were "landscapes like those we'll probably see after death, if we then have the chance to visit other planets." It is easy to mock such commentary, and the convoluted specificity of Messiaen's writing has not helped his cause. A committed performance like this one, however, makes us believe it all, at least while we're listening. Messiaen's dazzling color and near-painful ecstasy can't be bound by words, even if he issues a torrent of them—like Wagner, Scriabin, and others who were obsessed with their own mythologies.

It is sometimes fiercely dissonant, but more often euphorically lyrical. II, IV, and VIII are all depictions of amorous love and have some of the most passionate music Messiaen ever wrote, orgiastic "explosions", as he called them. The Mannheim players seem comfortable with both extremes. The work has many of his signatures—bird song (mainly by the piano), piercing wind sonorities, meditative blocks of sound, and a complex layering of textures—but it also has an uninhibited theatricality. It unfolds according to its own eccentric scheme, renouncing classical symphonic

structures, but its constantly resurfacing themes and colors make it relatively easy to take in. The slow music, especially the adagio in VI, 'Garden of Love's Sleep,' has a hypnotic sensuality, communicated here with whispered eloquence; the fast sections are delirious churning of joy and energy, powered by the relentless pulse of the orchestra's busy percussion section. V and X end with a major chord that rises in crescendo until it reaches the heavens. It is one of the most visceral endings in 20th Century music, and we get to hear it twice. Both times, Soddy holds the chord just bit longer than usual, producing a big emotional and sonic payoff. After the final shattering cut-off, we cheer along with the delirious concert audience.

SULLIVAN

MONTECLAIR: *Flute & Voice*

Carrie Henneman Shaw, s; Les Ordinaires; Jory Vinikour, hpsi—Naxos 573932—64 minutes

The word "brunette" comes from French and indicates the feminine form of "little brown"; although it doesn't specify hair, in English it is exclusively used that way. In French it also designates a secular form of song popular in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Researchers identify four types of songs in French culture: historical, professional, love, and Bacchic. The first category further contains songs that are sacred, military, national, and satirical. Cantatas developed from the "national" sub-category; the official name of their predecessor had been "songs of political solemnity". The *brunette* was a type of love song that could be considered an antecedent of the romance, which by the late 18th Century was an instrumental or vocal piece in triple meter. Haydn put a romance as the second movement of his Symphony 85, so they could even be orchestral, and Mozart wrote a chamber one in his celebrated Serenade 13.

Montclair (1667-1737) was a weaver's son who became a choir boy under Nicolas Goupillet, Jean-Baptiste Moreau, and Claude Thibaut and as an adult played bass viol in the orchestra of the Paris Opera, which was then called the Royal Academy of Music. This instrument was not exactly the equivalent of our modern string bass, and is in fact the direct ancestor of the cello. The family name was Pignolet (little pine nut), but once he moved to Paris he began going by a surname taken from a hill in northeastern Andelot, his birthplace. In addition to performing, he

taught, composed, and ran a music shop, making a living through the same combination of activities as many musicians today.

Oboist and flutist Julien Bernier, who died in 1755, was probably related to composer Nicolas (1664-1734); he played in the orchestra of the national opera beginning before 1704 to after 1719 as second to oboist Colin Hotteterre. We have a tribute to Bernier from a collection of *Ancient and Modern Brunettes* by Montclair published in Paris around 1721-4 (notes) or around 1725 (French National Library). It states in part, "nothing is as touching as hearing these little airs sung by a beautiful voice accompanied in unison by a transverse flute ... I cannot express the pleasure I felt at Boulogne on hearing this little ensemble which touched me more than any clever artificial music has ever done."

Most of the 24 Cantatas for one, two, and three voices with ensemble have texts by unknown authors, and four are in Italian. The first set appeared in 1706, the second in 1713, and the third in 1728, all published in Paris. We have Book 1:4 and Book 3:3. We also have one of the concertos for flute and bass from the early 1720s and an assortment of *brunettes* from the *Collection of Serious and Drinking Songs* published in 1696 and another collection published later. The booklet includes texts and translations.

The Ordinaries to the King were French court musicians of the 17th and 18th Centuries, and a few were the subject of a famous painting by Andre Bouys (1646-1750). The modern ensemble by this name was founded in 2013 and consists of flute, viola da gamba, and theorbo, which together were once known in France as the Royal Trio. They are joined here by American soprano Carrie Henneman Shaw and French-based American harpsichordist Jory Vinikour. The booklet describes their instruments, which include a flute modeled after one from 1715 by Jean Hotteterre played by Leela Breithaupt. It has a comparatively deep sound, muffled—or at least not bright, especially in the lowest range, where the writing mostly is. This quality makes it very distinct from its contemporary, the recorder, and both darker and more veiled than one might typically associate with a flute. The clarity of Shaw's voice is its most distinct feature, particularly pitch clarity. Her vibrato is usually fast, and my overall impression is favorable, though not entirely. Many tracks sound delightful, but now and then her placement is a little too forward and nasal. A rhetorical or

conversational approach to text is fine in this period, but singing must also have beauty, and sometimes here the delivery falls short. The combinations of voice with flute or viola da gamba are splendid.

Emma Kirkby has recorded a program of Montclair—five cantatas—with the London Baroque Ensemble (BIS 1865). Another five with three voice types were issued and reissued on Harmonia Mundi. There were 3 cantatas with Jacqueline Nicolas and 2 abbreviated concertos from Gerard Scharapan on Pierre Verany. Julianne Baird recorded three with one by Louis-Nicolas Clerambault (Koch 7096; Mar/Apr 1992). The French label K 617 gave us a collection with instrumental and vocal works by Clerambault and Montclair (May/June 2012: 227). Four of the flute concertos were recorded on natural trumpet by Gabriele Casone (Dynamic 229, Nov/Dec 1999; 8004, May/June 2011) and four on transverse flute and recorder by Bernhard Böhm (CPO 999213), but all six by the Apotheosis Ensemble on Stradivarius 33553. A program with two concertos and the *Ancient and Modern Brunettes* came out on Accent in 2005. Ramee issued selections for two flutes by Montclair and Pierre Philidor (Mar/Apr 2016) and a 2-disc set with the six concertos for two flutes.

GORMAN

MONTVERDI: *Coronation of Poppea*

Oksana Maltseva (Poppea), Shin Yoowon (Nero), Choi Seoyeon (Ottavia), Floriano D'Auria (Ottone), Jin Shuheng (Seneca); Ensemble San Felice/ Federico Bardazzi

Bongiovanni 2581 [2CD] 154 minutes

This new recording of Monteverdi's best known work is from January of 2020, just before the Covid virus began to wreak havoc in Europe. The singers are all very good—excellent diction and a sense of the style of the piece (a true accomplishment since the cast is drawn from 13 different countries). The old saying "The Great is the enemy of the Good" applies here. If one saw this performance locally, one would come away quite satisfied. Held up against the recordings of Harnoncourt, Gardiner, Jacobs, and Hickox it emerges a competent, but not memorable performance.

Bongiovanni doesn't help matters by not including a word of Gian Francesco Busanello's text, offering only a pithy, unhelpful plot summary. We are told that the performing edition is mostly the Clifford Bartlett one in the

Venice version of 1642; it does not use Act 2, scene 7, which is missing and presumed lost. The libretto is the same one Alan Curtis used in his Florence May Festival performance in 2011. The sound is adequate, the voices and instruments registering clearly, if with a little too much reverberation.

Fans of this opera will want this and will probably enjoy it more than a casual first-time listener. The performance is well done, the presentation is not.

REYNOLDS

MORRICONE: *Once Upon a Time*

Enea Leone, g—Brilliant 95855—63 minutes

Ennio Morricone (1928-2020) was an Oscar-winning Italian composer, orchestrator, and trumpet player whose film music gained recognition in the 1960s thanks to a number of spaghetti westerns, such as "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly".

From the first track on this recording, with soaring melodies, rich harmonies, clean technique, and creative arranging, one knows this will be refreshing and pleasant. The variety of music presented in these transcriptions, selected from decades of Morricone's movie scores, keeps the program moving, as does the range of seriousness, from the light-hearted to the sublime, and the track lengths, ranging from miniatures to more than 4 minutes.

Noteworthy arrangements and performances include "Rabbia e Tarantella" from the movie *Inglorious Basterds* (2009) with a variety of textures and "Deborah's Theme" from *Once Upon a Time in America* (1984), played with a spot-on sense of spaciousness, clarity, and thoughtfulness.

The guitar sound on this recording is wonderful—kudos to engineer Andrea Dandolo for knowing how to capture a realistic, pure tone with just the right amount of reverberation.

There are two things that make this recording stand out. First is the quality of the transcriptions. Translating what are mostly orchestral scores to the solo guitar, with its comparatively limited range and intervallic challenges, is an art that has developed over the centuries. Leone and fellow transcriber Carlo Marchione have done excellent work on these. Second, the playing on this recording shows the sensitivity of an artist who has the ability to express it clearly.

Whether or not you know this music from the movies, this is enjoyable.

MCCUTCHEON

MOZART: *Clarinet Quintet*;
BRAHMS: *Clarinet Quintet*
Eli Eban; Alexander Quartet
Foghorn 2021—71 minutes

Noted clarinet pedagogue and soloist Eli Eban takes a break from his duties as professor at Indiana University to record the Mozart Clarinet Quintet and the Brahms Quintet with the Alexander String Quartet. It took place in June 2019 at Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Belvedere, California, a small city on San Francisco Bay.

The performances are clean and elegant; and the balance, blend, and overall sonics are a treat to the ears. Some may find the renditions somewhat conservative; and even people unfamiliar with the Mozart may notice a splice 4:54 into the piece that adds an extra half-beat. Still, the album has a lot of nice qualities that clarinet aficionados will appreciate.

HANUDEL

MOZART: *Divertimento, K 563*;
Preludes & Fugues
Jacques Thibaud Trio—Audite 97.773—82 min

Mozart's Divertimento K 563 is widely regarded as the finest string trio ever written. It is in 6 movements rather than the usual 4, and the title is Divertimento, but don't let those aspects of the work turn you off to it; it is not a mere diversion. It has some of Mozart's loveliest writing for strings. It is also one of his longest chamber works, clocking in at three-quarters of an hour. I assure you that Mozart didn't pad the material to fill time, either. Every note counts.

Jacques Thibaud String Trio was founded in 1994 at the Arts University in Berlin. Their current membership is violinist Burkhard Mais, violist Hannah Strijbos, and cellist Bogdan Jianu. They play well together and perform this work with more taste and sense of proportion than some other groups I've heard. I can recommend this performance, but they are up against stiff competition. Isaac Stern, Pinchas Zukerman, and Leonard Rose made a very fine recording in 1975. Gidon Kremer, Kim Kashkashian, and Yo-Yo Ma made a wonderful recording in 1985. That is my favorite. It is exquisitely polished yet very soulful. The musicians really sing and produce ravishing sounds (unusual for the perpetual enfant-terrible Kremer). The classic recording is by Jascha Heifetz, William Primrose, and Emanuel Feuermann from 1941. It shows its

age, yet it is the most brilliant ever made. Some may not like it because of the exhibitionism of the players, all of whom were the greatest virtuosos of their age, but I like hearing such assured playing where all technical obstacles are surmounted with effortless aplomb and panache.

The works I had never heard before are the 5 Preludes and Fugues. Except for the first three Preludes, all of the material was arranged from music of Bach. They are pleasant to listen to, but not masterpieces, and the three Preludes composed by Mozart don't sound quite right coming before the more severe music of Bach.

MAGIL

MOZART: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*; *Serenata Notturna*; *German Dances*; *Symphony 29*
Philomusica of London/ Thurston Dart; Bamberg Symphony/ Joseph Keilberth (*German Dances & 29*)—Decca 4828529—78 minutes

These recordings are from 1951 and 1952. They were issued on Oiseau-Lyre LPs, and they sound good.

The most unusual thing here is an extra movement in *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*: there are two minuets. II (the first one) is actually a movement from a Mozart piano sonata, orchestrated to match the rest by Thurston Dart. Apparently Mozart had planned another movement (lost to us) and dropped it when the serenade was published. Why? Perhaps because the serenade sounds so crisp and complete without it. (Or maybe are so used to its published 4-movement form that this artificial second movement just seems to slow things down.)

The Dart recordings have a very "English" sound—too businesslike for me. Keilberth is more European and seems to have a natural instinct for Mozart. Still, there are many good recordings of Symphony 29, and some are in better sound—though I must admit that I never thought the sound was weak or poor here. It is easy to adjust to. It is not too close-up, as recordings became for a while and on some labels in the late 1950s. The orchestra is safely up there on the stage, and we are in the audience. That's the way I like it. If stereo matters to you, be aware that nothing here is stereo. That really didn't come along until 1958. That doesn't matter to me either.

The German Dances (two sets, K 509+571) are charming and not recorded very often. I did not have any of them, though I have some

German Dances led by Peter Maag—not these. Like EKN, they are late, mature Mozart.

It is hard to believe that all this was recorded almost 70 years ago. Decca Eloquence remasters things so beautifully that sound is not a matter of concern.

VROON

MOZART: *Flute Quartets*

Andrea Manco; Andrea Pecolo, v; Joel Imperial, va; Gianluca Muzzolon, vc

Brilliant 95958—64 minutes

These are modern instrument players from the orchestra of La Scala. Andrea Manco has been principal flutist since 2015 and before that was a prizewinner in several competitions. The program has four original works and the Oboe Quartet played on flute. Many moments are exquisitely phrased and balanced, particularly in the range between nothing and *piano*. Some quartets are rendered better than others. Most of the set is exquisite, especially the Quartet in A; so is the Oboe Quartet. The Rondo concluding the Quartet in D is not quite joyous and tends to stay in a bland middle ground. Neither is the Adagio that precedes it anything special—and it can be. The exchange between flute and violin that opens the Quartet in C is anemic.

In general, Andrea Manco's playing is gentle and deft, calibrated perfectly to the aesthetic of the Enlightenment. His pure tone quality remains regardless of any degree of nuance. Brilliant—or the Bartok Studio in Bernareggio, Italy—presents the players in sound that is beautifully balanced and realistic.

My top choice on modern instruments—brought down directly from the firmament via Philips—is William Bennett and the Grumiaux Trio (originally from 1969, reissued in 1989). May it long resound in other ears after I am no more. Several others come close or simply differ in how they excel: Peter-Lukas Graf (Claves), Paula Robison (Vanguard, July/Aug 1991 & Nov/Dec 1999), Ulf-Dieter Schaaß (Pentatone 5186567, Jan/Feb 2018), Aurele Nicolet (Tudor, May/June 1991 & Jan/Feb 2018), Emmanuel Pahud (EMI 56829, Mar/Apr 2000), Philippa Davies (Virgin), and, for quiet beauty and nuance, Juliette Hurel (Alpha 204, Jan/Feb 2016).

GORMAN

It was a joy to read recently from a medical expert that hugging is far safer than handshaking.

American Record Guide

MOZART: *Mass in C minor*

Ana Maria Labin, Ambroisine Bré, Stanislas de Barbeyrac, Norman Patzke; Musiciens du Louvre/ Marc Minkowski

Pentatone 5186 812—48 minutes

It is a sad irony that the two major liturgical compositions written by Mozart after he left Salzburg were unfinished by him and come down to us as fragments—albeit magnificent fragments. The better known is the Requiem (K 626) with the mysterious circumstances surrounding its commission, but there are uncertainties concerning the Mass in C minor (K 427) as well. By some accounts, it was written (or at least begun) in fulfillment of a vow Mozart made during his wife Constanze's first pregnancy, that he would write the work as a thanksgiving if all went well with her delivery. C minor seems an unlikely choice of key for such a purpose. The stern and somber opening of the Kyrie seems to convey apprehension rather than gratitude, but it is noteworthy that the lengthiest and one of the most exquisite of the extant movements is 'Et Incarnatus Est' from the Credo. What we have was written in 1782-83. Only the Kyrie and Gloria are completed. There are sketches for the first two sections of the Credo. There is an autograph score of the Sanctus and Benedictus, but the instrumentation is incomplete, limited to winds and timpani. There is no Agnus Dei at all. The first performance took place at St Peter's Abbey in Salzburg in October of 1783. Was it confined to the finished Kyrie and Gloria?

For the present recording, Marc Minkowski has chosen the performing edition prepared by Helmut Eder at the request of the *Neue-Mozart-Ausgabe* and published in 1985. The edition does not presume to supply the missing movements. The additions and completed instrumentation are distinguished graphically from what survives in Mozart's hand.

This is a studio recording made in connection with concert performances given in Grenoble in December of 2018. Apart from the solo quartet, the choir consists of only nine singers, barely enough to cover the parts in the double choruses of the Gloria and Sanctus. Even so, the singers never sound weak or sparse, though they are considerably outnumbered by the orchestra. The soloists have the qualities I associate with 18th-Century opera: solid sound but capable of lightness and virtuosic flexibility as needed. The sopranos Ana Maria Labin and Ambroisine Bré are especially

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impressive in this respect. I would not slight the excellent tenor and bass, but Mozart gives them less opportunity to shine. Recorded sound is generally good, but in the louder movements I would have been grateful for more sense of space. Emphatic moments are on the verge of sounding raucous at such close quarters.

There have been many other recordings of this work. Among the more recent, I was impressed but not bowled over by Harry Christophers and the Handel & Haydn Society of Boston (Coro 16084; J/F 2011). Philip Greenfield had good things to say about Masaaki Suzuki and Bach Collegium Japan (BIS 2171; J/A 2017) as did Paul Althouse about Howard Arman with the Bavarian Radio Chorus and Berlin Academy for Old Music (BR 900917; M/A 2019).

GATENS

MOZART: *Piano Concertos 19+27;
Rondo in A*

Francesco Piemontesi; Scottish Chamber Orchestra/ Andrew Manze—Linn 622—67 minutes

These two concertos, K 459 and 595, are joined by a Rondo in A, K 386, thought by some to be a first version or perhaps an alternate finale of Concerto 12 in A, K 414. (The writer of the liner notes, by the way, was misinformed as to what pieces were on the disc. He writes about another Rondo—in D, K 382—which was an alternate movement for Concerto 5, K 175.)

I've come across several very fine recordings of Mozart concertos in recent months with pianists like Anne-Marie McDermott, Ben Kim, and Charles Richard-Hamelin. Now we have another from Francesco Piemontesi, who has worked with Alfred Brendel, Murray Perahia, and Cecile Ousset; since 2012 he has served as Artistic Director of the Settimane Musicali di Ascona. Piemontesi's Mozart strikes me as articulate and crisp with a minimum of pedal and a sense of space around every note. (This is in contrast to the suave, lyrical, graceful school of Mozart performance.) The result is bracing and uplifting. The most exuberant movement here, the finale to Concerto 19, is very similar in tempo and style to the Pollini (a 1980 recording with Böhm, in the conductor's last Salzburg concert with the VPO). Do not assume, though, that the other movements are mechanical or unfeeling. This is wonderful, interesting playing.

Piemontesi is aided by the alert, sturdy accompaniment of the Scottish orchestra

under Andrew Manze. The liner notes list a good-sized orchestra (strings: 8, 6, 4, 4, 2), but it's hard to be sure all are used because the orchestral list includes their four horns, three trombones, and percussion! At any rate the orchestra has enough weight to give substance to Mozart's orchestral writing.

This recording follows one, also by Piemontesi, of Concertos 25 and 26 (Linn 624), which somehow escaped review. With good fortune, then, we may hear more Mozart from Piemontesi and Manze.

ALTHOUSE

MOZART: *Piano Quartets;
Rondo Concertante*

Dejan Lazic, p; Benjamin Schmid, Zen Hu, v;
Johannes Erkes, va; Enrico Bronzi, vc
Onyx 4207—71 minutes

As surely as Dejan Lazic's name is printed in huge letters on the cover and his peers are reduced to small type, this Croatian pianist is sonically emblazoned all over this recording of Mozart's piano quartets. Violinist Benjamin Schmid and cellist Enrico Bronzi have some degree of acclaim as chamber musicians, but this album is more akin to one of those "Martha Argerich and Friends" productions where the guest stars are beside the point. That's not to say that it is subpar; in fact, the performances are completely orthodox and on the level.

Romanticism before the fact, the first movement of Quintet 1 in G minor is played rather well, and II is also lovely. In the studio, however, some knobs and levers were not where they should be, and as a result the piano and violin are uppermost in the mix, to the detriment of the others. The Rondo belongs to Lazic, but this is unfortunate because it sounds like his peers are playing in a joyful and relaxed manner befitting Mozart.

The opening movement of Quintet 2 seems to be better balanced, but the desultory Larghetto threatens to derail the entire album. The Allegretto is lively, even if it is all about the piano.

Given Lazic's determination to turn quartets into piano sonatas, he takes the surprising step of adapting the third movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in B-flat, K 333/315c for quartet. The resulting piece is convincing as a bit of Mozartiana, and the strings are allowed to participate. Primarily a soloist, Lazic may still be settling in as an ensemble player.

DUTTERER

MOZART: *Requiem*

Simone Kermes, Stephanie Houtzeel, Markus Brutscher, Arnaud Richard; New Siberian Singers; MusicAeterna/ Teodor Currentzis

Alpha 661—47 minutes

The chorus and orchestra here are both associated with the Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet. The New Siberian Singers are the chamber choir of the opera, and MusicAeterna is the opera's chamber orchestra. The performance uses the Süssmayr completion and orchestration in the Sequences. There is a curious 30-second addition to the end of the *Lacrimosa*—something that sounds like sleigh bells accompanying a short fugato on the text “Amen”, which fades off in mid-phrase. I assume this is a sketch from Mozart, but it's still very odd in this context, and the notes don't mention it.

The performance on the whole is quite fast. The Kyrie, Domine Deus, and the Osanna fugue are about as fast as you'll ever hear them, which in this piece is not helpful. Even more disturbing, though, is the extreme energy the performers bring to this, a Mass for the Dead. The chorus almost punches its way through many sections with no sense of musical line or warmth. They certainly sing well from a purely technical point of view. Everything is firmly in place, and they know the piece very well; but the aesthetic is, well, let's say “different”.

Soloists are generally very good, but they don't match well, the soprano singing without vibrato, the others with. A great deal of the distinctiveness of this performance comes from the young Greek conductor, Teodor Currentzis. You can get a good sense of him on YouTube.

This is an interesting recording, filled with things done (or overdone) very literally, and also with a strong point of view. For me, though, it makes the *Requiem* into too much of a show.

ALTHOUSE

MOZART: *String Quintets 3+4*

Van Kuijk Quartet; Adrien La Marca, va

Alpha 587—67 minutes

Except for the first, written in 1773 when the composer was only 17, Mozart's six string quintets are late works. He may not have invented the genre, but he certainly established it, and many believe that the quintets are his crowning achievements in chamber music. They are later than the celebrated

Haydn Quartets, making them more mature products. Mozart's love of the viola likely inspired him: these works require two of them. Quintets 3 and 4 were written in 1787 and are thus products of middle age. They do have some of his loveliest and most imaginative writing for strings.

Of all of the modern recordings of these quintets I've heard besides the ones at hand, the best is clearly by the Tokyo Quartet with Pinchas Zukerman playing viola (Nov/Dec 1993). They produce a very full-blooded sound and are beautifully recorded with just the right combination of clarity and resonance. Another excellent set is by the Takacs Quartet with violinist Gyorgy Pauk playing viola for a change (Nov/Dec 1992). Quatuor van Kuijk and Adrien La Marca also have a wonderful sound, not as full as Tokyo's but with more pastel ensemble textures as one would expect from Frenchmen. Of historical recordings, there are magnificent accounts of Quintet 4 by the Pro Arte Quartet of Belgium with violist Alfred Hobday and the Lener Quartet of Hungary with violist L d'Oliveira, but these are from the 1930s.

Quatuor van Kuijk won the 2015 Wigmore Hall Quartet Competition, and it's obvious that they richly deserved it. It is a well-balanced ensemble without a dominant partner (that too often happens in chamber groups). All positions are strong, and they work out every detail together to great effect. Good sound.

MAGIL

MOZART: *Violin Concertos; Adagio;* *2 Rondos*

Baiba Skride; Swedish Chamber Orchestra/
Eivind Aadland

Orfeo 997201 [2CD] 129 minutes

The orchestra is Swedish (Örebro—conducted 1997-2019 by Thomas Dausgaard), the conductor Norwegian, and the violinist Latvian. The orchestra has 39 players. The sound is pleasant but not particularly warm or Central European (which I would prefer).

The set I listen to most often is David Oistrakh with the Berlin Philharmonic. This is not on that level, but if you find Oistrakh “too romantic” (which I do not) you might like this. It's certainly faster—in every movement! Mozart's middle movements in all 5 concertos are labelled Andante and Adagio: 2 are Andantes and 3 are Adagios. So I think Oistrakh's slower tempos are appropriate, at least in those movements. There are no prestos, and

most of the allegros are “moderato”. There is never a reason to rush thru these concertos, and I don’t think the tempos here are outrageous. I just prefer violin concertos (by anyone) to sound romantic. I think it’s a romantic instrument.

I hear nothing of PPP. Vibrato is not banished, but maybe slightly reduced. The strings don’t screech. Notes are held appropriately instead of cut off the way the PPP people think they should be. I simply want more warmth and feeling. This is too “northern” and too moderate—and thus lacking in character.

VROON

MOZART: *Violin Sonatas, K302, 379, 481; Variations K359+360*

Annette Unger; Robert Umansky, p
Genuin 19655—78 minutes

This is a good recording. They follow performance traditions with grace and charm. Ornaments in the piano, too frantic or heavy in other recordings, add sparkle and wit. The violin’s accentuations mostly feel right; a vocal approach contributes to longer notes. The violin does not always match the releases or elegance of the piano; her basses blare too much in II of K379, and her trills can sound awkward. The pianist could use more imagination with intervals. So it is not one of the best recordings of these pieces, but one could do worse if looking for an alternate to more acclaimed readings.

KELLENBERGER

MOZART: *Symphonies 39+41;*
see SCHUBERT

MUSGRAVE: *Oboe Pieces*

Rebecca Johnson, fl; Elizabeth Sullivan, ob; Jessica Lindsey, cl; Cara Chowning, p
Albany 1835—55 minutes

Young American oboist Elizabeth Sullivan, assistant professor at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, forms the basis of this program, playing English horn as well. She made Scottish-American composer Thea Musgrave the subject of her doctoral dissertation at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Selections range from 1960 to 2012, and the composer, born in 1928, is still with us. We have two solos, three duets, and two trios. Compositional techniques range from serial and unmetered to using taped accompaniment to tonal and metric. Although the selections span a range of modern styles, their consistent interest and fine craft makes them wor-

thy of attention as long as you can accept an aimless sort of abstract, through-composed approach to form.

A *Threnody* for English horn and piano written in 1997 and revised in 2003 has considerable dramatic heft. Her set of character pieces for oboe and piano, called *Night Windows* (2007), is also among the most accessible selections. In a general sense Musgrave seems to resemble Jolivet or Higdon somewhat, if that helps you place her without having heard any of this album.

These performances are thoroughly rehearsed and coordinated. Everyone plays at an exemplary professional level, with splendid tone quality. Their commitment to the project is apparent from the first note to the last.

The echoey opening tracks indicate a preference for acoustics that may be too much for some listeners. The playing comes across clearly and pleasantly; there is almost no trouble with blurring except possibly track 6. A booklet with biographies and photographs describes the pieces and the players.

GORMAN

NEPOMUCENO: *Suite in Ancient Style;*
see OSWALD

NIELSEN: *The Mother*

Christine Nonbo Andersen, s; Adam Riis, Rasmus Gravers Nielsen, t; Palle Knudsen, bar; Steffen Bruun, b; Danish Vocal Ensemble, Philharmonic Choir; Odense Symphony/ Andreas Delfs
DaCapo 220648—71 minutes

What a delightful discovery this is: the first recording of the complete score (which first appeared complete in 2007) to Carl Nielsen’s incidental music for Helge Rode’s play, *Moderen*. The play was drawn from a crucial event in Danish history. Until 1864 the country included the duchies of Slesvig and Holsten (Danish names) found on the northern border of Germany and populated with Danes and Germans. The problem was that the Danish National Liberal forces wanted to incorporate Slesvig into Denmark, but the Germans wanted to incorporate Schleswig and Holstein (German names) into Germany. Denmark’s 1864 defeat in a war with Germany (that Nielsen’s father fought in) led to both sections going to Germany, cutting the overall population of Denmark by 40%. After Germany’s defeat in World War I, Schleswig and Holstein posted a referendum to determine the fate of their populations. The result turned North Schleswig into the part of Denmark known as

Southern Jutland, with South Schleswig and Holstein staying German, creating the borders that exist today. The Danish Royal Theater decided to stage a play to celebrate that transition and persuaded the country's leading composer to write the music for it. Nielsen hesitated but agreed—for a considerable price. It helped that he was experienced composing music for the theater, though it did not help that he had tired of that milieu! Slowing things down was the fact that at the time he was traveling through Europe and working on other music, including the Fifth Symphony. Nielsen became more committed to the project as he worked on it, to the point where he came to enjoy the process and the result.

Mother is a fairy-tale allegory about the return of a King's kidnapped son. A duet for flute and harp, 'Tagen Letter' (The Fog is Lifting), accompanies the first scene where the King sees a mother parting from her son through the rising fog. The King instructs his *Skald* and his Fool to go out into the world and return in one year with joyful news. (A *Skald* is a Bard.) The *Skald* thinks of the beautiful Princess Tove, whose praises he sings, portraying her as a personification of Denmark. The Fool expresses cynicism with edgy music spiced by occasional moments of dissonance and snarls. The *Skald* sings of the desolate winter landscape and his desire for the return of spring. The West Wind responds by blowing down a wall of ice, behind which stands the lost boy. Their mission accomplished, everyone returns to the King's court, and a joyous procession follows. People representing different regions of Denmark join in, symbolically welcoming mother and son.

The premiere of *Mother* was in 1921, and it was staged several more times to mixed reviews. The music was enthusiastically received, which is fitting because this lovely and entertaining score is as enjoyable as anything Nielsen wrote. It includes a jaunty opening march, the tone poem *Saga Drom* as a prelude, two more evocative orchestral preludes, a waltz for piano, an orchestral minuet, two pieces for solo flute ('Tagen Letter' became a well known work for the instrument), and some nice writing for solo violin and solo viola. There is a great chorus and some eerie string passages symbolizing distant Danish voices, and a short brass fanfare. One section treats the Danish National Anthem; another is composed of brief phrases from the anthems of the three wartime Triple Entente countries and the United States. Some of the

best music is the multi-verse folk songs. Some are orchestrated Danish folk songs; others were composed by Nielsen and became Danish folk songs.

The performance is first-rate all around. Nielsen grew up near Odense, and the Odense Symphony sounds great. The star of the show may be tenor Adam Riis (the *Skald*) whose gorgeously sweet, lyrical tenor makes his songs high points of the piece. Rasmus Gravers gives the sarcastic Fool just enough bite. I presume the other soloists are members of the excellent chorus. All are top-notch, particularly the sopranos.

The sound is as good as the performance. The booklet offers good information about the history behind the work and the work itself, but the text is not included. Instead, the descriptive material includes track numbers to follow, which is sometimes difficult. But this is a terrific discovery whose appeal should be universal.

HECHT

NORDHEIM: *Aurora*; see HAGEN

OFFENBACH: *Pomme d'Api*; *Sur un Volcan*

Mogali Leger (Catherine, Katrina); Florian Laconi (Gustave, St Elme); Marc Barrard (Rabastens, Trafalgar); Cologne Academy/ Michael Alexander Willens—CPO 555268—82 minutes

These two one-act, three-person "chamber operas" with a small orchestra. They have the requisite overtures, waltzes, rondos, couplets, and romances along with buoyant librettos—all in their 40 minutes. *Pomme d'Api* (Little Red Apple) (1873) was written in Offenbach's late period (after the Franco-Prussian war) when he had already been composing two or three act operettas for several years. He had been shunned by France during the war owing to his German heritage, and it took a while to regain some of his standing. *Pomme d'Api* was part of that re-introduction phase.

The far from original plot is by librettists Ludovic Halevy and the lesser known William Busnach. The story involves the young Gustave's mistress Catherine (also known as *Pomme d'Api*) who has been hired as a housemaid by Gustave's Uncle Rabastens. Rabastens wants Catherine to be his mistress, but after a disastrous dinner decides that Gustave and Catherine are better mated. The operetta is mostly music with short dialog sequences. In this mature stage of Offenbach's career he

knew how to use scripts and melodies to construct popular shows.

Pomme d'Api is considered by many to be one of Offenbach's finest one-act operettas and I agree. There isn't a wasted note, the music is one delight after another, the timing is precise, and the characters are effectively drawn. The overture starts slow but quickly changes to a spritely jaunt. The romance music is absolutely beautiful and there are memorable characters and comic songs. The leads all sing nicely, expressively, and in character. The only drawback is the sound, which is often distorted when loud and somewhat muddy when all the voices and orchestra are combined. This is something that should have been corrected. You can overlook these deficiencies owing to the excellent performances, but they remain irritating. The only other recording available is in a 30 CD Offenbach collection reviewed by Richard Traubner in one of its earlier incarnations (EMI 49361, N/D 1989). I have heard selections from that recording, conducted by Manuel Rosenthal, on various EMI Offenbach compilations, but I haven't heard the complete performance.

Sur un Volcan has quite a history. Premiering in 1855 in a program with Offenbach's better *Bata-a-Clan*, it was withdrawn after one performance. It had been attributed to Ernest L'Épine (whoever that was) with assistance from Offenbach. Only portions of the score survived until some detective work by Willens, this recording's conductor. Over several years he pieced together the remnants into this performing version. His research also determined that Offenbach had actually written much more of the score than originally thought. This is the first recording, and it is delightful. The sound in this one is better than in *Pomme d'Api*, with only a little distortion. The three performers are all excellent with good characterizations and beautiful singing. The leads are the same for both operas. Mogali Leger has a beautiful voice that caresses each note and gives the text full meaning. The men have excellent diction and emphasize their characters' idiosyncracies.

Although both are enjoyable I found *Pomme d'Api* the better of the two, both in music and libretto.

Willens conducts lively performances, the orchestra plays beautifully, and except for some distortion in loud passages the sound is clear. The booklet has French and English plot summaries, history, and performer biographies, but unfortunately no libretto.

FISCH

OSWALD: *Piano Concerto*;

SAINT-SAENS: *Concerto 5*;

NEPOMUCENO: *Suite in the Ancient Style*

Clelia Iruzun, p; Royal Philharmonic/ Jan van Steen—Somm 276—72 minutes

Henrique Oswald (1852-1931) was of Swiss descent, living in Brazil in his youth. Winning a competition landed him in Paris, where Camille Saint-Saens encouraged him and his work. The Piano Concerto (1886) descends from Schumann, at least in its first movement. Like all too many late 19th Century examples of its genre, it's densely scored with yards of uninspired, rhythmically monotonous passagework. The following two movements are better in themes and orchestration. Brazilian pianist Clelia Iruzun plays with consistent skill and sympathy. In I, her control of dynamics and ear for balances helps the solo part stand out against the thick accompaniment, giving the movement such distinction as it has. Her sensitive touch and graceful finger work come more to the fore in the ensuing movements.

In the more familiar Saint-Saens, her rhythmic accuracy and clear voicing make a convincing reading. She manages some of his contradictory markings—a fast andante, a relaxed allegro—well, with fluid shaping.

I've written favorably about the Brazilian composer Alberto Nepomuceno (July/Aug 2019). His wife was a Grieg student, and the *Suite in the Ancient Style* for solo piano owes its concept to Grieg's *Holberg Suite*. As an homage to baroque forms, the music is pleasing and tastefully wrought. These adjectives also apply to Ms Iruzun's playing. The work makes a sophisticated encore after the two concertos. The Royal Philharmonic and the conducting furnish capable backup.

O'CONNOR

PANTCHEFF: *Veni Sancte Spiritus; What Shall we Offer Thee?; Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis (Aedes Christi & St Paul's); Poems of Stephen Crane; King Henry VIII's Apologia; Creator of the Stars of Night; The Covenant; Turn Again unto thy Rest; Spirit of Mercy* Jeremy Cole, org; Matthew Fletcher, p; London Choral Sinfonia/ Michael Waldron

Orchid 100144—71 minutes

I was unfamiliar with the English composer Richard Pantcheff until this recording. He has had a wide-ranging career as a composer, organist, and choral conductor, writing numerous choral, vocal, organ, chamber, and

instrumental works. This program contains mainly sacred choral pieces aside from the Stephen Crane settings and the *Apologia* of Henry VIII, where he seeks to absolve himself from blame for the sins of his youth. The two substantial settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (one for women's and one for men's voices) are particularly effective and worth investigation by church musicians. The style is interesting and approachable, and the performances are excellent. Notes and texts. A welcome discovery.

DELCAMP

PAVAN: *Guitar Pieces*

Park Slope Chamber Players
Centaur 3784—46 minutes

Argentine born guitarist and composer Carlos Pavan has resided in New York for two decades. In addition to his international concert career he is artistic director of the Park Slope Chamber Players in the Park Slope area of Brooklyn.

Playing the guitar on all tracks is Pavan himself, and he shines in this ensemble, with engaged, collaborative accompaniment as well as solid solo work.

In a work for solo guitar, 'Milonga y Misterio', he handles the contemporary language well, with interesting articulations and clean delivery, but could have used a bit more space between phrases to let the music breathe and to achieve the effect portrayed in the title.

Several lovely duets for guitar and flute are included, with fluid, moving melodies and textures; but the guitar level is too loud in all of those, even on different audio systems. Balance is better on the Two Pieces for clarinet and guitar and especially on the three-movement Concertino for guitar and chamber orchestra, where the instruments all sound realistic. This is an energetic work where the intelligent scoring gives the guitar space to be heard as it responds to the orchestra. Though written in a contemporary style, this music is accessible, with enough tonal substance for the listener to comprehend.

The program alternates Pavan's solo works with his chamber works. It concludes with his *Suite Cosmopolitan* for guitar duo, where he is joined by Liz Hogg. They work well together in this intricate and well-written work.

The meager liner notes and photos tell the basic story, but nothing more. They stay out of the way of the music, which speaks for itself.

MCCUTCHEON

PICCHI: *Canzoni Da Sonar*

Concerto Scirocco/ Giulia Genini
Arcana 476—72 minutes

This collection of 19 canzonas for "all sorts" of instruments—*Canzoni Da Sonar Con Ogni Sorte D'Istromenti* (1625)—was the last publication by Venetian composer, organist, and harpsichordist Giovanni Picchi (1572-1643). The pieces are very much in the Venetian tradition with choirs of wind instruments, sparkling high solo parts (for instruments such as cornetto, recorder, and violin), and contrapuntal writing. Although not as immense as the greatest San Marco festival pieces such as Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers, these are certainly not chamber works. As you set your playback level, don't hesitate to use high volume so that you can fill your space with the glory of Venice.

The playing is very good as the 13 players in Concerto Scirocco—in several different groupings—are by turns in happy convivial conversation (Canzona 7), scampering close together in high registers then pausing to catch their breath and aerate the texture (9), or relaxing together in a suave and elegant pastoral spot (16).

Picchi specified which instruments should be used in each canzona, and Concerto Scirocco follows this guidance quite closely. To explain why they chose a different combination of instruments sometimes, ensemble director Giulia Genini offers helpful details in the booklet notes, along with a description of each canzona. In Canzona 14, for instance, the "first sackbut line was given to the violone for more varied winds and strings in the ternary section".

In addition to Giulia Genini's essay, there is one by Professor Rodolfo Baroncini about Picchi and details of all 18 instruments used here.

C MOORE

PICKER: *Opera Without Words;
The Encantadas*

Nashville Symphony/ Giancarlo Guerrero
Naxos 559853—58 minutes

This recording presents two works with unusual literary connections by the American composer Tobias Picker. *The Encantadas*, one of his earlier compositions (1983), is a melodrama based on Herman Melville's poems about his encounters with the Galapagos Islands during a voyage on a whaling ship. Picker was attracted to the way these texts

hover in a “border zone between poetry and prose”; and the composer (who acts as narrator) illustrates them with easily engaging tone poems that have the quality of first-rate film music. (That’s a compliment, not a jab.) The last of the six movements, ‘Dawn,’ is particularly memorable.

For the 2016 *Opera Without Words*, Picker developed, as Thomas May describes it, “a radically new form: a purely instrumental work that conveys a secret opera”. In collaboration with librettist Irene Dische, he composed a one-act opera, setting the characters’ words not to voices but to musical instruments. In finishing the score, he removed all the “vocal lines”, but kept a separate copy so that *Opera* could theoretically be performed conventionally with the texts and staging restored. He left some indications in the score that “only an opera singer is accustomed to seeing”, such as “defensively”, “terrified”, and even “aside to the audience”.

As with all well-crafted operas, the accompaniment does indeed suggest a drama all its own. And so *Opera Without Words* is notable for a variety of mood and character not typical of orchestral pieces, as well as the tantalizing temptation to guess the contours of the “secret opera” it conceals. The Nashville Symphony, led by Giancarlo Guerrero, accentuates Picker’s clean lines and sonic richness, and the audio quality is exemplary.

ALTMAN

POTT: *A Room at the End of the Mind*

Jeremy Filsell, p—Acis 52078—74 minutes

This is a collection of piano music by Francis Pott (b. 1957), a neoromantic with a large variety of influences (almost all of them mentioned in the notes). Vaughan Williams, Simpson, Finzi, and such are omnipresent. Many of these were written for his friends, others in homage to early music composers, with ample counterpoint and lush pianism. They are all attractive and worthy of repertoire consideration, but the music itself may be hard to find.

The presentation is confusing, since it seems that Mr Filsell is the main attraction; “Francis Pott” is subsidiary on the jewel box. His notes are detailed and lengthy. Mr Filsell is a fine pianist and is more than equal to the task. The music is inventive and always inviting much faster movement. If you don’t know this composer, this is worth your while.

GIMBEL

PROCTER-GREGG: *Violin Sonatas 1, 2, 4*

Andrew Long; Ian Buckle, p
Toccata 539—79 minutes

The notes credit Humphrey Procter-Gregg, a distinguished academic who founded the Manchester University Music Department, with cultivating a compositional style reminiscent of Delius and late Fauré. I confess that neither name springs readily to my mind on hearing these three sonatas, though perhaps that’s a side effect of not knowing any Delius with a keyboard part; from what I do know, which is mainly orchestral, I wouldn’t have expected such extreme muscularity in the piano writing as there is here. Certainly there’s no such thing in Fauré.

What is here is strong music—sometimes too much so for its own good. The exuberance and drive of several of the fast movements sometimes seem apt to steer the whole apparatus into the ditch; there’s nothing reining anything in. The acoustic also does the music few favors, emphasizing the harshness of Long’s sound up close. Again, anything less like the perfumed haze of late Fauré could scarcely be imagined. But Buckle’s magisterial handling of what sound to be very difficult piano parts is admirable, and in quieter movements (like the central Andante of No. 4) the two make a winning team.

There is a lot of odd and mixed meter here, usually to the music’s benefit. When Procter-Gregg launches a three-part fugue in 5/4 at the opening of No. 4’s finale, I defy anyone not to applaud. But there is much that’s straightforward too, and since the road is wide and the ditches distant, what’s not to like?

THOMSON

PROKOFIEFF: *Violin Sonata 1;*
SHOSTAKOVICH: *Sonata*

Natalia Prischepenko; Dina Ugorskaja, p
Avi 8553425—59 minutes

About 25 years ago I heard a program on a small German label of a then very young Natalia Prischepenko (she has since dropped the C) playing, among other things, Prokofiev’s “second” violin sonata, Op. 94a (the one originally for flute). Right after that she co-founded the Artemis Quartet and began making 18 years of chamber-music waves, eventually leaving the ensemble in 2012. And now, finally, comes the other Prokofiev sonata, together with its even gloomier Shostakovich discmate.

Both works were originally written for David Oistrakh, and Prishchenko (who hails from the same Zakhar Bron violin studio as Maxim Vengerov and Vadim Repin, among others) has Oistrakh's dour heft as well as his occasional silkiness. In the slow movement of the Prokofiev it's something more than that, a sound at once rich and ghostly, with a timbre on the G string that's almost viola-like. The loud bits are, well, loud, and there are a lot of them in both works. II of the Prokofiev is mostly violent slashings, mingled sometimes with what seems a savage parody of one of the composer's happy-go-lucky themes (the main theme of *Peter and the Wolf*, perhaps, or even the one from the finale of the Flute Sonata). Twice—once in the first movement, a second time near the end of the piece—there are ice-cold, quiet, very rapid scales that Prokofiev described as “the wind rushing through a cemetery”. That's the USSR in 1938, all right. I have an idea that Prokofiev, though he was never allowed to leave the USSR again, was nevertheless ensconced comfortably away in the country somewhere, unlike his comrade, “fireman Shostakovich”.

Shostakovich's sonata, for its part, bids fair to be the bleakest thing ever written ostensibly in G major. (Beside it, the yet later viola sonata is positively chipper.) As in the Prokofiev, the piano spends much of its time in the deepest register (Ugorskaja balefully dark here) and the violin a great deal of time shrieking. The long finale is a passacaglia, of the sort Shostakovich loved so well, but this time the theme begins almost atomistically, as irregularly-spaced pizzicatos, and only later does the semblance of the variations begin to take shape. This work has a sort of analog of the cold winds of the Prokofiev: a crawling, spidery theme beginning high up the E string and slowly descending, both at the end of the first movement and at the end of the last.

Neither performance is likely to be bettered any time soon, and short of Oistrakh's several performances of each, these are the best I know (and in much better sound). But this isn't music to break out on a cold, isolated, COVID-ridden winter night. Wait for daylight and spring.

THOMSON

PURCELL: *music*

David Hansen, ct; Oslo Circles

Simax 1367—58 minutes

The Baroque band Oslo Circles imbues this
American Record Guide

collection of music by Purcell, titled “One Charming Night”, with an exuberant air of artlessness. They shine in the *Abdelazer* Suite, which opens with a spritely rendition of the rondeau Britten used as the basis for his *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* variations. And they whip up invigorating baroque jam sessions in ‘Strike the Viol’ (from *Birthday Ode for Queen Mary*) and ‘Hornpipe I & II’ (*The Indian Queen*).

As the album's vocal soloist, Australian countertenor David Hansen lavishes warmly piercing tone on the haunting ‘Music for a While’ and ‘When I am Laid in Earth’ and finds the right contrast of colors for the slow and fast sections of ‘Sweeter than Roses’. But there is a feeling of formality in his veiled enunciation (an occupational hazard for his vocal category) that is a bit at odds with the instrumental ensemble's free-spirited abandon.

Simax's attractive packaging includes all the sung texts, as well as enlightening notes by Bryan White on Purcell and the sources of the selections. The audio engineering and aural positioning of the artists is superlative.

ALTMAN

PURCELL: *Welcome Songs*

The Sixteen/ Harry Christophers

Coro 16182—74 minutes

It has been some time since Hyperion released recordings by Robert King and the King's Consort of complete traversals of several genres of music by Henry Purcell: odes and welcome songs from 1988 to 1992, sacred music from 1991 to 1994, and non-theatrical secular songs in 1994. I have long regarded King's performances as the gold standard in this repertory. Meanwhile, Decca and Christopher Hogwood gave us the complete theatrical music other than *Dido and Aeneas* and the semi-operas in recordings made from 1974 to 1983.

In his series of Purcell recordings, Harry Christophers takes a markedly different approach. Each disc in the series will contain one or two royal welcome songs: cantata-like compositions to mark the return of the monarch to London after spending the summer in Windsor. A more ephemeral genre could hardly be imagined: each welcome song might be performed once and never heard again. The extravagantly fawning poetry was mediocre at best, but as I observed in my review of an earlier disc in the series, Purcell

could have set a laundry list to magnificent music. These pieces are well worth hearing.

Christophers fills out each recording with a cross section of shorter works in a variety of genres: anthems, theatrical songs, catches, and instrumental pieces. Andrew Pinnock supplies program notes that relate the music to the intense political machinations of the period.

What Shall Be Done in Behalf of the Man (1682) is the first of the two welcome songs on this recording. It was written on the occasion of the permanent return from Edinburgh to London of the Duke of York (future King James II). That and Charles's dissolution of Parliament in the previous year put an end of the "Exclusion Crisis", a Protestant movement to prevent James, a Catholic, from succeeding to the throne, and to name the Duke of Monmouth, Charles's eldest illegitimate son and a staunch Protestant, as heir apparent. The text of the welcome song names York unequivocally as successor to the throne—a somewhat delicate proposition, since York was only three years younger than the king, so that either might plausibly predecease the other. The other welcome song here is *From Those Serene and Rapturous Joys* (1684) to a text by Thomas Flatman. It may not be as politically charged as the 1682 work, but as Andrew Pinnock puts it, Flatman "took hyperbole to a ludicrous extreme" in comparing the king's return to the raising of Lazarus.

The shorter works on the program include Purcell's best-known symphony anthem 'Rejoice in the Lord Alway'. Among the theatrical songs are 'Blow, Boreas, Blow' from *Sir Barnaby Whigg*, 'Retir'd from Any Mortal's Sight' from *King Richard the Second*, and 'Thy Genius, Lo!' from *The Massacre of Paris*, a play written during the Exclusion Crisis and sympathetic to the exclusionist position. For that reason it was not performed until 1689, after the deposition of James and the enthronement of William and Mary. The three-part catch 'Come, My Hearts' (1685) proposes toasts to Charles and York, and so was excluded from catch collections published after 1688. The instrumental pieces are the Overture in D minor and the chaconne 'Two in One on a Ground' from the semi-opera *Dioclesian* (1690). Two recorders play treble in canon over a ground bass. Of course, there are instrumental symphonies in the anthems and the two welcome songs.

As we have come to expect from Christophers, the performances are technically out-

standing. As in other recordings in the series, the forces are economical to emphasize the intimacy of the music. There are only 9 singers. They produce a convincing choral effect in the anthems and welcome songs, but they are essentially an ensemble of vocal soloists, and they get their solo moments. The strings are 3-3-3-3 with no double basses. Continuo harmony instruments are drawn from organ, harpsichord, theorbo, and harp. The recorded sound is good, but not especially warm.

A few years ago I reviewed a disc containing two welcome songs for James II (Coro 16151; J/F 2018). Later in that year John Barker reviewed the first of the recordings of welcome songs for Charles II (16163; N/D 2018) and expressed his general agreement with my evaluation. This is the third release in the Charles II series. It appears that the previous volume (16173) was not reviewed in ARG.

GATENS

RABL: *Clarinet Quartet*; see ZEMPLINSKY

RACHMANINOFF: *5 Preludes, 4 Etudes-Tableaux, 2 Moments Musicaux, 2 Song Transcriptions, Fantasy Piece; Andante from Cello Sonata*

Sergei Babayan, p—DG 4839181—61 minutes

Babayan has been a world-class pianist for many, many years, but not as well known as he has become recently. As the teacher and piano duo partner of Daniil Trifonov I have seen him in performance twice at Carnegie Hall. And both were among the five soloists in a marathon concert of all the Prokofiev piano concertos at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in February 2016 (May/June 2016). More recently he has partnered with Martha Argerich in Prokofiev (DG 4799854, Sept/Oct 2018). He signed a recording contract with DG in 2018, and this is his first solo album for the label.

This is as varied and balanced a Rachmaninoff program as one could hope for. There are very familiar works, two transcriptions by Arcadi Volodos, one by Rachmaninoff, and a little 'Morceau de Fantaisie' that all but the most complete recordings miss. Babayan has taken great care in constructing this recital. The works are not arranged by date or opus number. The inclusion of Volodos's transcription of the 'Melody' Op. 21:9 balances well with Rachmaninoff's own 'Lilacs' Op. 21:2, but they are not played back to back. The gorgeous slow movement from the Cello

Sonata is in E-flat, but its persistent use of F-sharp (enharmonic of G-flat) gives the feeling of alternation between E-flat major and minor, with major winning out at the end. By placing this transcription by Volodos between an Etude-Tableaux (Op. 39:5) and Moment Musical (Op. 16:2), both in E-flat minor, Babayan keeps a common tonal center with as much variation as possible.

The pianism here is flawless. There are tempos a little faster or slower than usual. This is everything that you would expect from a great Rachmaninoff recital. DG's piano sound is state of the art, and the booklet essay has a number of interesting comments by the pianist.

HARRINGTON

RAMEAU: *Les Boreades*

Deborah Cachet, Caroline Weynants, s; Mathias Vidal, Benedikt Kristjansson, t; Benoit Arnould, bar; Tomas Selc, Nicolas Brooymans, b; Collegium 1704—Versailles 26 [3CD] 165 minutes

Listening to *Les Boreades* (the god of the north wind and of winter) by Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) is like moving to another planet from Haydn (b 1732), Mozart (b 1756), and even Rameau's contemporaries Bach, Handel, and Telemann. The music's style and instrumentation seem closer to Henry Purcell (1659-95). Louis XV's court apparently was (among other things) part entertainment, part distraction, part fashion show, judging from the long series of ballets, airs, minuets, gavottes, rigaudons, airs, and choruses that repeatedly stay the action of this (as the liner notes call it) "theatrical work".

The plot is simple: Queen Alphise (Deborah Cachet) is desired by Calisis (Benedikt Kristjansson) and Borilée (Tomas Selc), sons of Boreas, but she's intent on marrying Abaris (Mathias Vidal). Since she can't marry Abaris and remain queen, she gives up her crown. All heaven shakes loose in a fabulous 22-minute scene of storm, thunder, and earthquake, after which Alphise "is carried off into the air". Ah, but it turns out Abaris is the son of Apollo; thus, he keeps the winds from obeying Boreas and renders the wind god's two sons amenable. Abaris and Alphise marry to "general jubilation", the kind that leave Mar-a-Lago celebrations in the dust.

Vaclav Luks is founder and artistic director of the Prague-based baroque orchestra Collegium 1704 (6-5-4-3-2 plus pairs of woodwinds, French horns, and a percussionist) and

the Collegium Vocale 1704 chorus (6-6-6-5). Performances in Act I seem rather tame, or was I just getting used to a sound world I don't normally inhabit? Ensemble, pitches, and balances are excellent; but neither singers nor orchestra are subtle or nuanced here. In fact, it sounds as if the singers are performing in a hall where they have to really project their voices into the audience; so dynamic and expression levels remain the same.

But starting with Act II the singers invest even the many extensive recitatives with an almost spoken drama, especially in the dueling recitatives where two or more characters react to one another. There aren't many full-blown arias in this work, but Matias Vidal's mellow baritone early in the act is especially tender, and his interchanges with Deborah Cachet later in the act are deeply felt and touching. The act ends with ebullient, tender, and vigorous praises of liberty and love amidst solos, quartets, choir, and numerous ballet selections.

Act III furthers the notion of pageant and entertainment as Alphise's two rejected suitors sing, "Why resist the chains of love and budding flowers. Let us enjoy our finest years!" *Sacré bleu!* An orgy before the deluge (that 22-minute storm scene). By this point, recitatives seem to go on for a lot longer than they actually do; but, again, the performances are so well paced, the orchestra is so vital, and the singing so uniformly good that they're never boring (especially with a remote control in hand).

The storm music plunges without a break directly into Act IV for six minutes, following by a gorgeous four-minute lament sing by Vidal, accompanied by delicate woodwinds and soft sustained strings. Enter Polymnia, the Muses, Zepher, Seasons, the Hours, and the Arts for 22 minutes of dances and airs meant to soften up the gods, especially Boreas.

Rameau opens Act V with Boreas unleashing devastation via the cleverest, advanced rhythms and harmonies. As the wind god says to Alphise, "Unwanted husband or slavery? An empire or fetters." She chooses fetters, followed by a ballet with plenty of threatening sound effects. But Abaris, son of Apollo with the golden arrow, comes to the rescue with a message for people in power that is especially timely right now: "Everything that hurts is a crime. You would be feared, but can you be loved?" after which the text notes, "The decor changes", followed by lively ballets with sweet moments of love, ending with "very lively contradances".

If this sounds like a plot outline more than a performance critique, it is because of the work's layout. For example, Act V at 33 minutes is divided into 25 tracks. And the same is true of the other four acts. But was it the music itself, or the performers, or both, who managed to hold my attention? Even though the orchestra has no brass to stir things up other than two mellow French horns, the music never stagnates, the flow is always moving forward, the conductor is alert and incisive, the orchestra is peerless, and the singers are excellent; the two leads (Deborah Cachet and Mathias Vidal) are especially engaging. In fact, I find this work much easier to take than some of Handel's operas where an aria can drone on for 15 minutes with an inane text ("I am going to the store"), followed by a 12-minute aria ("What will you buy?"), etc.

Recorded in Versailles, the engineering is warm and resonant, and balances are superb. The liner notes are informative and easy to read, and the complete text is in French, English, and German. The packaging is attractive, with sumptuous photos of the opera house.

FRENCH

RAMEAU: *Pigmalion & Dardanus Suites & Airs*

Anders Dahlin, t) Orfeo Baroque Orchestra/
Michi Gaigg—CPO 555 156—64 minutes

These are selections from two of Rameau's important compositions, the 1748 act de ballet, *Pigmalion*, and the 1744 tragedie en musique, *Dardanus*. The instrumental selections are essentially two suites of dances. In each suite, Anders J Dahlin sings two selections: from *Pigmalion* the air 'Fatal Amour' and the ariette 'Règne Amour', and from *Dardanus* the title character's prison air 'Lieux funestes' and the ariette 'Hatons-nous; courons a la gloire'. The airs were in an updated style based on Jean-Baptiste Lully; the ariettes were basically Italian arias in French. Texts and translations are in the booklet. Dahlin has a light and agile voice, well suited to the *haute-contre* repertoire.

Both of these works were composed for an opera orchestra, and this smaller ensemble lacks the presence found in the complete recordings: for *Pigmalion*, see the brief overview in Jan/Feb 2020, and for *Dardanus*, Nov/Dec 2000 and July/Aug 2016. In particular, the interpretation lacks the elan of Gustav Leonhardt's recording (DHM 77143, 1981), especially in the final Contredanse. Even in

this performance, Rameau's music retains its color and motion. Though it is Rameau "light", it might be a useful introduction.

BREWER

RATHAUS: *Piano Sonatas 1+3;*
SHOSTAKOVICH: *Sonatas 1+2*

Vladimir Stoupel—Avi 8553481 [2CD] 104 min

Karol Rathaus (1895-1954) was of Polish Jewish descent; he studied with Franz Schreker at the Hochschule fur Musik in Berlin, and the First Sonata, from 1920, was his entrance examination there. Judging from his writing, he was generally an Extremely Serious person. Moods shift often, especially in the Spanish-tinged Scherzo; and our ears are filled with the massive struggles of late romanticism. The style can veer from heights of virtuosity to gnommic restraint, but the dark intensity almost never lets up.

The Third (1927) steers an even wider berth around traditional form and tonality. At the same time it is slightly less glowering, though we are still oceans away from throbbing Rachmaninoff. To contradict my statement about Rathaus's seriousness, the scampering, turbulent finale uses some wild, markedly Jewish-sounding dance material, and there are the barest hints of jazz as well; even the opening notes ring like a spoof of Chopin's 'Minute Waltz'. Admirers of Medtner, Scriabin, Lourie, and their associates should have this music.

Shostakovich's brash, acerbic Sonata 1 is dense and cluttered here, and the piano's iron tone makes me feel pummeled. Lilya Zilberstein (Decca 4757425) plays with much more subtlety and personality. Stoupel doesn't bring out individual voices much; instead we are faced with a rabble-rousing, angry chorus. The most difficult passages stretch his technique slightly beyond what is comfortable. All this is not to say his interpretation is ineffective or invalid—not in the slightest! (And Stoupel does respect the quiet passages, keeping an atmosphere of eerie tension.)

20 years ago I may have responded with enthusiasm, but these days, I tire of the "to a hammer, everything looks like a nail" approach. The more approachable style of the Second Sonata normally makes it go down better, but again the playing is mostly brutalist and undefined. There are problems of technique, too: repeated inner chords are inconsistent, and the rippling accompaniment patterns do not always flow. Rubato saves the pro-

ceedings from turning mechanical, but in III an excessive amount of it holds the music back.

The Rathaus and Shostakovich were recorded a year apart with different engineers. Though the booklet (German and English) points out similarities between the two composers, I would still rather pay for a single, full-length, all-Rathaus disc. Note that this label is not the same as Avie.

ESTEP

RAVEL: Piano Pieces

Valses Nobles et Sentimentales; Tombeau de Couperin; Sonatine; Prelude; Pavane; A la Manière de Borodine; A la Manière de Chabrier; Menuet sur la nom d'Haydn

Ann Martin-Davis—Guild 7825—69 minutes

This is an enjoyable single-disc Ravel recital. It is subtitled 'Le Langage des Fleurs' which relates to a ballet based on *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* for which Ravel wrote the libretto as well as the music. This offers a central idea for the extensive booklet essay, which complements the pianist's own notes. The two major works (*Valses* and *Tombeau*) are near and dear to my heart, as is the *Sonatine*. The *Pavane* has one of the most beautiful melodies ever written. The three pieces that refer to other composers make for an interesting group, and the little two-page Prelude, written as a sight-reading test, has been in my own repertoire for years.

The piano playing here is what I aspired to do when working on these pieces many years ago. Martin-Davis takes a gentler approach than I did, especially in the opening waltz of *Valses*. Her slightly detached Prelude in *Tombeau* is true to the neo-Baroque idiom Ravel was emulating. The notorious closing 'Toccata' is, like the Prelude, detached and clear but switches to pure legato in the central section. As it builds to the closing climax of notes that cover the whole keyboard, Martin-Davis misses none of the excitement, while keeping the phrases sensibly shaped and clear.

I found this a real discovery of a great pianist with impressive teaching and scholarly credentials. I noted that her notes in English, French, and German were not translated by anyone (as was the booklet essay), leading me to believe that she is fluent in many languages. She has trained over 4000 piano teachers in South East Asia and the UK. This should be widely heard.

HARRINGTON

American Record Guide

RAVEL: Trio;

CHAUSSON: Piano Quartet

Trio Machiavelli; Adrien Boisseau, va

Berlin 301417—61 minutes

Over the past century, Ravel's sole trio has steadily gained in stature, and it is certainly a cornerstone at this point. What does Trio Machiavelli bring to it? Intimate acoustics and a straightforward interpretation, sometimes verging on very good. Each movement is persuasive here (III is a wonderful slow burn), but it just can't go to the head of the class. In fairness, I have heard this several times and hearing this a few more times might elevate it in my estimation.

The 11-minute first movement of Chausson's Quartet in A is like the opening of some massive piano concerto. The 19th Century hothouse atmosphere is simply tiresome after a while, and only III offers respite. Joined by Adrien Boisseau on viola, Trio Machiavelli make a fine case for this piece. The Schubert Ensemble was a bit better, but it may be too epic (Jan/Feb 2017).

DUTTERER

REICHA: Grand Salon Symphony 1;

BEETHOVEN: Septet

Le Concert de la Loge—Aparte 211—75 minutes

Over the past two centuries, Anton Reicha has often been disparaged at the expense of Beethoven or some of the other more emphatic romantics. There's no question that he was rather theory-driven, and his contemporaries were sometimes baffled by his music. Listening to the two composers as they are represented here, a listener engaging in a blind taste test would be hard pressed to say which was considered a dabbler and which one is sometimes regarded as Zeus in the classical pantheon.

But Reicha's Grande Symphonie de Salon 1 is not necessarily the sort of music that will redeem his reputation overnight. No matter who writes it, salon music observes different laws. This world premiere recording is fresh, and this nonet (culled from the larger orchestra) is relishing it. It begins with brooding romantic thunderclouds, but they quickly give way to lighter fare. Anyone who has heard his wind quintets will have a sense of the tone that prevails. For that matter, strings play little role in II, a very leisurely Adagio. Violinist Julien Chauvin's name looms larger on the marquee than his confreres; but although he gets play-

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ing time, the impression lingers that this is an amplified wind quintet. The Finale has a wonderfully woozy drunken tone, delivered in a polished, classical-era style rather than “sturm und drang” assertiveness. If nothing else, this piece opposes the image of Reicha as technician and paints him as an entertainer in the same tradition as Mozart and Rossini.

For me, Beethoven's Septet has never really merited its 40-minute run time. Nonetheless, it is performed here with warmth and 18th Century flavor, with II and IV having the mood of a summer reverie. The final movement is lovely. I'd like to hear more cello and violin, but otherwise there's nothing to find fault with here except perhaps that the album's total time of 75 minutes is 15 minutes too much.

The notes are well done and accompanied by images of musical manuscripts, and there's an article on the music department of France's Bibliothèque Nationale. Because this album is part of a larger, semi-official celebration of Reicha's 250th birthday, there's also a text by the Czech Republic's ambassador to France.

DUTTERER

ROMBERG: *Harp & Cello Sonatas*

Zsuzsanna Aba-Nagy, Zsuzsa Szolnoki
Gramola 99216—77 minutes

This release claims to be a World Premiere Recording, but it isn't. I reviewed its predecessor played by Rachel Talitman, harp and Didi-er Poskin, cello (Talent 86; July/Aug 2004) and liked it.

Bernhard Romberg (1767-1841) was a cellist as well as a composer. These are beautiful examples of his art and ability. As Christian Heindl reminds us in his fine liner notes, it is easy to mix up Bernhard with his cousin Andreas, who was born in the same year, played the violin and also composed some lovely music. The harp is an unusual partner for the cello.

How does the present issue compare with its predecessor? The sound is similar, but the playing differs a bit. Poskin is a little more solid technically than Szolnoki, and the tempos taken on the earlier release cut over four minutes from the total. The recorded balance and sonority are similar—perhaps a little more distant in the earlier release. I'd prefer that one, though this one is not to be ignored.

D MOORE

ROSNER: *Requiem*

Kelley Hollis, s; Feargal Mostyn-Williams, ct; Thomas Elwin, t; Gareth Brynmor John, bar; Crouch End Festival Chorus; London Philharmonic/ Nick Palmer—Toccat 545—69 minutes

Arnold Rosner's Requiem (1973), no exaggeration intended, is one of the great works of the 20th Century. Rosner (1945-2013) was a post-modernist at a time when modernism was unshakable in academic circles. He studied at SUNY/Buffalo—a notorious hotbed: the faculty laughed at him. They were wrong. They couldn't deal with his love of Renaissance and early music (Dufay especially), his tonality and post-tonal language.

Written when he was 28, the maturity and vision is striking. Inspiration for this work was triggered by his fascination with Ingmar Bergman's *Seventh Seal*. He wanted to adapt it for an opera, but Bergman refused permission. He began to write it anyway, and some of it appears in the Requiem. His sources include the New Testament, François Villon, the Kama Sutra, Whitman (*When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloomed*), Dante, the *Kaddish*, and the *Dies Irae*. All are set with sensitivity and profound musicality.

The London Philharmonic is great, but Ms Hollis's soprano is wobbly. Helpful notes by Rosner scholar Walter Simmons. Texts and translations. Don't miss this.

GIMBEL

ROSSINI: *Moses*

Silvia Dalla Benetta (Sinaide), Elisa Balbo (Anais), Randall Bills (Amenophis), Alexei Birkus (Moses), Luca Dall'Amico (Pharoah); Gorecki Chamber Choir, Virtuosi Brunensis/ Fabrizio Maria Carminati—Naxos 660473 [3CD] 168 min

If an opera has given a beloved tune to the musical world, the rest of the work is probably worth getting to know. This is certainly the case with Rossini's opera about Moses's freeing of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. The tune in question occurs in a big ensemble prayer as the Israelites stand by the Red Sea, just steps ahead of the Egyptian chariots. You may know it from Paganini's setting. The opera turns out to be fascinating, with many tunes on the level of that one or even finer!

168 minutes is a lot of Rossini for some people, barely enough for others. Here we have what must be one of the longest of Rossini's operas, because it is one of his serious

ones, further expanded for performance at the Paris Opera.

The Italian-language version of the work is relatively familiar on recordings, under the title *Mosè in Egitto* (Moses in Egypt; 1818). There have been at least six CD or DVD recordings (plus several pirated ones—one with Boris Christoff in the title role). I particularly recommend a shapely, well-recorded CD release under Claudio Scimone, with June Anderson and Ruggiero Raimondi, made when they were in splendid early-career voice.

Now Naxos (which has already made available two performances of the 1818 version, one on CD, the other on DVD) brings us the 1827 French work, whose full title translates as “Moses and Pharaoh, or the Crossing of the Red Sea”.

The excellent booklet essays by Annelies Andries and Reto Müller explain how Rossini and his French librettists rearranged the order of the 1818 opera’s scenes, reworked much of the music, and added many new sections, such as an extensive ballet.

The result is apparently the first complete CD recording of the 1827 French version, and I recommend it heartily to anybody interested in the early history of French Grand Opera. Here Rossini tried, as he would two years later in *Guillaume Tell*, to tell a story from the legendary past in a grand, inspiring way. He thereby set a path that Meyerbeer, Halevy, Donizetti, Verdi, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, and others would follow.

He varied the orchestral colors greatly, offering solemn passages for brass choir and even a touching flute solo. The latter opens the Act 2 aria where the pharaoh’s wife pleads with her son to give up his love for the Hebrew maiden Anaïs. (It’s complicated: the mother herself has secretly accepted Jehovah as Lord. The plot elaborates wildly on the Bible story.)

Particularly striking are the many descriptive passages, such as when the skies brighten again after the plague of darkness is lifted. (Rossini was surely thinking of the “Let there be light” in Haydn’s *Creation*.) Or, toward the end, the turbulent closing of the Red Sea on Pharaoh’s troops.

And then there are the reliable pleasures of any Rossini opera, namely lilting melody, often blossoming into exquisite or passionate coloratura. One of my favorite such passages is in the third-act finale: after Moses makes the statue of Isis collapse and the Ark of the Covenant appear in the sky, everyone expresses a kind of frozen astonishment for three glo-

rious minutes, to an accompaniment that includes harp arpeggios (‘Je tremble et soupire’—I tremble and sigh).

If you don’t know the opera, you might be better off with a recording of the 1818 Italian version (such as the Scimone). The present recording comes from three staged performances in summer 2018 at the renowned “Rossini in Wildbad” festival (Black Forest), and it shows some of the near-inevitable shortcomings when a complex work is recorded that way. The orchestra, not very large, sounds smaller because it is recorded without much resonance. (Perhaps the mikes were kept on the stage to avoid audience noise.) Also, in the opening scenes, the chorus and soloists often sing slightly below pitch compared to the orchestra. Were they standing far from the pit, making it hard for them to hear? But this same choral group is perfectly in tune with the orchestra—which helps one appreciate how gorgeously they sing!—at the beginning of Act 2 when God has afflicted Egypt with a plague of darkness.

Alexei Birkus (from Russia) is often slightly flat even when he is standing front and center, near the orchestra; and, though he has a sonorous voice that conveys Mosaic authority, his coloratura is not always clean.

Still, the work comes across well, thanks to the otherwise fine cast, led by two remarkable sopranos: Silvia Dalla Benetta (whom I have admired in Rossini operas—Nov/Dec 2019, May/June 2020); and Elisa Balbo (who sings here as beautifully as in another Rossini opera, Mar/Apr 2019).

Tenor Randall Bills is eloquent and convincingly heroic at the top end of his range though sometimes thin at the bottom. Patrick Kabongo, from the Republic of the Congo, is exquisite in the smaller role of Eliezer. The rest of the cast produces healthy, stylish singing: Luca Dall’Amico (as Pharaoh) is more precise than Birkus (Moses) but produces a less resonant sound.

Carminati, a conductor I have not previously encountered, keeps up the pace nicely; and the orchestra (from Moravia, in the Czech Republic) and chorus (from Poland) follow him to the hilt.

A 2003 La Scala DVD of the Paris version, though perhaps not as complete as the new CD, includes singers who were, or would soon become, major stars (Frittoli, Ganassi, Muraro, Schrott, Abdrazakov), conducted by Riccardo Muti (Sept/Oct 2006). The bits I have seen are captivating. There’s also a recording with

Cecilia Gasdia, Shirley Verrett, and Samuel Ramey (under Georges Pr***tre)—blurry video but clear sound. This new CD gives you every note that Rossini wrote, in a shapely and largely convincing performance. French-only libretto at the Naxos website, with helpful track numbers in red.

LOCKE

ROUSSEL: *Bacchus & Ariane Suite 2;*
see Collections

RUBINSTEIN: *Le Bal; Allegro Appassionato*
Warren Lee, p—Naxos 574216—88 minutes

This is the longest CD I have seen. Like much of Rubinstein's music to come my way, *Le Bal* is quite long-winded, but always well crafted, with easy-to-listen-to melodies and harmonies.

Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) was one of the great pianists of all time. He is regularly compared with Liszt, and his legendary concerts teaching career occupy a huge place in Russian music history. His compositions have not fared nearly as well. Gerald Abraham said that Rubinstein was "a competent imitator of Mendelssohn or Schumann with little personality".

Le Bal (1854, revised 1871) is a ballroom scene in ten sections. It begins with the anticipation of the dancer, followed by varied dances that culminate in a wild 'Galop'. The final movement is a dream reflection of what has been. The program and construction of the work is more interesting than the actual music. That tends to be predictable, with repeated phrases, agreeable, but not memorable melodies, and a lot of notes. I give Lee high marks for the sense he makes of it all. He has the technique and sensibilities to bring it off. But it is not something that I'll listen to again.

HARRINGTON

RÜGEN: *Songs*
Ensemble Peregrina/ Agnieszka Budzinska-Bennett—Tacet 261—75 minutes

This is the first complete recording of the extant works of the minnesinger Wizlav von Rügen. The identity of the poet is uncertain, but he might have been Prince Wizlaw III, who died in 1325. Most of the 21 items here fall into the category of Springtime love songs, with their familiar bucolic "natureingang" (nature opening). There are a few "sangspruchdichtungen" (religious, moral-didactic songs) in

the style of Walther von der Vogelweide. And there is one "tagelied" (dawn song) that borrows from the alba tradition going back at least as far as the Troubadours of the 12th Century.

Ensemble Peregrina aims for rather simple performances of these songs, preferring solo voice (Agnieszka Budzinska-Bennett, Marc Lewon, Mathias Spoerry) with instrumental accompaniments—harp, sinfonia (Budzinska-Bennett), gittern (Lewon), vielles (Baptiste Romain), and medieval transverse flutes (Mara Winter), all of which are attested in the miniatures of the famous song manuscript known as the Codex Manesse (c. 1340). Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

SAINT-SAËNS: *Liszt Sonata;*
Chopin Sonata 2, arr
Simon Callaghan, Hiroaki Takenouchi, p
Nimbus 5997—55 minutes

Since we regularly publish Liszt transcriptions of other composer's works under Liszt's name, I thought it proper to place these transcriptions under Saint-Saëns. There are a huge number of recordings of the original solo piano sonatas. I know of only one other of the Liszt (Melodiya 2463, May/June 2017) and none of the Chopin in the two-piano arrangements. These are both very literal transcriptions, and the only noticeable added notes are octave doublings and some filling out of the harmonies or figurations that are beyond the capability of two hands.

Both of these works count among my favorites, and I have been listening to the originals all my life. As I played this several times, I kept asking why. Why take the time to write these arrangements? Why invest the time in perfecting performances? Why listen? Now I have to answer those questions.

Saint-Saëns undoubtedly admired these works and most likely had the occasion to play two-piano music with very competent partners (including Liszt). Recreating a masterpiece with a partner or as a gift for two other pianists is likely why he made these arrangements, beyond the fact that it clearly would enhance one's knowledge of the works.

No pianist would minimize the time required to learn and bring to performance level either of these two works. While the two-piano versions do decrease some of the technical problems, the ensemble requirements must add to the difficulty with two pianos. For a piano duo team, learning one or both of

these might be viewed as ascending Mt Everest. I listen because I love the works and a slightly different version makes me listen more closely and even hear some lines that I've never noticed in the originals.

Callaghan and Takenouchi are well up to the demands Saint-Saëns has put before them. They are at their best in the most technically demanding sections. Also, they do very well when one part clearly has the main idea and the other accompanies, giving great shape to inner voices. The recorded sound is good. The booklet notes talk much more about the pieces than the arrangements. Since these scores are not readily available, I would have preferred more information about the arrangements. But I would certainly recommend this recording to people who love these works and would enjoy a different aural presentation.

HARRINGTON

SAINT-SAËNS: *Le Timbre d'Argent*

Helène Guilmette (Helène), Jodie Devos (Rosa), Edgaras Montvidas (Conrad), Yu Shao (Benedict), Tassis Christoyannis (Spiridion); Les Siècles, Accentus chorus/ François-Xavier Roth
Bru Zane 1041 [2CD] 148 minutes

You know how odd a piece Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann* (1881) is, with its three different stories encased in yet another story and a villain who reappears as different characters. Well, *Le Timbre d'Argent*, which was largely composed 17 years earlier than the Offenbach, resembles it in important ways—not least in the high quality of the music and its astonishing variety.

Le Timbre d'Argent (The Silver Bell) has never been recorded before—and, until revived by these performers in 2017, had not been performed in 103 years.

Saint-Saëns was thought unlikely to succeed in the theater. He was a master of symphonic and chamber genres and a great pianist and organist, but he twice failed to win the Prix de Rome competition, which required a cantata or operatic scene. Nonetheless, over the decades he did finally get all his operas performed, as Hugh Macdonald explains in a marvelous recent book, *Saint-Saëns and the Stage*. Only one of them, *Samson and Delilah*, became a central item in the international repertory.

Timbre uses a libretto by Barbier and Carre, who supplied texts for numerous other operas, including Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* and, yes, *Tales of Hoffmann*. The musical

numbers were separated by pages of spoken dialog.

It was composed in 1864 but did not get performed until 1877 (18 times) at the Theatre National Lyrique. It was revived in Brussels 15 years later, then in Germany in 1904-5 (revised); and in Monte Carlo in 1907 (with an entire act removed). He reworked the whole opera, turning the spoken passages into recitatives. (He had already drafted the recitatives years earlier for a promised production at the Paris Opera that did not come to pass.) In this all-sung form it was staged in Brussels in 1914, a full 50 years after most of it was composed. The composer was nearly 80, though still quite vital.

The recording is the 1914 version, which enables us to hear a maximum amount of largely unknown music by this immensely skillful and often-inspired composer. The all-sung version also allowed the Center for French Romantic Music (which prepared score and parts, and arranged for the performances and recording) to select singers not all of whom are native Francophones. (Spoken dialog in a French opera can be excruciating with a non-native cast.)

The plot? Well, let's just say that it's a series of misadventures involving Conrad, a destitute painter in 18th Century Vienna, who faints and has a series of dreams where his doctor, Spiridion, accompanies him (in changing guises: a marquis, a coachman, a Gypsy) to various places where all kinds of strange things happen. The "gimmick" in the plot, and in the work's title, is a magical silver bell that, whenever Conrad rings it, will bring him riches but also cause someone to die.

The locales include a theater (where the characters are on the stage), a Florentine palazzo, a country cottage, and the shore of a lake. Two characters die from his greedy ringing: his girlfriend's father and his friend and good angel Benedict. The latter returns as a ghost to advise him to shatter the bell, at which point Conrad awakens and, in the opera's last pages, accepts a normal life of hard work, modest income, and a wife of good moral character.

The cast includes three prominent female characters. Conrad's deeply worthy sweetheart is Helène, Benedict's innocent sweetheart is Rosa, and a mime plays twin roles in the dream scenes: the ancient enchantress Circe (who steps out of one of Conrad's paintings) and an enticing dancer named Fiammetta (who, in Act 3, transforms into a Gypsy along

with Spiridion). The Circe/Fiammetta character, inevitably, nearly disappears on a recording. One must keep reading the stage directions to follow her.

Macdonald rightly describes the score as “a young man’s opera, with a prodigal abundance of fresh musical invention”. (Saint-Saëns was 28 in 1864 when he composed the first version.)

You can get a sense of the stylistic range from the lengthy potpourri-type overture, which includes highly contrasting melodies that will occur later. It begins with a brisk, highly syncopated passage that evokes Berlioz at his best. (The two composers were friends.) The weirdness and frequent shifts in the plot and the locale, and between reality scenes and dreamed ones, prompted Saint-Saëns to write music of ever-fresh variety. For example, listen to the mysterious chords in the cellos for the arrival of the diabolical Spiridion, flippant observations by that character (recalling Mephistopheles in *Faust* and well conveyed here by Tassis Christoyannis), and a “ghostly” (Macdonald’s word) male chorus where Conrad’s student friends regret his misguided desires and deranged state.

Among other musical high points are a lovely song for Helène (‘Le bonheur est chose légère’), a gambling scene (analogous to the one in *La Traviata*), a Neapolitan song, a Gypsy chorus and dance, a drinking song, and a purposely raucous Carnival chorus.

There are exquisite and situation-specific choices of instrumentation, such as ominous brass in the gambling scene. In the opera’s opening scene, Saint-Saëns indicates Conrad’s downheartedness by using *two* English horns. When the perky, silent Fiammetta performs the ‘Dance of the Bee’, the violas do the necessary buzzing. This number is a kind of striptease, with the dancer removing veil after veil in order to try to rid herself of the annoying insect.

Timbre contains well-managed “I am” and “I want” songs (to use Broadway terminology) for several characters, and effective scenes of action and interchange between characters. There are some delicious short choruses in a variety of styles. Larger ensemble scenes create much excitement through artful modulations.

The preludes and other passages for orchestra alone are enchanting. The entr’acte to Act 2 is for the combination of winds and harp. (The composer also published a piano arrangement of it called simply ‘Gavotte’.)

Motives or even entire melodies are anticipated as hints of things to come; or they are later recalled, altered to suit the drama.

The two sopranos, Hélène Guilmette and Jodie Devos, both French-speakers, are simply marvelous, and appropriately cast: Guilmette rich and soulful as Hélène, Devos naive and straightforward as the simpler, cheerful Rosa.

The two tenors contrast even more strikingly. Lithuanian-born Edgaras Montvidas, as the anti-hero Conrad, suffers marvelously yet ever-musically, as will not surprise anyone who knows his recorded performances in operas by Gounod, Felicien David, and Benjamin Godard. He sometimes sings a bit sharp in an exciting scene, and some of his vowels are unclear. For example, “ses”—“his” or “hers”—can sound more like “ce”—“this”. All in all, though, this is yet another triumph for a world-class artist.

Yu Shao, as Conrad’s sensible and self-controlled friend Benedict, produces clear lyric sound, always on pitch. A native of China who has studied and performed in France and Belgium since 2008, he pronounces his French with more consistent clarity than Montvidas, but he is less responsive to specific words and phrases.

Greek-born baritone Tassis Christoyannis, as the diabolical Spiridion, balances the necessary elements beautifully: one can understand nearly every word without looking at the libretto *and* sense the many shifts in the character’s contrasted personas and moods. This role is a triumph for a singer whom I have already praised here in numerous song and opera recordings (Salieri, David, Gounod, Offenbach, Lalo).

The chorus and period-instrument orchestra, under François-Xavier Roth, are immensely colorful, and all is captured in excellent balance. It’s a studio recording made after five staged performances at the Opera-Comique.

Lovers of French opera will find endless fascinations in *Timbre*. It is tuneful and colorful from beginning to end. The small book that comes with the recording contains excellent essays and the libretto, all capably translated. One miscalculation: the compositional and performance history of the work is told again and again by each writer. Eliminating these repetitions would have left room for other considerations about a major work that listeners are discovering for the first time. The synopsis, for example, is far too brief.

LOCKE

SAINT-SAENS: *Piano Concerto 5*;
see OSWALD

SARDELLI: *Trio Sonatas 1-6*
Stefano Bruni, Giovanni Battista Scarpa, v;
Lorenzo Parravicini, Bettina Hoffmann, vc; Paola
Talamini, organ—Brilliant 95999—67 minutes

I was fooled. I listened to the entire program assuming Sardelli was a lesser-known Italian baroque composer, but he is very much alive today, writing in the style of a Venetian composer from the 1720s. I was fooled because Sardelli never wavers from his approach. The music is predictable and sometimes fades into the background, easily digested. The performers display panache; violinistic interplay dazzles. Cellos supply reliable basso continuo, and the organ fills the harpsichord's usual role, subtly filling out harmonies. It sounds as if an entire chamber orchestra is playing thanks to boomy acoustics. I am impressed with how dissonances rub exactly as they ought to. Vivaldi is a glaring influence; there is one notable quote listeners may recognize from the *Four Seasons* in I of the third sonata. Gravity and spirituality characteristic of Bach's cantatas seep into 5:I, and you might recognize late Mozart in the pathos of 6:II—a Mozart who was more drawn to baroque influences as he aged. Sardelli has resurrected history with earnestness and conviction.

KELLENBERGER

SAURET: *Caprices 14-19*
Nazrin Rashidova, v—Naxos 573975—79 minutes

Today Emile Sauret (1852-1920), a concert violinist, is best known for the devious cadenza for Paganini's first violin concerto, a compendium of Paganini's advancements on the violin. Sauret's reverence for the legendary virtuoso is demonstrated with this set of 24 etude-caprices composed near the end of his life in homage to Paganini's illustrious 24 caprices. These caprices are grander in scope and design than Paganini's; the average time of the six caprices is more than 13 minutes; the 15th clocks in at an astounding 18. If Paganini's are chapters, Sauret's are books. Paganini dabbles in introspection while captivating audiences with technical prowess. Sauret carries thoughts along for a great while, allowing ideas to settle and percolate in a listener's mind. It is not quite accurate to call the latter "deeper," but he is less interested in bedazzlement and certainly in less of a hurry. These are

good enough pieces that researchers and performers should excavate his violin concertos and many other pieces.

This is the third of Rashidova's four discs covering the caprices. They are good recordings, and the feat of a complete cycle is mind-boggling, amounting to hours of unaccompanied virtuosic music. Anyone looking to discover technically demanding romantic music for unaccompanied violin would be advised to listen to these. They take their place among Ernst, Wieniawski, and Ysaye.

Reverberation is a cloak that conceals an artist's true sound. It grants perfect anonymity, neither confirming nor denying the truth. We think of recordings as arbiters of truth, but often they work in the opposite direction. This recording suffers from too much. I prefer drier recordings. Why listen to a muddy and indistinct performance from the other room? I could tell you Rashidova has a good sound, but I really do not know. There is no way even I—a music critic—can fight my way through the smoky haze of reverberation.

KELLENBERGER

SAY: *Violin Sonatas 1+2; Cleopatra*;
1001 Nights in the Harem
Friedemann Eichhorn, v; Fazil Say, p; Aykut Koeselerli, perc; German Radio Saarbrücken/ Christoph Eschenbach—Naxos 574085—71 minutes

Fazil Say first appeared on the musical scene as a pianist, but composition now occupies more and more of his time. Indeed, he rather snuck up on me. Only one of the four works here is a first recording: the 2019 Second Sonata (subtitled *Mount Ida*); there have been at least two recordings of both the First Sonata and the Concerto, and at least one of *Cleopatra*, a solo-violin test piece for a competition. Say himself appears in most of them and clearly knows what he wants from his collaborators.

That ranges from straightforward Turkic elements, as in much of the First Sonata and the Concerto (where a large array of Turkish percussion instruments, deftly deployed by Aykut Koeselerli, does a good bit of the heavy lifting), to more general violinistic and pianistic "special effects," as in the Second Sonata. The latter work is about environmental despoilation—specifically, the deforestation of a mountain to make way for gold mining—and so there are all manner of extra noises, if you will, from playing inside the piano in I ('Decimation of Nature') to the most realistic bird song I have ever a stringed instrument pro-

duce in II ('Wounded Bird'). This is not the genteel trills of Vivaldi's 'Spring,' nor the stylized bird of Olivier Messiaen's 'Liturgie de Cristal' (the first movement of the *Quartet for the End of Time*), nor yet the cello-harmonic seagulls of George Crumb's *Vox Balaenae*; this is so close to the sound of an actual bird (something in the range of a chickadee, though of course not the same call) that at first I suspected a recording was involved. The piano reverts to very simple, somber, tonal writing underneath it, like the soundtrack to a nature documentary.

This is not, incidentally, the only work Say has written about Mount Ida and the devastation there; the notes to this recording mention a "Mount Ida series". These notes, which aren't credited to anyone, state that the composer "has connected with audiences and critics alike for more than 25 years, in a way that has become rare in the increasingly materialistic and elaborately organized classical music world". I can't see that "materialism", as such, has diddly to do with this phenomenon, if phenomenon it is.

THOMSON

SCHMITT: *Songs*

Sybille Diethelm, Annina Haug, Nino Aurelio Gmünder, Rene Perler; Fabienne Romer, Edward Rushton, p—Resonus 10265—71 minutes

Florent Schmitt's orchestral works are well known, but his songs hardly ever find their way onto recordings. This album of 25 songs, including 22 recorded here for the first time, is an important response to their neglect. (Schmitt's name is tainted by his Nazi collaboration, but these songs are very engaging and well performed.) This seems to be the only album of his songs available.

My colleague Roger Hecht has aptly characterized Schmitt's compositional style as "a combination of the French Wagnerian and impressionist composers". I was struck by his chromatic inventiveness and adventurous style, particularly in the second song, 'Star', of *Kerob-Shal* where the piano writing to depict the twinkling of stars anticipates Messiaen's bird calls. The liner notes refer to his music's gorgeous sensuality, biting wit, laconic charm, and unleashed savagery. Many of the songs have a dreamy and sometimes a somber quality.

These fine young singers blend their voices nicely in six *Songs for Four Voices* to begin the program. The triple meter songs with four-

hand piano accompaniment bring to mind the *Liebeslieder Waltzes* of Brahms. Then each singer alone takes a group of songs. Their voices are fresh, clear, and appealing. Diethelm is especially impressive in the three *Kerob-Shal* songs and the final three.

Notes, texts and translations (except for 5 songs).

R MOORE

SCHNEIDER, E: *Flute & Orchestra*

Lukasz Dlugosz, Agata Kielar-Dlugosz; Silesian Philharmonic & Chamber Orchestra/ Miroslaw Blaszczyk—Wergo 5127—69 minutes

Enjott Schneider (b 1950) taught music theory from 1979 to 96 and film composition from 1996 to 2012 in Munich. He was president of the German Composers' Association (DKV) from 2013 to 2020. He was also on the supervisory board of the German music copyright society (GEMA) from 2003 to 2020.

Schneider is an incredibly prolific composer, having written 9 operas, 7 symphonies, plus many other orchestral and choral works, 16 organ symphonies, and scores for 600 films. In 2019 he won the German Film Music Award. In 2018 he was given the Orlando di Lasso Medal for sacred music.

In the first few weeks of 2020, the Beijing and Tianjin orchestras commissioned a work on the coronavirus to open the first program they would play after the shutdown on March 6. He completed a 48-page score between February 10 and 20, but then the date for reopening was postponed to April, then to May. *Wuhan 2020: Tragedy and Hope* was eventually performed on August 14 in Beijing and August 17 in Tianjin. After Krzysztof Penderecki died (March 29) the Silesian Philharmonic of Katowice commissioned a *Sad Mazurka* as a memorial piece. It was written one minute at a time, with two versions of each section posted online and the audience voting for which section they preferred. Beginning Monday April 6, 2020 over 12 consecutive days the parts of the work were composed and decided on. It was the first time in history that a classical composition has been created with continuous participation from the audience.

All the selections are recorded for the first time. These are multi-movement works that have evocative titles for the movements as well as the whole. *Pictures of Yang Guifei* (2015) for flute and orchestra was followed more recently by *Tree Worlds* (2019) for flute, strings, and harp and *Water: Element of Infinity* (2019) for

two flutes and orchestra. Inspired partly by the Khalil Gibran quotation “Trees are poems that the Earth writes to heaven,” he has written and rewritten many tree pieces in recent years. One earlier incarnation is *Four Tree Pictures* (2011) for recorder, 2 guitars, and low string quintet, or flute, harpsichord, and string orchestra. Its movements are ‘Birch,’ ‘Cedar,’ ‘Rowan or Mountain Ash,’ and ‘Chestnut.’ The four movements of *Tree Worlds* are ‘Birch,’ ‘Apple,’ ‘Chestnut,’ and ‘Hornbeam.’ His *Musical Portraits of the Celtic Tree Calendar* for two fifth-bass or baritone guitars, flute, and string orchestra was recorded on Wildner in 2009.

Schneider’s long affinity for Asian culture, which culminated in his opera *Marco Polo* (2017), informs much of what’s here in both style and texture. The writing is very effective; this is a composer who really knows how to make things “sound.” One could also say he writes music that is very scenic. The concert piece for two soloists uses flute, alto flute, and piccolo backed by a considerable array of pitched instruments and non-pitched percussion. The scoring for flute, strings, and harp gives *Tree Worlds* a subtly Celtic feel while tremolos, trills, and runs in the flute evoke sounds from nature. The mood of these four pieces is more contemplative, whereas the *Pictures of Yang Guifei* are more dramatic. The best thing about Schneider is that his pieces are easily grasped but do not descend into banality.

Lukasz Dlugosz has a rich sound he deploys through a wide range of expression. It should come as no surprise that he was awarded Poland’s Bronze Medal for the Glory of Art in 2012. Agata Kielar-Dlugosz plays so well it can be impossible to tell them apart. The orchestras supply terrific backing, and from the podium Mirosław Błaszczyk keeps the balances just right. When music worth hearing is played to the hilt, you have every reason to try something new, as in this case.

A 25-page booklet contains plenty of background and biography in English and German. All three works have been published. I enjoyed a mixed program I heard from these two on the Polish label Dux a little while back (Jan/Feb 2018—Vivaldi).

GORMAN

SCHNITTKE: *Cello Concerto 1*;
see KAPUSTIN

Only pessimists are *really* happy; nothing turns out as bad as they expect it to be.

SCHUBERT: *Octet*

Amaury Coeytaux, Loïc Rio, v; Laurent Marfaing, va; François Kieffer, vc; Knut Erik Sundquist, db; Sabine Meyer, cl; Dag Jensen, bn; Bruno Schneider, hn—Mirare 438—62 minutes

When Beethoven wrote his Septet as a warm-up exercise for his first symphony he invoked the classical divertimento tradition, casting the work for four strings and three winds, and unfolding it in six movements of contrasting dispositions and structures. His effort was such an enduring hit with the Viennese public that he later resented it, feeling that he had crafted better compositions. When the Austrian noble and amateur clarinetist Ferdinand Troyer asked the young and sickly Franz Schubert to craft a companion piece to the Septet, the composer had already composed six symphonies and his style had become fully romantic. He added a second violin to Beethoven’s instrumentation; and his effort was twice as long, lyrical, and intense.

The private premiere at Troyer’s townhouse (he played the clarinet part), was well received; but at the April 1827 public reading in memory of the recently deceased Beethoven, critics found its length bothersome. The next year, Schubert succumbed to a long illness; and the Octet languished. In 1861, Vienna Conservatory violin professor Joseph Hellmesberger re-introduced the Octet at an important concert; and in later years he supervised a critical edition of Schubert’s complete works. His advocacy ensured that Schubert’s scores entered the performance canon and that the Octet etched a permanent place in the chamber music repertoire.

This September 2018 recording is an international project. The Paris-based Modigliani String Quartet, Norwegian double bassist Knut Erik Sundquist, German clarinetist Sabine Meyer, Norwegian bassoonist Dag Jensen, and Austrian horn player Bruno Schneider all join forces; and the presentation is fully professional: resonant timbres, lovely phrasing, effortless technique when needed, and exquisite balance, blend, and teamwork. The musicians here lean a bit more toward the composer’s classical roots, keeping Beethovenian weight at arm’s length; but they still supply plenty of romantic gusto. The slow movements have profound lyricism and the fast movements tight rhythm and infectious energy. This is a terrific album to have in any music collection.

HANUDEL

SCHUBERT: *Piano Sonata in A minor, D 845; Sonata in G*
Yasuyo Yano, fp
IBS 102020—76 minutes

I hate the sound of fortepianos. Having just listened to Sheila Arnold's beautiful rendition of Schubert's G-major Sonata on a fine modern piano (J/A 2017), the rattling of the old instrument was a slap in the face (or on the ear, if you will) and I soon turned it off. Pianos, unlike string instruments, have truly improved until at least the mid 20th Century, and I don't understand why anyone would not play keyboard music of any period on the best instrument available now. Even though the Japanese lady who made this recording seems competent as a Schubert interpreter, she has been wasting her effort as far as I am concerned. I hope she will choose a concert grand next time—this is billed as Volume 1 of a series—and that Switzerland, where the pianist lives and this recording was made, will also be spelled correctly then.

REPP

SCHUBERT: *Songs & Instrumental Pieces*
Rosemary Standley, Sandrine Piau, s; Aïrelle Bee-son, tpt; Ensemble Contraste
Alpha 418—53 minutes

This is Schubert as you've probably never heard it. The program offers arrangements (recompositions is more accurate) of 14 well known songs with accompaniment by various instruments including trumpet and percussion and two instrumental pieces in jazzy arrangements.

"Vocals" is how the album lists Standley. "Nondescript" would be more accurate. It reminds me of a pop singer like Sting recording songs of Dowland. The idea of having two voices singing 'Death and the Maiden' is fine; but even Sandrine Piau, who joins her in three songs, sounds out of place here. The best track of the album is an arrangement of the gorgeous Impromptu in G-flat from D899 with the melody line assigned to a cello.

I suspect this release will find a very limited audience, appealing neither to those who love the music as Schubert intended us to hear it nor to those who like pop music or nightclub jazz.

Notes, texts, translations.

R MOORE

SCHUBERT: *Songs*
Sharon Carty, mz; Jonathan Ware, p
Genuin 20697—65 minutes

The idea for this album, "Schubert's Four Seasons", was to create a program of songs that relate to the seasons of the year, using two long ballads as bookends for the program. 'Viola' and 'Ganymed' represent Spring, 'Das Sommernacht' and 'Romanze' relate to Summer, 'An der Mond in einer Herbstnacht' and 'Litanei auf das Fest Allerseelen' connect with Autumn, and 'Griesengesang' and 'Das Winterabend' refer to Winter. The second long ballad, 'Klage der Ceres', brings the album full circle back to Spring. The smart selections make a good program of familiar and less familiar songs.

The songs are mostly gentle and the performance overall is subdued. Carty's voice is lovely and her readings are clear and nicely phrased, but the program suffers from sameness. All the songs are wonderful and each is performed well, but they are all at pretty much the same level of affect. Most of the variety and energy in the program comes from Ware's fine playing. If you'd like a calm and comforting group of some of Schubert's finest songs, you may find this satisfying.

Notes, texts, translations.

R MOORE

SCHUBERT: *Symphonies 2+3*
B'Rock Orchestra/ Rene Jacobs
Pentatone 5186759—55 minutes

What a stupid name for an orchestra! And in their picture they are mostly young and in blue jeans—super-cool. There are about 27 strings and about 13 others—40 players. By any definition, this is a chamber orchestra. I do not want Schubert played by a chamber orchestra. Nor do I want the players to have grown up with "rock"—that is a disadvantage. I doubt whether the players (all either European or—occasionally—Japanese) grew up on early Schubert.

Jacobs is known as a PPP (Period Performance Practice) advocate. What that essentially means here is that Schubert is not allowed to be a romantic. Tempos are strict and boring. "Vivace" is mistaken to mean "super-fast". I don't think they have fussed over the instruments. The fuss instead is over practice—above all, nothing even slightly "romantic".

The Allegretto of Symphony 3 is by far the fastest I have ever heard. So is the finale, which

includes the repeat. Mr Jacobs in his notes refers to Rene Leibowitz, who said that II should be much slower than it is often taken—it's the slow movement, after all. But Jacobs disagrees, and we are stuck with what Leibowitz warned us about: 4 fast movements. That can't be right.

Well, all of this is sterile. For 60-some years I have loved these symphonies. I have heard worse performances than these, but I will never listen to these again.

VROON

SCHUBERT: *Symphonies 4+6;*

MOZART: *Symphonies 39+41;*

WEBER: *Oberon Overture*

London Symphony/ Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, Walter Susskind

Decca 4840353 [2CD] 120 minutes

Spend an evening with these and you will agree with me that they are pleasant and attractive performances in excellent sound. They are all from 1958. Of course, Beecham was still alive, and this is Beecham territory. Nothing is as charming and elegant as Beecham was. But I don't think you can find Beecham recordings of all four of these symphonies.

The Schubert 4th is conducted by Susskind. It's quite similar to the Ormandy (same period), and it has a rather fast minuet (Allegro Vivace—an old problem that both Ormandy and Susskind got wrong. Böhm, Barenboim, Vaughan, and Viotti got it right—even Muti did. The "Vivace" should not speed up the Allegro!).

Schubert 6 was a Beecham speciality, and he was usually slower than what we hear here. Again, it's a matter of more expression, more elegance—though there is elegance in this recording, too.

The Mozart is excellent, but a bit plain. London critics at the time considered the E-flat Symphony a speciality of this conductor. They liked his tempos, and the *Times* called his performance "light and strong". The same critic described this conductor's Mozart in general as "crystal clear, without false sentiment, but full of beautiful, airy sound". It is. But I have to admit that I prefer George Szell in this symphony. The same description applies to Szell, but he adds (very subtly) more feeling in the Andante, more expression in general.

And Beecham's *Jupiter* is in a class by itself. So many performances of 41 seem heavy, but this one is light and airy. The Min-

uet is not too fast (5 minutes—still a minute faster than Beecham), and the whole symphony takes only 27 minutes. A number of famous conductors took all the repeats and ended up around 40 minutes—just too much.

By the way, I suspect monaural sound, since there is no claim that it is stereo—though in 1958 many recordings were stereo. It really doesn't matter, because it is beautiful sound—warm and never too close-up or harsh. This is a Decca Eloquence reissue, and their remasterings are always superb.

The Weber overture is conducted by Antal Dorati (8 minutes).

VROON

SCHUBERT: *Arpeggione Sonata;*

see Collections

SCHUMANN: *Piano Pieces*

Nono Gvetadze—Challenge 72855—67 minutes

This young Georgian pianist, born in Tbilisi, student at the conservatoire and later in the Hague, demonstrates her artistry once again. Those a bit confused by the appearance of "einsam" here are alerted that it is not a name, but German for "lonely" to indicate the pianist's response to the pandemic and her satisfaction on discovering the composer in this isolated period of her life.

While the presentation seems a bit obsessed with her hands, they fortunately do not get in the way of her playing such standards as *Kinderszenen* and *Kreisleriana*. On the contrary, these are agile, pleasant performances which show considerable strength when needed. The use of pedal never turns to overuse, and the children may be boisterous sometimes, but never rambunctious.

Other contents include the 'Arabesque' in an especially felicitous reading, 'Prophet Bird' from *Forest Scenes* and 'Einfach' from 3 Romances. Sound is good, if not exceptional and the notes decent.

BECKER

SCHUMANN: *Songs 9*

Detlef Roth, bar; Ulrich Eisenlohr, p

Naxos 574029—65 minutes

For this ninth program in his Schumann project, "Romances, Ballads and Melodramas", Eisenlohr has selected songs having a dramatic narrative with texts by some of the leading European poets of the 19th Century. Some of the late songs have a dark and menacing quali-

ty, which probably reflect the composer's anxiety and mental instability.

From 1840, Schumann's inspired "Year of Song," we hear the three songs of Op. 45; from Romances and Ballads, Book 1; and the three songs of Op. 49 from Book 2. The most familiar of that Op. 49 group is "The Two Grenadiers." Less often heard is the third song, "The Nun." Rarely heard is the second song, "The Hostile Brothers"—who end up killing each other in a battle for a woman they both desire. We also hear Five Songs, Op. 40 from 1840.

The remaining 10 songs are from 1849-52. In the last years of his life Schumann turned to melodrama—spoken text with piano accompaniment. Three are included here: Two Ballads, Op. 122 and "Pretty Hedwig," Op. 106. We also get *Four Hussars' Songs*, Op. 117 and the ballad "The Singer's Curse," Op. 139.

Roth's melodramatic narration is engaging and nicely shaped. In singing he does a fine job enunciating the text and shows a clear affect for it, but he sounds too tentative and is less satisfying than in his narration. I would like to hear more legato in the line. His bottom notes are sometimes inaudible, and he strains for the top notes.

Eisenlohr's playing is up to his usual high standards, and he makes the most of the piano writing in the narrated ballads.

Notes in English and German. Texts and translations on the Naxos website.

R MOORE

SCHUMANN: Symphonies 1+4

Gurzenich Orchestra/ Francois-Xavier Roth

Myrios 28—55 minutes

This is a hit-or-miss conductor. He has done things that I really liked, but in other music he misses the point. This is not romantic Schumann. It is too businesslike. The main part of I is Allegro molto vivace. "Vivace" seems to license conductors to speed. That wrecks the movement here. II is a minute or two faster than in my favorite recordings, and it seems less felt that way. III, the Scherzo, is not too fast but seems choppy to me. It must be smoother. Even that Scherzo is majestic in some recordings!

In Symphony 4, all the movements are too fast. The Romance, for example, at less than 4 minutes, is 2 minutes faster than Furtwangler, who obviously influenced Bernstein and Barenboim.

So there's no reason to bother with this. As so often nowadays, a conductor decides to

record something that has been exhausted in recordings (see our Overview). We didn't need a new one, and any "original" ideas here are unattractive.

VROON

SCHUMANN: Symphony 4;

see MENDELSSOHN

SHAPERO: Sinfonia; Credo; Partita; On Green Mountain; Serenade

Vivian Choi, p; Boston Modern Orchestra Project/ Gil Rose—BMOP 1072—84 minutes

Harold Shapero (1920-2013) was a nightmarishly archconservative composer, who rejected mid-century academic modernism and savored imitations of standard tonal repertoire. He studied with Boulanger and Hindemith, became friends with Bernstein at Harvard, where he studied with Walter Piston, and had an influential lunch with Stravinsky. He bought into the neoclassicism of the time, but he was no Stravinsky. His music is tonal in a warped way.

The program opens with the Sinfonia in C minor (1948) in which uses Handel concertos as a model. After the French overture opening the work progresses in a complex neo-tonal language. *Credo* (1955) places the text in abstract, purely musical terms. The words are translated into melodies and harmonized in Stravinskian manner. Partita in C, for piano and small orchestra (1960), is a suite with Baroque dances along with a scherzo, an aria, a cadenza, and a virtuosic finale.

On Green Mountain (1957) is for jazz ensemble (in the spirit of Gunther Schuller's Third Stream jazz-classical fusion). The classical part in this piece comes from the accompanying chord progression of Monteverdi's madrigal *Zefiro Torna*. The piece's title is Monteverdi's name. The chords become a catchy jazz riff, which I dare you get out of your head (surgery might help). The jazz part reminds me of high school jazz bands, typical of the type in many colleges and high schools (in conservatories!)

The program closes with Serenade in D (1945) for string orchestra after Mozart—more in genre than style.

The composer's notes are followed by helpful notes by Rodney Lister in the booklet. This extremist postmodernism will be of interest primarily to historians and students who seek examples of the genre, though only in comparison with the master (Stravinsky). The music is more difficult to perform than you

might think, but this great band gives it their all.

GIMBEL

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Quartet 8; Piano Quintet; GOLEMINOV: Quartet 4*
Victor Chouchkov, p; Sofia Quartet
Gega 420—64 minutes

Despite clocking in at only 8:27, Marin Goleminov's compact, expressive "microquartet" is the main draw here. It is reminiscent of Bartok in its drama, gestures, and extended tonality, but it is in no way imitative; Goleminov's harmonies and themes are his own. Brief bursts of aggression alternate with nocturnal passages or dance episodes, textures and instrumentation varying all the while.

The Shostakovich pieces are competent but unpolished; the competition for both pieces is far too fierce. I wish Gega had given us an all-Goleminov album: they could have reissued his Third and Seventh quartets. The sound is fine if not exemplary; notes are in English and Bulgarian.

ESTEP

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony 5*
Bavarian Radio/ Mariss Jansons
BR 900191—44 minutes

The Germans spell the composer's name Dmitrij Schostakowitsch. I'm glad the rest of the world resists! I also think this is a short program, not good value. It is short partly because Jansons is a fast conductor—and cold, I would say. I know no faster Largo than this, yet even so it does not cohere especially well. Jansons was a peppery guy and conducted accordingly. His lack of emotion almost seems English. It's certainly not Russian! And in a piece I have loved all my life he left me unmoved. I'd call this a "so what?" performance—utterly routine.

The sound is excellent, as is the orchestra; but this is hardly competitive in a huge field of recordings.

VROON

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Piano Sonatas*;
see RATHAUS
Viola Sonata; see Collections
Violin Sonata; see PROKOFIEFF

SIBELIUS: *Quartet*; see VERDI

SILVESTROV: *Symphony 7; Piano Concertino; Cantata 4; Ode to a Nightingale*
Inna Galatenko, s; Oleg Bezborodko, p; Lithuanian Symphony/ Christopher Lyndon-Gee
Naxos 574123—73 minutes

Valentin Silvestrov (b. 1937) is a Ukrainian composer who was involved in the avant-garde in the 1970s; he later moved to a post-modern style, with "...nostalgia for sounds half-heard, barely remembered from a past full of beauty and spiritual aspiration", as the conductor's excellent booklet essay says. Silvestrov has left us divided, with Allen Gimbel finding much of his music "hauntingly beautiful", and Mark Lehman wanting to "shove a big, floofy banana-cream pie right smack dab into (his) otherworldly kisser" (Nov/Dec 2007). Rob Haskins liked his pieces that didn't turn into "absolute kitsch" (Mar/Apr 2017); heck, Silvestrov even wrote a piece called *Kitschmusik*. He struck me as a sedated Schumann (Sept/Oct 2013).

Ode to a Nightingale (1983) uses a Russian translation of the Keats poem, taking it into an eerie, completely foreign world. The soprano is given basically eight short melodic phrases; multiply those in 19 minutes of music and you get a lot of repetition. The bird-song motifs in the orchestra make the piece sound like stripped-down Messiaen. *Ode* grew on me a little after the first time through, as I learned to approach it on its own terms. More adventurous harmonies helped, as well as the fact that it takes a stand for something, where the other pieces wouldn't dare have an opinion.

Cantata No. 4 sets poems by three different men. The melodies come to a halt at the end of every phrase; as critic Raymond Tuttle wrote, "Silvestrov's music is usually in the process of fading into nothing..." That is an apt description, and it isn't necessarily a compliment. The

Word Police: The Dis Problem

Everybody seems to use "disinterested" to mean "not interested", but that is not what it means. A disinterested person is someone who can be objective and see things clearly, because he is not involved. He is impartial (M/A 2006, p 284).

"Discomforted" is also starting to turn up in this age of the death of dictionaries. There is no such word. "Discomfort" is a noun. There is a verb, "discomfitted", that means to make uneasy or puzzled.

Concertino for piano and small orchestra (2015) imitates some of Gavin Bryars's sound world (*The North Shore*), but it lacks his wit. It is an ethereal but finally disappointing collection of cheap melodies and gauzy orchestration. The symphony, like the cantata, is more adventurous, but it alternates drama—or what passes for it in Silvestrov's world—with the facile gestures that inundate the other pieces. The performances are fine, and the sound is rather gauzy, too.

ESTEP

SIVELÖV: *Piano Concertos 2+5; Concerto Classico*

Niklas Sivelöv; Malmö Symphony/ Victor Aviat; Livgardets Dragonmusikkor/ David Björkman
Naxos 573181—65 minutes

Swede Niklas Sivelöv was a child prodigy on organ who switched to piano and then studied piano and composition at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm; he now teaches piano at the Royal Danish Academy. All three concertos—*Classico* with full orchestra, No. 2 with strings, No. 5 with brass band—are spiky and perky; they remind me in favorable ways of Martinu, Bartók, and Michael Torke. Sivelöv is a cerebral composer by his own admission, and though his style is accessible and enjoyable, nothing here stirs my soul. Even accounting for the warm, almost-glowing, expansive slow sections or movements, the general impression is that the music churns away—another similarity to Martinu. The *Concerto Classico* is the best of the three, but all the thematic material lacks a strong profile.

ESTEP

SKALKOTTAS: *Duo*; see KODALY
SLAVENSKI: *Quartet 4*; see KUNC

SOKOLOV: *13 Postludes; Violin Sonata 2; Reminiscence; Elegie*

Karen Bentley Pollick, v, va, p; Ivan Sokolov, p
Toccata 560—69 minutes

Ivan Sokolov (b. 1960) is a pianist and composer. Like many other composers (see Silvestrov above), he moved from an avant-garde style to roughly a neoromantic one, and all the pieces here are in that vein. If I may anthropomorphize the sonata (2018), I'd say she spends her first three movements gazing drearily out windows dripping with rain, hoping some stranger will come by and notice her sweetly mournful demeanor. In the finale she arises and emotes with vigor. But everything is so

derivative that the piece goes from bland to corny.

The performance doesn't help; there are irregularities in Sokolov's technique, and Pollick's bowing is uncontrolled and her intonation tragic in several places. 'Reminiscence' for piano four hands (2013), is more of the same soggy pablum with syrupy Hollywood harmonies. 'Elegie,' a 2001 work for solo viola, is spare rather than maudlin, but it still doesn't say a lot.

The slow movements of the *13 Postludes* for viola and piano (2018) are dutifully pretty, cut from the same cloth as the sonata. The faster movements keep trying to spike the punch, but their decorous housemates don't let them get far. The contrasts help the set as a whole go down better, though, and Pollick is in better control of the viola. But if you like Silvestrov, ignore everything I said about the compositions themselves and buy Sokolov as well.

ESTEP

SOMMER: *Songs 1*

Jochen Kupfer, bar; Marcelo Amaral, p
Naxos 573827—65 minutes

After having been relegated to the musical margins for a century, the songs of Hans Sommer (1837-1922) are being rediscovered. Jochen Kupfer and Marcelo Amaral have searched through Sommer's 300 or so songs (both published and unpublished) and selected 25 of them, all but 3 recorded here for the first time—and with pleasing results. Sommer was a pioneer in establishing copyright practices. His success in establishing that practice that prevented easier availability of his works.

Hans Friedrich August Zincken (his birth name) was a German composer and mathematician who served as the director of the Braunschweig University of Technology, where he taught mathematics from 1875 to 1881. He went on to become director for several years and was a leading figure in his field of dioptrics. From early in his life music was his true passion, though his prospects for a career in music were dim.

In 1881, at the age of 47, having become independently wealthy, Sommer abandoned his scientific career and pursued his lifelong devotion to music with encouragement from Franz Liszt. This may be when he adopted the name Hans Sommer.

When he died in 1922 his friend Richard Strauss eulogized him as "an outstanding artist, a composer with an ideal disposition"

and called Sommer's opera *Lorelei* "one of the finest and most interesting things written in Germany at the moment". His finely crafted songs are solidly in the romantic tradition.

Both artists are new to me. Jochen Kupfer is a rising star in the world's opera houses and concert halls. He is listed as a bass-baritone, and he has both the low and upper ranges at his command. His phrasing, lovely legato, clear and attractive timbre, and use of dynamics are all exemplary. He sounds thoroughly at home in lieder and (in a video I heard of him singing Wotan) sounds just as at home in Wagner. He has a big voice that he can reduce to a commanding hush, as in his soft release at the end of 'Schöne Nacht'.

Amaral has gained a reputation as a sought-after accompanist of singers and instrumentalists. Winner of the Pianist Prize at the 2009 Robert Schumann Song Competition, he has performed worldwide with internationally renowned artists. Both artists do a splendid job here.

Until recently it was hard if not impossible to find any recording of Sommer's songs other than one archival 78rpm record of one song made more than 100 years ago by Leo Slezak. Recordings of his songs are now starting to appear. I reviewed a fine release of his orchestral songs (S/O 2012). Krishan Oberoi reviewed an album of songs with piano accompaniment (S/O 2018), and Avi released another in 2018 performed by Sebastian Noack and Manuel Lange. This release by Kupfer and Amaral is the best of the three. There is practically no duplication on any of them. Since Naxos lists this as Lied Edition 1 I hope we can look forward to more of his songs from Kupfer and Amaral. A performance this good may help others take note of these songs and bring them out of the margins.

Liner notes give biographical detail of the composer's life. Texts and translations on the Naxos website.

R MOORE

SPERGER: *Double Bass Concertos 2+15;*
Sinfonia 30

Roman Patkolo, db; Kurpfalz Chamber Orchestra
Mannheim/ Johannes Schlaefli
CPO 555 101-2—69 minutes

Johann Matthias Sperger (1750-1812) is a Haydn-Mozart style composer and double-bassist whose 45 symphonies and 30 concertos are worth exploring, judging by what we have here and the few earlier recordings I have.

American Record Guide

There are at least 18 double-bass concertos by him. The four-movement symphony is a nice addition to separate the two concertos.

Patkolo is an outstanding double bass player with a history of awards. He studied with Klaus Trumpf, who wrote the liner notes for this release, at the University of Music in Munich, where he himself became a professor at the age of 24. He teaches at the University of Basel, Switzerland. This technically demanding music is played with fine accuracy and musical polish, and I am sure we will hear much more from him soon. More Sperger would be a great pleasure, since this music is unexpectedly beautiful. Nicely balanced recording!

D MOORE

STANFORD: *Sacred Pieces*

Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis in G, B-flat; When Mary through the Garden Went; I Heard a Voice from Heaven; Latin Magnificat; O for a Closer Walk; Te Deum in C

with **HOWELLS:** *Requiem; Gloucester Service; The Fear of the Lord; Like as the Hart; Long, Long Ago; All my Hope on God is Founded*

Wayne Marshall, org; Cambridge Singers/ John Rutter—Collegium 524 [2CD] 93 minutes

This was originally released in 1992 as *I Will Lift up Mine Eyes* and adds the Stanford *Nunc Dimittis in G*, *Latin Magnificat*, and the *Nunc Dimittis* from the Howells *Gloucester Service*, which were not included in the original release. The Cambridge Singers were formed by Rutter in 1981, initially using students from Clare College, Cambridge, where he had been the chapel music director. Their primary purpose was to make recordings under their own label, Collegium—which now number nearly 40 and include several highly acclaimed Christmas albums. They are a superb group, whose intonation, blend, ensemble, musicianship, and interpretation are all in perfect accord.

Many of their recordings, including this one, were made in the Lady Chapel at Ely Cathedral, where the acoustics are of an astonishing perfection. The 1992 sound has aged well, and the remastering has delivered clear, resonant sound. You won't hear better performances of these pieces. Informative notes by Rutter on the music and composers, with texts and translations.

DELCAMP

STOHR: *Suite for Organ & Violin; 5 Intermezzos for Piano & Organ; Organ Sonata in D minor*

Jan Lehtola, org; Anna-Leena, v; Annikka Kontori-Gustafsson, p—Toccata 280—75 minutes

Richard Stöhr (1874-1967) was born in Vienna, studied under Robert Fuchs and taught theory, composition, and music history at the Vienna Academy of Music. In 1939 he fled the Nazi invasion, emigrating to America and teaching first at Curtis, then at St Michael's College in Colchester, Vermont. His output as a composer includes 7 symphonies, 2 operas, choral music, 150 lieder, 15 violin sonatas, chamber and solo piano music. In his 50-year career as a teacher his students numbered in the thousands and included Barber, Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, Rudolf Serkin, and even Marlene Dietrich.

Aside from an unpublished collection of chorale-preludes, this program has his entire output for the organ. This is pleasant, well-crafted music in a late 19th-early 20th Century tonal idiom with a strong influence from Reger. I found the suite particularly effective and engaging, but the sonata is tedious, sounding like re-worked Reger.

Lehtola plays the sonata on a 1931/2005 3-manual, 53-stop Kangasalan organ in St Paul's Church, Helsinki, and the chamber pieces on a 2013, 2-manual, 18-stop Veikho Virtanen organ in the Church of Reconciliation in Hollola, Finland. The pianist and violinist are both excellent. Notes on the music and composer, with photos and specifications.

DELCAMP

STRAUS: *Piano Concerto; Serenade; Reigen Waltz; Tragant Waltz*

Oliver Triendl, p; German Radio/ Ernst Theis CPO 555280—58 minutes

Oscar Straus is wrongly thought to be a relation to the Strauss waltz dynasty. Early in his career, Straus removed the second "s" from his name so as not to be confused with the other Strausses. Although much of his work was written for the stage, he also wrote about 500 cabaret songs, chamber music, orchestral and choral works, and worked in German, English, and French language films into the 1950s. Straus was particularly adaptable to the changing operetta scene in the 1920s and 1930s mirroring advancements in the form by Lehar and Kalman. His first operetta, written in 1904, was the *The Merry Nibelungs*, a paro-

dy of the Wagner operas. The more popular operettas include *A Waltz Dream* (1907) and his most famous show, *The Chocolate Soldier* (1908).

Straus's orchestral works are the subject of this program, and they are a revelation. The Piano Concerto written early in his career but unearthed in the 1950s, is a complex work with a jaunty I, a somber and church-like II, and a III that is joyous and enthralling. This fascinating piece is truly unexpected from a composer mostly known for light music. The concerto is quite difficult, tasking the pianist with a complex score. The performance by pianist Triendl is superb, and the orchestral playing and conducting are first rate. A wider audience should appreciate this melodic and multifaceted showpiece.

The Serenade for Strings was originally written in a period when Straus was Max Bruch's student in Berlin. Bruch was a taskmaster, and even the mention of light music or operetta was forbidden. Bruch wanted Straus to write a Requiem, but Straus balked and wrote instead this five-piece suite that he later renamed a Serenade. It, like the Piano Concerto, is in a classical-romantic style favored by Bruch, but the Serenade is a lighter piece enhanced by the string orchestra. It is melodic, and although not as consequential as the Piano Concerto, it is quite accomplished and very enjoyable.

The *Tragant-Waltzes* is also a suite, but of waltzes derived from the Straus one-act dance play *The Princess of Tragant*. These lighter-than-air waltzes are infectious, melodic, and charming. The final item on the program is one of Straus's most familiar pieces, the *Reigen-Waltz* (Round Waltz), though you may not recognize it by that name. It was written for the 1950 Max Ophuls film *La Ronde*. The film is based on the play *Reigen* by Arthur Schnitzler. It follows the escapades of several lovers in a "round dance of love" in France's "fin-de-siècle" period. This delightful film is enhanced by Straus's intoxicating waltz played at the opening, ending, and in between. For many years the Los Angeles classical radio channel KFAC used to introduce its afternoon program with this waltz.

This is a highly enjoyable disc, and the Piano Concerto will leave you wondering why such an outstanding work hasn't been performed more often. The orchestra plays all the music with the right amount of flair and deftness, making all the selections impressive and enjoyable. If you only think of Oscar Straus as

an operetta writer, here are examples of his highly accomplished work in other forms.

FISCH

STRAUSS: *Don Juan; Death and Transfiguration; 6 Brentano Songs*

Louise Alder, s; German Symphony Berlin/ Robin Ticciati—Linn 640—69 minutes

Ticciati, who is still in his 30s, had his first major position with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra from 2009 to 2018; he added on the Directorship of the Glyndebourne Festival in 2014 and the German Symphony Berlin in 2017. Here he tackles two of the most popular Strauss tone poems along with a seldom-heard set of songs, the Brentano lieder, Op. 68.

Don Juan, which premiered in 1889, was far from Strauss's first work—it is Op. 20—but it is the one that put the composer, then just 24, on the map as a leader of the New German School. It combined orchestral virtuosity and melodic lyricism in a new and wonderful way, setting the stage for Strauss's long career. Ticciati plays the opening, which some have likened to the popping of a champagne cork, with great panache, by which I mean it's a sweeping gesture that you couldn't transcribe if your life depended on it. The lyrical sections, though, are quite broad, so the overall time is more in Furtwängler territory (18 minutes) than Klemperer (17) or Kempe (16). *Death and Transfiguration* is similar in that the total time is a trifle slow (24 minutes), and the pacing is similar to Furtwängler's back in 1950 (VPO). The big climactic sections (roughly letter G up to L, leading to the G major section and Q up to the big A-flat statement of the transfiguration theme) are effective and exciting. In short a fine job on both tone poems.

Strauss wrote lieder all his life, but most of them (and many of our favorites) are early, before about 1906; many of them were written for his wife, Pauline de Ahna. The Brentano songs are later (1918), but they are a superb set, challenging for the singer and quite varied; they were orchestrated later, in 1933 and 1940. The fifth ('Amor') requires a Zerbinetta voice, light and agile. 'Lied der Frauen', which describes women in fear of losing their husbands, is an 8-minute piece, intense and dramatic. Soprano Louise Alder has full measure of these songs. She is a lyric, with a voice suited to Pamina and Zerlina in Mozart, Sophie in *Rosenkavalier*. In a sense these songs are the high point of the program, because we have lots of good recordings of *Don Juan* and *D&T*,

but the Brentano songs are seldom recorded. Texts and translations are included, along with informative liner notes.

ALTHOUSE

STROZZI: *Cantatas & Arias*

Elissa Edwards, s; Richard Kolb, theorbo, archlute
Acis 90277—58 minutes

In the seven works that are Part 1 of Barbara Strozzi's Opus 8, one observes the composer stretching the boundaries of genre. Early-baroque arias were usually tuneful and strongly metrical (often in triple meter), while cantatas consist of recitative and aria-like singing over basso continuo, much like scaled-down operatic scenes. But as Richard Kolb notes, the terms were fluid, as Strozzi shows in the blended style of her Opus 8, published in 1664.

Edwards's talents are on full display from the beginning of this release. Her nimble fiorituras in the cantata *L'Astratto* are breathtaking. The way she bends pitches in the aria *Non c'e Piu Fede* draws attention to Strozzi's chromatic inflections. *Tu me ne Puoi Ben Dire* might be the best example of Strozzi's blended style. The aria is so full of rhapsody that it seems to defy gravity. Edwards slips easily from tuneful song-like textures to wild melismas to bring out Strozzi's ardor. Kolb breaks up the sequence of vocal pieces with two Correntes by Bernardo Gianoncelli. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

SUK: *Serenade for Strings*; see Collections

SZYMANOWSKI: *Piano Sonata 3*;

see MESSIAEN

TARREGA: *Guitar Pieces*

Michael Winkler—Eos 234200—56 minutes

Here are 24 works for solo guitar by Spanish composer and guitarist Francisco Tarrega (1852-1909) These include his "greatest hits", along with a few nice surprises, delivered with a clear, meaty tone by Swiss guitarist Michael Winkler, who has often recorded as a member of the EOS Guitar Quartet. If you are a fan of the romantic period, this is for you!

Delicate ornaments abound in 'Capricho Arabe' with Winkler always singing the *cantabile* melody expressively, placing luscious spaces between some phrases. His very enjoyable, even-sounding tremolo is evident in 'Recuerdos de la Alhambra' but in this romantically conservative performance, he could have used more tone colors and dynamics, not to mention *rubato*.

No Tarrega compilation nowadays would be complete without his 'Gran Vals,' which was the source for the famous Nokia ringtone a few years back. Not sure what this melody is? Just listen to this and you'll recognize it!

Other favorites include the charming 'La Alborada,' with nicely-balanced, simultaneous right-hand harmonics and left-hand ligados; 'Mazurka (en Sol),' which truly captures a dancelike mood; and 'Maria (Gavota)' with its clearly balanced lines. This is consistent in all the dance pieces included in this program, including 'Rosita (Polka).'

To balance out the many Tarrega "hits" that guitarists so often program, Winkler includes some less often heard pieces: 'Tango Maria,' 'El Columpio,' and 'Isabel' (a waltz), all of them convincingly delivered and deserving of more exposure. The sweetly played 'Pavana' belongs here as well.

The second half is mostly miniatures (under 2 minutes). Winkler treats each of them with respect and care.

The recorded sound is realistic, with apparently little added to the natural reverb in the chapel where it was recorded. Winkler's assured technical connection with the instrument and his feel for the music make this a recording to hear!

MCCUTCHEON

TARTINI: *Violin Sonatas*

Duo Tartini—Muso 40—80 minutes

One baroque composer I had never warmed to is Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770). I'd never really been able to put my finger on why this is so—he was as competent a composer as most others of his era. When I saw this I thought, "Well, here's 80 minutes of tedium." I am happy to report that I was wrong.

Duo Tartini (violinist David Plantier and cellist Annabelle Luis) play the last violin sonatas written by the master, and the effect of a violin-cello duo does wonders for this music. Dispensing with the usual keyboard instrument gives greater prominence to the cello. Luis alternates bowed and pizzicato notes, giving variety to the music's textures. This may be her choice as the accompaniment for music of this era was largely written in figured bass for the accompanist to realize. The duo plays very well together, and it is obvious that they know each other well and are not afraid to exercise their own imaginations.

For the first time, I can give an unreserved recommendation to an all-Tartini disc. Per-

haps toward the end of his life he finally figured out how to compose music that I enjoy.

Plantier's violin was made by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini in Parma in 1766. Luis's cello was made by Nicolas Augustin Chappuy in 1777.

MAGIL

TARTINI: *Little Sonatas 25-30*

Peter Sheppard Skaerved, v

Toccata 454—67 minutes

These unaccompanied sonatas are historically significant for two reasons. Tartini was one the 18th Century's greatest performers and teachers of the violin, and his teaching line would produce such distinguished progeny as Heifetz and Milstein. His *Devil's Trill* Sonata with the famous Fritz Kreisler cadenza is a mainstay in standard repertoire. His stature is such that all of his works merit recordings; four of the sonatas on this disc are overdue first recordings. The other reason for their importance is their place in the solo violin genre, succeeding baroque masters such as Westhoff, Biber, Bach, Geminiani, Locatelli, and Telemann. The genre then hibernated through the classical era until Paganini's groundbreaking caprices revived interest 50 years later.

Called "sonatas", these pieces resemble Bach's partitas more than his sonatas; they tether to rhythm and distance themselves from improvisation or fantasy. In musical depth they lie between Bach and Telemann. Tartini was looking back more than forward; like Bach he was viewed as atavistic in his later years. He lived well into the classical era but is rarely spoken of in the context; he shares this anachronistic distinction with romantic luminaries like Rachmaninoff, Saint-Saens, and Strauss. Perhaps it is of little import that Mozart was already a teenager, an accomplished composer, and a widely traveled performer when Tartini died.

The playing is competent, sometimes a little rough, sometimes a little out of tune—sloppy errors that seep into concert performance but usually evade studio recordings. He mostly captures the pieces in a way that does not distract much from the music. For anybody interested in exploring the unaccompanied violin in a baroque context beyond Bach, this would be a logical stop. I cannot say I am enthusiastic about it, but it's a first recording, and I suppose it is fair to say that it is better than nothing.

KELLENBERGER

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake (excerpts)*
Philharmonia Orchestra/ Santtu-Matias Rouvali
Signum 648—43 minutes

In 2021 Finnish conductor Santtu-Matias Rouvali, 35, will become only the sixth principal conductor of London's Philharmonia Orchestra since its founding in 1945. He will have been preceded by Esa-Pekka Salonen, Christoph von Dohnanyi, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Riccardo Muti, and Otto Klemperer—quite a lineup.

One thing he is *not*, at least on this album, is a ballet conductor. His tempos, which feel very controlled, are strict rather than flowing, and they're too deliberate to have balletic "lift". Nor is his conducting subtle. He draws out harmonies usually not attended to, but too often they do not feel integrated into the ensemble. The principal trumpet has two solos, and neither of them is perfect—no wrong notes, but he lacks an even touch. And a piccolo line at the end of the waltz, which I've never paid attention to, sounds more "hey, look at me" than blended.

The sound projects everything from treble to bass, which is surprising for a recording in Royal Festival Hall, but instruments sound somewhat spotlighted. Four engineers are listed, and someone seems to have tamed the percussion and bass drums in the finale, which is followed by applause. Ugh.

If this album had been 73 rather than a measly 43 minutes, it'd still be a waste of money. For an album of highlights from this ballet, stick with Eugene Ormandy and the incomparable Philadelphia Orchestra on Sony's Essential Classics, a series of reissues with more outstanding performances than any other I know.

FRENCH

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Violin Concerto; Serenade Melancolique; Waltz Scherzo; Pas de deux; Lensky's Aria; Letter Scene*
Guy Braunstein; BBC Symphony/ Kirill Karabits
Pentatone 5186747 [SACD] 70 minutes

The violin concerto is solid. Braunstein achieves a refreshing amount of charm in II, and his muscular playing works well in most of III. His limitations with the bow surface in the difficult double-stop passages in I. Sometimes he is too thick and aggressive, and the music sags. He never quite captures the playfulness or the grace of Tchaikovsky's balletic writing.

Waltz Scherzo feels a little stodgy; his

robust sound is good on its own merits but in context does not project the proper energy or buoyance; when it is time to impress us in the cadenza, the music sounds measured and sluggish. Some clever impishness enters in the second section, but one does not feel the waltz from violin or orchestra.

The Serenade displays crystalline sound but lacking a tremulous vibrato. He sometimes has too wide and thick a vibrato, defying Tchaikovsky's character. The resonance and timbre of his sound is rare and worth listening to, but he does not phrase with the heart, and his gestures are combined piecemeal. Tchaikovsky should flow like characters on a ballet stage.

Is it my preconceived notions about this concertmaster of the notoriously tradition-steeped and proud Berlin Philharmonic, or does he play everything like German music, with deep, philosophical sound, with weight and struggle behind every note? His sound should adapt more to the music. There is a common misconception that music personalities are not what they were in the Golden Age, where personality dwarfed adherence to style and era of composition. This half truth is not wrong because the performers today have less personality, but rather the old guard of performers intuited style, particularly in romantic compositions, at a much more personal and visceral level, many having direct or far stronger indirect connections to the composers. As a youngster, Kreisler played for Brahms; Leopold Auer was a close acquaintance of Tchaikovsky; Milstein studied with Ysaye, the consummate late romantic violinist, who in turn had studied with both Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski. One should not conflate Braunstein's lack of versatility with strong personality.

This is a respectable if unremarkable recording.

KELLENBERGER

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Rococo Variations;*
see DVORAK

TELEMANN: *6 Flute Partitas; Cello Sonata*
Manuel Staropoli, rec & fl; Gioele Gusberti, vc;
Manuel Tomadin, hpsi & org
Brilliant 95517—72 minutes

The first score printed in present-day Germany to mention the transverse flute explicitly was actually dedicated to four oboists. Telemann's set of *Small Chamber Music* pieces was published in Frankfurt in 1716. He admitted in a

preface that he kept the writing short and simple “to present something that could meet everyone’s taste”. A Sonata in D for cello and continuous bass dating from 1728 or 9 concludes the program.

Details about the instruments are given in the booklet. In the leading role we hear a soprano recorder in C, another in B-flat, a tenor recorder in C, and a flute modeled after one by Denner, which could mean Johann (1655-1707) or Jacob (1681-1735), probably the latter. Together, Staropoli, Gusberti, and Tomadin give us deft, stylish readings made at A=415. We hear a group sound rather than a recorder soloist raised above the others. The balance in the cello sonata is optimal too. Tempos, which range from Largo to Presto, seem apt. For an idea of the variety here, compare the Allegro movements that constitute Aria 1 & 2 in Partita 4 in G minor.

Our Index lists nine similar albums, but given Telemann’s vast output they cover a considerable range of selections. The most comparable present all six partitas as here (Well-Tempered 5169, CPO 999497, M/A 1995 & Musicaphon 51539). Well-Tempered had a scoring of oboe, bassoon, and harpsichord with modern wind instruments. It was recorded in 1968 for the Musical Heritage Society and issued in stereo sound. The other two had period instruments and assorted instrumentation. CPO supplied a track for each movement, making an album of several dozen tracks, like this one. The Musicaphon put each partita on a single track, making an album of six tracks that were not terribly long, but a little inconvenient to isolate any movements. In Sept/Oct 2020, Brad Lehman reported that he enjoyed Brilliant 95683 with Andrea Coen on harpsichord (solo; no winds).

GORMAN

TELEMANN: *12 Fantasies*

Renate Mundi, gamba
Perfect Noise 2104—80 minutes

It’s always a pleasure to hear Georg Philip Telemann’s music, a little lighter in nature than Bach, more rococo than baroque. The viol fantasies are in three movements, some fast-slow-fast, some otherwise. They were published in 1735. This is only the third time I have come across them in toto and there is a reason for that: they had been lost until about 2015 when Thomas Fritzsch discovered them in the so-called Ledenburg Collection. He proceeded to record them himself (Coviello

91601, S/O 2016) in a rich recording that I enjoyed. Richard Boothby took them up two years later (Signum 544 N/D 2018) in a lighter sounding but just as impressive reading.

Now we meet a new contender, Renate Mundi. She plays both gamba and cello, notably with the ensemble La Tirata. Her interpretation of these fine fantasias is perhaps a touch more feminine but technically up there. Telemann’s style lends itself well to a certain brightness and lightness. My only criticism is that the recording leaves no more space between fantasias than it does between the individual movements, making unclear the division between works and movements.

D MOORE

THEOFANIDIS: *Violin Concerto;* *Viola Concerto*

Chee-Yun; Albany Symphony/ David Alan Miller
Albany 1816—53 minutes

Texan Christopher Teofanidis (b. 1967) has had a significant career thus far with ample awards. He is a neoromantic with modal tendencies, not necessarily Greek in origin in spite of his name.

The Violin Concerto (2008) is in the usual three movements. I is passionately romantic with exotic flavors. II is sweet, written for the birth of his daughter, and III is a breathless dance sure to elicit an appreciative ovation.

The four-movement Viola Concerto (2002) was written for Kim Kashkashian. The opening movement is a dramatic affair in the romantic sense. II is mournful. III is a memorial to the victims of 911 inspired by a Sikh melody heard at the Yankee Stadium service following the attack. IV is an intense development of previous materials.

These are professionally executed pieces, but I doubt they will change the repertoires in the long run. Performances should delight the composer. Notes by the composer, mostly consisting of puffery.

GIMBEL

TOGNI: *Sea Dreams; Earth Voices; Totus Tuus; Requiem et Lux; Da Pacem Domine; Of the Father’s Love Begotten; Psalm 98; Responsio Introit; Silentio*

Katie Partridge, s; Oliver Munar, Timothy Shantz, t; Sarah Hahn-Scinocco, Sarah MacDonald, fl; Jeff Reilly, bcl; Tova Olson, Victor Cheng, perc; Luminous Voices/ Timothy Shantz

Leaf 236—62 minutes

Peter-Anthony Togni (b 1959) is a Canadian

composer, keyboardist, and broadcaster based at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. The notes tell us that his music is “spiritually rooted and introspective,” which means he has things in common with just about every other choral composer coming before us these days. Togni’s a cappella works are pleasant enough, especially the lyrical and lovely ‘Totus Tuus’ and the bouncy Psalm 98, which is sung in French. This choir from Calgary serves him well, though their intentions are not flattered by the engineers. Luminous Voices would sound a lot more luminous if the sonics weren’t so glaringly close.

Sea Dreams is a set of three songs for choir, solo soprano and tenor, and a pair of flutes. Togni turns to TS Eliot, the *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, and the *Perpetual Angelus* to express his reverence for the sea and for those who sail it. The booklet presents the texts in English, Latin, and French. I’m assuming that Eliot is sung in English and the others in Latin, but can’t tell for sure. Diction seems not to have been a priority, and I can’t make heads or tails out of the words. It’s the hyperactive flutter-tonguing and other noodles and doodles from the flutes that dominate the proceedings.

Earth Voices brings on the percussion to speak in the whispers of spring and set the rhythms of life. The bass clarinet joins the proceedings to bless the Virgin Mary’s name in the ‘Responsio’ and to hint at the inner quiet of salvation in ‘Silentio’.

Togni writes adeptly for instruments as well as for voices, so if you’re up for something new, this collection might be something to seek out. Better sound, though, would have made me more enthusiastic.

GREENFIELD

TOURNEMIRE: *Organ Pieces*

Tjeerd van der Ploeg

Brilliant 95983 [4CD] 296 minutes

I reviewed an earlier volume in Van der Ploeg’s perusal of Tournemire’s magnum opus, *L’Orgue Mystique* (S/O 2015). The 51 suites set the portions of the Mass the organist was expected to improvise, using the appropriate Gregorian chant themes for that day in the church year.

This program presents another aspect of Tournemire’s output: secular pieces drawing their inspiration from the symphonic style of his teacher Cesar Franck, variously titled symphonie sacre, symphonic chorale, fresque symphonique, fantasie symphonique, piece

symphonique, and triple chorale. These are large-scale pieces using two or three themes, which are then developed much in the manner of Franck’s Chorales.

His other major sacred piece is *Seven Poems for Organ on the Seven Last Words of Christ*. This is a monumental work, lasting over an hour and, in the words of Messiaen, “the direct expression of a powerful originality at the service of a profound faith”.

There are also several collections of smaller pieces, most notably the delicate *Sei Fioretti*—six movements illustrating the stories and sayings of St Francis d’Assisi—and the *Suite Evocatrice*, inspired by the forms of 17th Century French organ music. There are several other gems worth exploring that will not be familiar to most organists.

Tournemire’s music, like Messiaen’s, may be an acquired taste. It is a subtle, complex, and wholly original symphonic impressionism, laced with refined harmonies and infused with the language of Gregorian chant and the atmosphere of the liturgy.

Van der Ploeg plays it all with understanding and virtuosity, greatly helped by three marvelous organs: the 1922, 4-manual, 64-stop Charles Mutin in the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Douai; the 1936, 3-manual, 34-stop Auguste Convers in Cambrai Cathedral; and the 1885, 3-manual, 55-stop Cavaillé-Coll in the Church of Notre Dame in Auteuil. Extensive notes on the music and specifications. The recorded sound and playing are superb.

DELCAMP

TUMA: *Stabat Mater*; see BIBER

VAINBERG: *Mazel Tov*

Katia Guedes (Madame), Anna Gütter (Fradl), Olivia Saragosa (Bejlja), Jeff Martin (Reb Alter), Robert Elibay-Hartog (Chaim); Potsdam Chamber Academy/ Vladimir Stoupel

Oehms 990 [2CD] 80 minutes

For several decades now, many musicians on the European Continent have been keen to explore the Jewish musical heritage, which had been suppressed in the 1930s and 40s by Fascist and Communist regimes. For example, klezmer bands (often made up entirely of non-Jewish players) are today fashionable in Germany and Poland.

And musicians and concert presenters in various countries have discovered a major neglected Jewish composer: Moissey (or Mieczyslaw) Vainberg (1919-96). Born in

Poland, Vainberg ended up fleeing the advancing Nazi troops by moving to the Soviet Union in 1943. (Record companies sometimes spell his name Weinberg or Vainberg.)

We have reviewed dozens of all-Vainberg CDs since late 1986, including his cello concerto, many of his 22 symphonies, and much string chamber music. The reviewers were often very impressed and moved.

Vainberg also composed seven operas. The two-act opera recorded here (1975-82) is based on a one-act play written by the renowned Yiddish short-story writer whose pen name was Sholom Aleichem, famous for his tales about the silly townspeople of Chelm and for creating the indelible Tevye the Dairyman, who would become the central character in the 1964 Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. The title of the 1889 play was *Mazel Tov*. Here the sentiment is translated "Wir Gratulieren!"

The main characters are a grumpy rich Russian woman (Madame), her cook Beylya, her maid Fradl, plus two men—Reb Alter, an impoverished bookseller, and Chaim, a servant from a neighboring estate—who end up pairing off with the cook and the maid, with clear intent to marry soon. *Mazel Tov*!

This is the first Vainberg vocal work that I have heard. It comes to us in an effective "version for chamber ensemble" by Henry Koch. The "German adaptation" is by Ulrike Patow. The words may be a roughly accurate equivalent of the Russian (I have no way of knowing), but they often don't fit the vocal line. The exchanges, if one reads them on the page, feel very conversational, but to the ear they are awkward: individual words and syllables are often elongated and in ways that impede aural comprehension.

It comes to life only at a few moments, such as the folk song-like orchestral prelude to Act 2 and a song that Reb Alter and the other three lovers sing in celebration of their future marriages. Act 1 ends very touchingly, with Reb Alter singing a condensed (though quite distorted) paraphrase of the famous inscription on Sholom Aleichem's gravestone, including, here, the words "He ridiculed the great world...His whole life long he was a schlimazel [unlucky man]...and wept in silence." After which all five characters moan "Aha." Vainberg repeats the "Aha" passage (or Koch and Patow do in this adaptation) at the beginning of Act 2.

Otherwise, the work is mostly grim, sluggish, sometimes angular recitative. The mood

and pacing sound much the same no matter who is singing or what she or he is feeling.

The vocal performances are competent but rarely manage to make the emotional content specific. One exception: Katia Guedes (from Brazil) looks youngish in her photo but already has a troubling throb and a shrieky edge in the high register. Her vocal mannerisms were clearly considered appropriate to the character: the grumpy lady of the manor, who ends up objecting to all the pre-wedding singing and celebrating. But her vocal excesses wore me down.

In a few spots the small audience laughs, apparently at some amusing stage business.

The libretto is given in German only. The booklet is generously laid out, with longish biographies of the singers and large photos of them. If the bios and photos had been omitted or reduced, there might have been room for an English translation—which would have made the whole package useful to more listeners.

The printed libretto also has numerous glitches. Several times the names of a character who is singing is printed small and incorporated into the sung text, as if somebody is singing that name! The reverse happens as well: the first sung line in a track is printed large, above the singing character's name, as if it were the title of a scene or aria, with the result that the printed text (below the name of the character who is singing) starts with line 2 instead of line 1. Also, one set of lines is assigned to the wrong character entirely.

The chamber ensemble (11 players) sounds tight and precise. The recording comes from a staged performance (2012) in the small "black-box" theater found in Berlin's Konzerthaus. I wish it showed Vainberg to better effect.

LOCKE

VAINBERG: *Symphony 6*;

21 Easy Piano Pieces

Elisaveta Blumina, p; Konzertchor Rutheneum;
Altenburg Gera Philharmonic/ Laurent Wagner
Klanglogo 1532—66 minutes

Mieczyslaw Vainberg was a Shostakovich protégé. Like his mentor's Symphony 13, Vainberg's Symphony 6 (1963) commemorates the Nazi massacre at Babi Yar. The work is in 5 movements played without a break; 3 of them for youth choir. I is orchestral, beginning with horn calls. There's a slow, treading theme with pizzicato accompaniment. The movement often uses solo instruments over sustained

pedal notes, but eventually fills out to an emotional climax. It ends in a long decrescendo. The general effect is one of desolation.

II sets Lev Kvitko's poem "The Little Fiddle," about a boy playing his homemade violin. The music is in a lighter mood. Trumpet fanfares begin III, an extroverted scherzo, very much in the manner of Shostakovich. IV is the most intense segment, setting Shmuel Hakim's poem "A Trench Is Dug in the Red Clay". The reference is to the specific site of the massacre. The vocal writing has a passionate vehemence, matching in expressiveness a text of aching reminiscence for irreparable loss. In V, the words of Mikhail Lukonin's "Sleep, People, Sleep" finish the symphony in a mood of restrained hope. Vainberg's vocal writing is effective in its combination of extended arioso with tunes recalling childhood.

The performance is a good one, with transparent sound that does the most for the music's lean textures. The Ruthenian Choir sings with accurate pitch and expressive phrasing. The notes have German and English texts, though the performance is in Russian. Still, the words do give you the emotional import of each poem and of Vainberg's sensitive musical response to them. His choice of poets is significant. Halkin was sent to the Gulag and Kvitko executed, both as part of what would undoubtedly become an anti-Semitic purge had Stalin lived. Lukonin was deemed acceptable by the regime; did his inclusion point to a truce?

I suppose the common factor in the odd coupling is that both involve young people. The 21 Piano Pieces are teaching works roughly equivalent to the later books of Bartok's *Mikrokosmos*. They readily express their titles. Thus "The Skipping Rope" uses leaping figures, and "Baba Yaga" has a faint flavor of Mussorgsky's witch. "Granny's Fairytale" has interesting harmonies that could engage a young player, while the stomping march of "The Grey Wolf" dispenses with the subtlety of Prokofiev's. Some pieces aren't all that easy. "Hide and Seek" needs fluency in scales as well as facile finger work in its alternating phrases. If I had kids with an aptitude for the piano, these would be on their music rack. Blumina's performances are excellent; she interprets them with an intelligence that shows what they ought to sound like and why they're worth playing.

O'CONNOR

VAN DER PALS: *Concert Piece for Violin and Orchestra; Cello Concertino; Piano Concerto; The Monk Wanderer Suite*

Gordan Trajkovic, v; Tobias van der Pals, vc; Marianna Shirinyan, p; Helsingborg Symphony/Fredrik Burstedt—CPO 555 316—63 minutes

A previous release of Van der Pals's music generally struck me as uninspired (Jan/Feb 2019). This one has more to recommend it. The Concert Piece for violin (1911) is in two movements. I is meditative, its themes gaining interest from whole-tone garnishing. II by contrast is more extroverted and sweetly lyrical.

The Piano Concerto (1938) at less than 10 minutes' length could be dubbed a concertino. It opens with a clarinet theme, the pianist adding accents, the movement continuing with appealing harmonies. The middle movement—less than 90 seconds—is a perpetual motion scherzo. The finale opens grandly, leading to an abrupt end. Who'd ever imagine a concerto that was too short?

The Cello Concertino was originally written as a saxophone piece for Sigurd Rascher. The cellist here, Tobias van der Pals, arranged and finished the music for cello. (The notes are vague as to his relationship to the composer.) I is dramatic, with dense sonorities. II floats a long cello line that's harmonically adventurous. As with the Violin Concerto, some phrases in the development branch out into whole-tones. The finale is lively, with some good writing for the soloist. The contrast of moods is effective and the balance of solo parts with orchestral are skillfully handled.

The movements of the *Monk Wanderer Suite* (1931) are collectively called Music of the Spheres. As with Holst, they're named after some planets plus the moon and the sun. The notes include the composer's poetic phrases printed before each movement. The music itself often shows some pleasant British influence. The Prelude is Delian; other segments—Venus and Saturn—do resemble Holst. The work is enjoyable, if not especially vital. It's hard to pick out a theme or progression where you could say "That's got to be by Van der Pals". All the movements are well scored, especially The Sun, which has sonorous trumpet writing, and Saturn, a cortege for the lower brass. The soloists acquit themselves well. The orchestra, both of itself and as an accompanying ensemble, is able, as is Burstedt's conducting.

O'CONNOR

VASKS: *Distant Light; Lonely Angel;*
Dona Nobis Pacem

Daniel Rowland, v; Maja Bogdanovic, vc; Consensus Vocalis; Stift Festival Orchestra/ Thomas Carroll, Benjamin Goodson

Challenge 72830-72 minutes

Distant Light (1997) is a violin concerto written for Gidon Kremer—a romantic, single-movement work with endless extended lines, Latvian dance, three cadenzas (one with a little aleatoric episode), and a general aura of loneliness. It has become a repertoire item. Check indexes for competitors. This one is a concert performance recorded in a 15th Century Dutch church and supervised by the composer. Some will be bothered by in the rock concert applause following both concertos. Couplings might make a difference, too.

Lonely Angel is Violin Concerto 2 (1996, rev. 2006). It is a shorter single movement, a Meditation with endless line climbing into the heavens and floating back down. Mr Rowland's vibrato is too rapid for my tastes. Mari Samuelsson on DG is better.

Plainscapes (2002) is for mixed choir, violin, and cello. It was inspired by the Latvian countryside, plains, birds, and nature. The piece is beautiful, with a choir acting as orchestra. The combination works well in this chamber-choral context.

The program ends with *Dona Nobis Pacem* for mixed choir and strings. A heart-breaking rendering combining plainchant with mournful Latvian spirituality makes an appropriate ending.

The applause at the end is especially egregious. The Concerto and choral work are studio recordings. Notes by the composer.

GIMBEL

VASKS: *Castillo Interior*; see KODALY

VERDI: *Quartet*;
SIBELIUS: *Quartet*

Vertavo Quartet—LAWO 1201—53 minutes

The two composers on this recording have nothing whatever in common, save that they became famous for writing things very unlike string quartets and wrote one quartet each. Apparently that is sufficient matter on which to hang a coupling, because this is not the first time these two have been together: in fact, my computer thought this was the Juilliard Quartet's recording of the same coupling when I first popped the disc in, until it became yet

more recalcitrant and refused to recognize the disc at all.

I have not heard the Juilliard's recording, but I doubt it's much like this, which seems to have a lot less, er, beef on the bone than I'd expect of the Juilliards; the Vertavos are quick, lithe, and rather narrow-toned, as perhaps befits a quartet that once sat, and mostly played, through an all-day-and-night Haydn festival involving the complete quartets. They might have thrown a little more stereotypical "Italianate" passion into their Verdi (the Hagen Quartet mostly outplays them), but the giddy, "orchestral" passages they have down pat.

In the Sibelius things are complicated by the nature of the piece, which despite the evocative subtitle doesn't give up its "intimate voices" easily. Half of it seems too straight-out romantic to be as late Sibelius as it is, while the other half has a curious bare-bones quality, like a late Sibelius symphony's string parts played without any other instruments. Whatever the intimacy really is here, it's kept in disguise; compared with this, Janacek's "Intimate Letters" don't just wear their heart on their sleeve, but shout its existence to the entire universe.

The performances are, at any rate, terrific; I can't see anyone complaining of either, except perhaps wishing for a bit more Italian flavor in parts of the Verdi.

THOMSON

WEBER: *Clarinet Concertos*

Jorg Widmann, cl; Denis Kozhukhin, p; Irish Chamber Orchestra—Alpha 637—69 minutes

German clarinetist, composer, and conductor Jorg Widmann enlists Russian-born pianist Denis Kozhukhin and the Irish Chamber Orchestra for an all-Weber concert that he leads as soloist and conductor. The program includes the Concertino, the Grand Duo Concertant, the Clarinet Quintet scored for string orchestra, and the overture to *Der Freischutz*, where Irish Chamber Orchestra principal clarinet Katherine Spencer enjoys a brief moment in the spotlight.

Once again, Widmann sports his wonderfully expressive personality, outstanding fingers and articulation, daring tempos, and dramatic flair. He also brings his very free-blowing set-up that is marvelously clear in lyrical lines and annoyingly thin and out of tune at loud volumes and in heated technical passages. As usual, his supporting cast complements his zesty readings well. Kozhukhin handles the formidable keyboard part in the Grand Duo

Concertant with skill and brilliance; and the musicians of the Irish Chamber Orchestra play with the aplomb, weight, and smoothness of their German colleagues indulging in one of their favorite romantic composers.

HANUDEL

WEBERN: *Piano Pieces*

with CHAU, GACHE, AMODEI, STODDARD, JOHNSON, OATFIELD, MATZION: *The Kinderstuck Project*; MCMANUS: *4 Pieces for Children*; BELET: *3 Kinderstucke*; FURMAN: *Trip to 12-Tone Town*

Janis Mercer, p—Centaur 3771—40 minutes

This album is creative and inventive, but not easy to listen to if you do not find 12-tone music your cup of tea. I don't either, but I commend Mercer both for her skill in interpreting these works and in collecting (and in many instances, commissioning) other works on the program. It brings together the small handful of works Webern composed with works inspired by them.

Mercer's performances of Webern's complete works are incredibly expressive, even lyrical, and she manages to bring coherent melodic lines out of these thorny, dissonant pieces. She brings contrasts out. 'Klavierstuck' is delicate and sprightly.

The idea of 12-tone for children may seem surprising and impossible, but *The Kinderstuck Project* commemorates the 60th anniversary of his death in 2005 by completing his unfinished project of children's piano pieces. It is a little up in the air whether these pieces would be good teaching tools for children—or are perhaps meant to be performed for children. I am not sure how accessible these works would be for children. 'The Little Wooden Horse' (Denise Matzion) may be too advanced for the average young student. These works have interesting titles and even in the 12-tone framework evoke the characters and moods they suggest. 'Subarctic Penguins' (Christina Oatfield) and 'Laughing Man' (Donavan Johnson) explore the higher registers of the piano in chromatic, rhythmic pulses. *Four Pieces for Children*, based on the same fragment by Webern, is meant more as a preliminary approach to Webern, according to the composer. *Trip to 12-Tone Town* does interesting things with the tone row in a retro style.

Your mileage may vary, but this is overall a good effort at making Webern's legacy relevant to modern audiences.

KANG

WHITACRE: *The Sacred Veil*

Lisa Edwards, p; Jeffrey Zeigler, vc; Los Angeles Master Chorale/ Eric Whitacre

Signum 630—80 minutes

Eric Whitacre, a popular, much-performed composer, has written extensively for orchestra, wind ensemble, music theater, film, television, and choir. Composed in 2018, this 12-movement work was inspired by the death of the poet Charles Silvestri's wife in 2005. The texts, written by Silvestri in collaboration with Whitacre, are about confronting loss and dealing with the fragility of life: "Whenever there is birth or death, the sacred veil between the worlds grows thin and opened slightly up, just long enough for Love to slip, silent, either in or out." This is a gorgeous soundscape beautifully sung by the Los Angeles Master Chorale with atmospheric cello and piano accompaniment. It has grown on me every time I listened.

Extensive notes by the composer, with texts and photos. Beautiful.

DELCAMP

WOLF-FERRARI: *I Quattro Rusteghi*

Munich Radio/ Ulf Schirmer

CPO 555140 [2CD] 130 minutes

In Sept/Oct 2018 I reviewed a fine new recording of Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's delectable comic opera *I Quattro Rusteghi* (The Four Curmudgeons—or, perhaps, The Four Stubborn Fathers), conducted by Vasily Petrenko. First performed in 1906 in Munich (in the German translation heard here: *Die Vier Grobiane*) and in 1914 in Milan (in the original Italian—or, for the most part, Venetian dialect).

Wolf-Ferrari (1876-1946) was born in Venice to a German father and Italian mother, studied in both countries, and was also active in both.

The libretto for *Rusteghi* is freely based on a 1760 comedy by Carlo Goldoni. The plot, which I summarized in my previous review, hangs on the insistence of four fathers that a young couple should only get married if, according to local tradition, the two individuals do *not* get to know each other at all before the wedding ceremony. Each of the roles is important, making it a bit like *Così fan tutte*, but with 11 characters instead of 6.

The music is tuneful, attractively harmonized, and exquisitely orchestrated, as record collectors know from a few orchestral excerpts—notably the intermezzo before Act 2. If you are wondering what Italian opera

around Puccini's time could be like without the verismo intensity, here's a good answer. The work is extremely attractive and poised, not least through its conscious evocation of style elements from operetta and from Mozart-era opera. This time around, though, I couldn't help but also be reminded (because of the German words) of the sunnier moods of Mahler, as at the beginning of Act 1, Scene 4.

Particularly delightful is Wolf-Ferrari's skill at differentiating the characters and their shifting moods, from sneaky and suspicious to grandiose or elated. The main "father" character (Lunardo) has a tendency to repeat a word or phrase several times, as if comically sputtering in annoyance.

There is also much amusing unison and chordal singing for the fathers and other groups of characters (Act 1, Scene 8). Passages suggest that Wolf-Ferrari was familiar with Verdi's *Falstaff* and perhaps also took some inspiration from Wagner's *Meistersinger*, a work that had much success in Italy in translation. The famous "Grossvater-Tanz" (used by Schumann and Tchaikovsky) gets quoted prominently at the ends of Acts 2 and 3 (though this goes unmentioned in the written discussions of the opera that I have consulted).

The orchestra also gets some chances to shine, as in the Intermezzo, based on a traditional ballad sung by Marina in Act 1, Scene 5, that sounds a bit like the 'Carnival of Venice' tune. The scene-changing music that precedes Marina's ballad offers a refreshingly expansive moment in a work that otherwise chatters at us almost without pause (but quite amusingly). And often, in the opera's main scenes, the orchestra—a bassoon, the brass section, etc.—comments on a character's most recent statement.

The singers here are as professional and even sometimes as eloquent as the ones in the Petrenko recording; most of them are native German-speakers. Jürgen Linn, Zoryana Kushpler, and Christine Landshamer are one pair of parents and their daughter; Susanne Bernhard, Peter Schöne, and Markus Francke are another and their son (the two young people eventually realize they love each other and get married); and, as other busybodies, Christine Buffle, Nathalie Flessa, Uwe Eikötter, Victor von Halem (a veteran basso, whom I saw years ago as a superb Osmín in Mozart's *Abduction*), and Friedemann Röhlig.

I must express special appreciation for Landshamer and Francke, compact and eloquent as the two young lovers, and Linn and

Von Halem, both of whom have voices that ripen toward the bottom instead of becoming gravelly. Such true basses and bass-baritones are in short supply in the opera world. Von Halem was 74 when the recording was made, but sounds as firm and clear as all the others. In a long career, was he careful not to take on roles that were too heavy and not to sing in halls that were too large?

The recording comes from performances in 2014, when Ulf Schirmer was artistic director of the (superbly responsive) Munich Radio Orchestra. The performances took place in the acoustically superb Prinzregenten Theater and, by the aural evidence, were not staged: the singers all sound as if they are standing near each other without moving. Quick exchanges are always clearly audible. The microphones pick up a few moments of quiet chuckles from the well-behaved audience. There is Applause only at the ends of acts—as has long been the general practice in German opera houses.

I Quattro Rusteghi has had several recordings. The Petrenko has many strengths: excellent vocal control on the part of all the singers, a fine orchestra, and rich and clear recorded sound. Still, the heavily international cast gives the impression of having been well trained in a tricky and quick-moving Italian/Venetian text that is not quite native to most of them.

The new recording, despite the oddity of being sung in German, is perhaps the most convenient way to get to know, in fine modern sound, this exquisitely crafted and rarely staged comic opera. The libretto is printed in German and good English, whereas the Petrenko recording supplied the Italian libretto but, in English, only prose summaries of each scene. The booklet includes a fine essay and synopsis. These are translated a bit more stiffly than the libretto, but you'll get the drift.

For a sense of how vital this work can be when sung by Italians, I urge opera lovers to listen to its first recording (1951), conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. It deserves to be released on CD.

Still, I am thrilled to have gotten to know this amazing light opera now in a second language (German) and would love to hear it in a third: English. Edward J Dent's "splendidly witty translation", under the title *School for Fathers*, was a resounding success in London in 1946.

LOCKE

WRIGHT: Sacred Choral

Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis; 3 Carols; Penitential Prayer; Hymn of Salvation; In Memoriam; Missa Brevis; Bread of Life; Thy Perfect Grace; I Come Into Deep Waters; Prayer for Peace; Rejoice in the Lord Alway

Julian Thomas, org; Canticum/ Mark Forkgen
Toccata 457—71 minutes

Christopher Wright (b 1954) is a retired British schoolteacher whose career as a composer has been going great guns since he left the classroom in 1994. He has written string quartets, instrumental solos, and choral works that have been performed at festivals and on broadcasts in the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. His style reminds me of England's pre-Rutter choral tradition—polite but snappy dissonances and splashes of color from the King of Instruments animating his sacred fare. He's pretty good at it, too, especially in setting up his contrasts between introspective moments and outbursts of joy.

You hear those extremes often—from the jaunty *Magnificat* to the hushed "Who takes away the sins" in the otherwise ebullient Gloria of his Mass, and the attractive "Rejoice in the Lord" that closes the program. The choir is not a world-class outfit, but there's no mistaking their enthusiasm for the music. That counts for something in a release like this. So while I'm not proclaiming the Second Coming of RVW, Benjamin Britten, or William Matthias, I can commend Christopher Wright to you as a composer who knows his business and brings a nice story line with him.

GREENFIELD

XENAKIS: *Dhípli Zyla*; see KODALY

YOUNG: *Beowulf*

Armonico Consort/ Christopher Monks
Signum 632—61 minutes

Perhaps I am not the only person whose first awareness of *Beowulf* came when, as a teenager, I saw the 1977 film *Annie Hall*. Diane Keaton's character expresses an interest in enrolling in an adult college class, and Woody Allen counsels her somberly, "Just don't take any course where they make you read *Beowulf*."

Well, any sense of forboding that surrounds this epic fable is effortlessly dissipated by Toby Young with his delightful and accessible musical-dramatic adaptation. It is scored for harp and keyboards, chorus and soloists

(libretto by Jennifer Thorp), and punctuated by a witty spoken narration assigned to the title character himself. Written by William Towers, *Beowulf*'s story is told here with a superb blend of humor and suspense by the esteemed British actor Timothy West.

The opening choruses have the jaunty appeal of Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*. As the piece progresses, there are homages to Gaelic rhythms and British folk songs, jazz, and the contemporary Broadway style of classically-oriented composers like Ricky Ian Gordon and Jason Robert Brown. The meltingly beautiful chorus "When I Was King," sung by the children's chorus, might have sprung from the pen of Stephen Schwartz. Young gracefully integrates these disparate elements into an eminently pleasing whole.

The work is performed with gusto by the Armonico Consort, the AC Academy Warwick and AC Academy Scholars. Full texts are included. Though it has the earmarks of a concert work, one can imagine an inventive staging that might find an audience in an intimate off-Broadway theater or on the West End.

ALTMAN

YSAYE: *Solo Violin Sonatas; Unfinished Sonata*

Niklas Walentin—Naxos 574214 [2CD] 86 min

The principal distinction of this set is that it is the first that I know of that includes the recently discovered Unfinished Solo Violin Sonata that apparently was originally intended to be dedicated to the Spanish violinist Manuel Quiroga, who was the dedicatee of Sonata 6. The first recording of the unfinished sonata, which I reviewed, was made by Philippe Graffin (May/June 2019). If there is anything remarkable about it, it is that it lacks the inspiration and invention of the six published sonatas. I hope it will soon be forgotten. All it will do is to necessitate two discs to accommodate all seven sonatas.

The other six sonatas by the great violinist are among the very finest in the repertoire. Danish-Swiss violinist Niklas Walentin does a good job playing them. My only serious objection is that he changes the final notes of Sonata 1:II, and his change is less effective than what Ysaye had written. These sonatas have become deservedly very popular in the past three decades, and there are quite a few other recordings that are better than this one. Best are the sets by Thomas Zehetmair (Jan/Feb

2005), Rachel Kolly d'Alba (March/April 2011), and Viktoria Kaunzner (July/Aug 2017).

MAGIL

ZEMLINSKY: *Clarinet Trio*;

RABL: *Clarinet Quartet*

Christoph Zimper, cl; Kristina Suklar, v; Florian Eggner, vc; Peter Ovtcharov, p

Gramola 99228—52 minutes

In the halls, salons, and theaters of late 19th Century Vienna, conservatives and progressives quarreled over the future of German-Austrian music. Although each camp boasted a lineage back to Beethoven, they differed sharply over how much to preserve and how much to move forward. In 1885, a group of conservatives established the Vienna Musicians Society to protect classical tradition amidst the Wagner revolution. They invited Johannes Brahms, their idol and model, to be honorary president.

While Brahms was a source of comfort to many in the Society, he challenged their thinking in other ways. In 1887 the Society began a composition competition to encourage new chamber music in the vein of their revered composers. Brahms served as a judge; and in order for each piece to have a fair hearing, he coached rehearsals and insisted that Society members pay the performers. He also stated that, while the string quartet was a fine medium for the first year of the competition, the Society needed to dispense with the notion that no other genre could match its supposed musical perfection. In 1888, the medium was a cappella choir with at least four voices; in 1892, piano with at least one other instrument; in 1893, at least three mixed voices and piano; and in 1896, at least one wind instrument.

The 1896 competition took place only a few years after the honorary president's prominent contributions to clarinet chamber music: the Trio, the Quintet, and the two sonatas. It also happened during his battle with cancer. (He died the following April.) A record 18 submissions arrived by the July 1 deadline; and of these Brahms and his two fellow judges selected 12 for performance over 5 concerts. 10 of the 12 included the clarinet.

Walter Rabl, a 23-year-old pianist pursuing a doctorate in musicology at the German University of Prague, took home first prize with his Opus 1 and a first in music history: piano trio plus clarinet. The four-movement Quartet in E-flat demonstrates the young musician's textbook grasp of the Brahms heritage. Joseph

Miroslav Weber, an established 42-year-old violinist, earned second place with his Septet in E for violin, viola, cello, clarinet, bassoon, and two horns. The four movements vividly depict the composer's Czech homeland.

Alexander Zemlinsky, a rising 25-year-old pianist-composer, came in third with his Trio in D minor for clarinet, cello, and piano. Though modeled after the Brahms Trio in A minor, it pursues a folk aesthetic and lasts 27 minutes.

After the competition, Brahms wrote to his publisher Simrock and asked the company to issue the Rabl and the Zemlinsky. Though left out of this favor, Weber was older and more recognized; in 1899, Aibl of Munich published his Septet. As the next ten years unfurled, so did the fate of each piece.

Rabl continued to compose; but he increasingly turned to conducting and vocal coaching. He also began to champion the progressive works of the New German School; and in 1903, his Wagnerian opera *Liane*, based on a Teutonic fairy tale, was produced. After this, he worked exclusively from the podium and the piano. His handful of opus numbers—all completed before the age of 30—eventually became a footnote, and he died quietly in 1940. Two years before that, Hindemith wrote a quartet for piano trio and clarinet as he prepared to leave Nazi Germany; and the next year, Messiaen wrote his *Quartet for the End of Time* in a German prisoner-of-war camp. Was either composer aware of the Rabl Quartet? Messiaen said that he wrote his Quartet for piano trio and clarinet because that was the only instrumentation available to him.

Weber maintained his high profile and busy career. In 1898, his String Quintet won first prize in the Prague Chamber Music Society competition; and he appeared all over Germany and Bohemia as a violinist and conductor. He died in 1906 at age 51; but if his wistful romantic oeuvre didn't catch on beyond the occasional contest, the modernist tide doomed it. A few of his works survive in print and on recordings, even the Septet; but for the most part, Weber and his music are forgotten.

Zemlinsky persisted as a composer, conductor, and teacher over the next four decades, obtaining important music director positions and working with some of the most important musicians of the early 20th Century: Mahler, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Berg, Weill, and Klemperer. In 1938 he fled Nazi Germany for New York, where he passed away unknown and neglected; but unlike Rabl and Weber, his

place in music history is secure, and his compositions continue to be performed and recorded.

Here, four Austrian-based musicians keep alive the memory of the 1896 Vienna Musicians Society competition in their pairing of the popular Zemlinsky Trio with the rarely heard Rabl Quartet. Christoph Zimmer is Professor of Clarinet at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna; Kristina Suklar is Associate Concertmaster of the Radio Symphony Vienna; Florian Eggner is an active chamber musician and festival director in Austria; and when not giving masterclasses in Austria, the Russian-born Peter Ovtcharov is

Professor of Piano at Yonsei University in South Korea.

The concert is thoroughly professional and artistically convincing, replete with rich and beautiful timbres, evocative phrasing, sizzling technique, seamless collaboration, and a fiery and intense romantic ethos. The performances remind the listener how fresh and urgent these works must have sounded to the Society as its members perceived the ailing Brahms and his legacy to be under siege. Even so, each piece looks to the horizon; and though the Zemlinsky is the bolder of the two, particularly in its cyclic elements, both Rabl and Zemlinsky wear their emotions on their sleeves much like their progressive colleagues.

HANUDEL

Collections

Collections are in the usual order: orchestral, chamber ensembles, brass ensembles, bassoon, cello & double bass, clarinet & saxophone, flute, guitar, harp, harpsichord, miscellaneous, oboe, organ, piano, trumpet & brass solos, viola, violin, wind ensembles, early, choral, vocal.

Lento Religioso

BERG: *Sonata*; **KORNGOLD:** *Lento Religioso*; **BRUCKNER:** *Adagio*; **BRIDGE:** *Lament*; **LEKEU:** *Adagio*; **WAGNER:** *Tristan & Isolde Prelude*; **STRAUSS:** *Capriccio Sextet*

Amsterdam Sinfonietta/ Candida Thompson
Channel 36620—78 minutes

This is a collection of slow movements or arrangements for string orchestra. The Berg uses Wijnand van Klaveren's arrangement; the Wagner one by Adrian Williams. The Korngold is from his 1949 Symphonic Serenade. It's a movement of somber beauty, quoting from the composer's Oscar-winning score for *Anthony Adverse*. Bruckner's adagio is from his Quintet. A beautiful movement in itself, it gains even more from the larger string ensemble. Bridge's brief Lament eulogizes a young girl lost in the *Lusitania* sinking.

The selection by Lekeu—a major talent, stricken at the ridiculous age of 24—proves yet again how clumsy and whimsical are the fates. He was overwhelmed when he first heard *Tristan and Isolde*, thus his beautiful essay makes the ideal lead-in to the Wagner prelude. Williams's arrangement is skilled, though the famous Tristan chord does lose some bite without its woodwind color.

Strauss's wonderfully mellow Sextet sacrifices nothing being played by larger numbers. The Amsterdam Sinfonietta is an ensemble of 20 or so strings; their roster varies. Their play-

ing is a constant delight, with refined tone quality and precision of ensemble. These give the Korngold a crisp, more modern sound. Their dynamic control is also firm, so the music never sounds bloated or ill-proportioned. Ms Thompson conducts with a steady hand, plus the flexibility these mostly postromantic pieces need. It's all strings and all slow, but it's also all valuable.

O'CONNOR

Roger Desormiere

BIZET: *Patrie Overture*; *Jeux d'Enfants*; **CHABRIER:** *Habanera*; **CHARPENTIER:** *Depuis le Jour*; **CHOPIN:** *Les Sylphides*; **DEBUSSY:** *Marche Ecossaise*; **DELIBES:** *Coppelia Suite*; *Sylvia Suite*; **GOUNOD:** *Ah! Je Veux Vivre*; *O Legere Hirondelle*; **IBERT:** *Divertissement*; **IPPOLITOV-IVANOV:** *Caucasian Sketches*; **OFFENBACH:** *Les Oiseaux dans la Charmille*; **POULENC:** *Les Biches Suite*; **PROCH:** *Deh! Torma me Bene*; **TOMMASINI:** *The Good-Humored Ladies*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Sleeping Beauty Suite*; **THOMAS:** *Je Suis Titania*

Janine Micheau, s; Paris Conservatory Orchestra; National Symphony

Decca Eloquence 484 0416 [4CD, mono] 3:51

Roger Desormiere (1898-1963) began as a composition student of Vincent d'Indy. As a conductor, he led several important French premieres, including Messiaen's *Three Little Liturgies* and Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three*

Movements. After hearing him conduct Debussy's *Pelleas*, Virgil Thomson described him as "among the very great musicians of our time and the great French conductors of all time." His career ended tragically with a serious stroke in 1952, after which he was unable even to converse. Despite this, the young Pierre Boulez would visit him often, and made sure that the recorded set of his complete works included Desormiere's *Soleil des Eaux*.

These discs completely back up Thomson's claim. On track after track, I found myself thinking "I wouldn't need to hear this music done any other way." With his balancing precision and lightness of touch and strength of expression and eloquence of interpretation, he's ever in the Goldilocks Zone of conducting—everything done just right.

The performances are also fine. The National Orchestra was a British pickup group, but picked up the right players. I recall the Paris Conservatory Orchestra when they made some good LPs for Decca's budget label, Richmond. In the *Sylvia* Suite, their ensemble in the pizzicato movement—a trap even for the best of orchestras—is executed with precision and humor.

I'd seen the name Janine Micheau, but never heard her sing. My loss, as she was a lyric and coloratura soprano of major stature. She sings with a clean, clear tonal quality, on pitch and with firm rhythm in some *tres* difficult ornamental flourishes. At the same time, her soulful singing of 'Depuis de Jour' from Charpentier's *Louise* proves her ability to float a sustained line with superb phrasing. Desormiere's accompaniments are again first-rate. There's the feeling that conductor and soloist are a true partnership where each respects and reinforces the other.

Let me preface my impressions of the recorded sound by noting that I have no patience with dinosaur sonics, regardless of how "historically important" the performance might be. Though these discs are not stereo, that's no bar to their enjoyment. The set proves that even back in the late 1940s-early 1950s Decca was becoming a hallmark for top-quality recordings. The sound is thoroughly enjoyable, with minimal background noise. The orchestral choirs are well balanced, and the recordings have a good range of register response. Even in tutti passages, there's little congestion. This set is for people who want—need—to hear French conducting at its best.

O'CONNOR

Antal Dorati on Mercury

Mozart & Haydn
London Symphony & others
Decca 4840385 [4CD] 5:23

This is for Antal Dorati fans. These are all Mercury recordings, from 1952 to 1962. Mozart's Symphony 40 is here twice. The early one was in Minneapolis (1952), the later one in London (1962). There are more repeats in the LSO recording, and the minuet is a bit faster. The sound is terrific in both. I would not reject either recording, but I prefer Bruno Walter and Beecham.

The first disc also has *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and 3 marches, 3 German Dances (K 605), and the delightful Minuet in C, K 409. These items are not done much—at least not by major conductors—and they are all enjoyable.

CD 2 has Mozart 36 and 40 (LSO; 36 in 1956), with Haydn 59 (Bath Festival 1964). The other Haydn symphonies—45, 81, 94, 100, 101, and 103—are played by the London Symphony, The Bath Festival Orchestra, and the Philharmonia Hungarica. I don't think 45, 59, or 81 are among Haydn's best; and the others have been recorded a lot. I prefer Decca sound to Mercury (richer; more bass), so I am happy with the complete Dorati Haydn set on Decca. I also prefer Beecham and Bernstein to Dorati in most of these symphonies, but again I cannot complain about his conducting. All of this was music he did well.

VRON

King Frederik IX Conducts

KUHLAU: *Elves' Hill Overture*; **LUMBYE:** *Dream Pictures*; *Galop*; **SCHUBERT:** *Symphony 8*; **WAGNER:** *Tannhauser*, *Rienzi*, & *Flying Dutchman Overtures*; *Siegfried's Funeral March*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Symphonies 1, 3, 7*; **GRIEG:** *Last Spring*; **GADE:** *Echoes of Ossian*; **BERRESEN:** *Royal Guest Prelude*; **WEBER:** *Euryanthe* & *Freischütz Overtures*

Royal Danish Orchestra, Danish Symphony
Dacapo 8204001 [4CD] 4:18

King Frederik IX of Denmark was born in 1899 and was king from 1947 to 1972. Although he was a self-taught (amateur) conductor, he caught the bug when he was 16. His mother liked to play piano with an ensemble of family members, friends, and members of the court, which her son conducted. In his 20s he made recordings with a larger ensemble, and by 1938 he was offered the chance to conduct

occasional pieces with the Royal Danish Orchestra as a gesture of thanks for his patronage. In 1941 he first conducted the Danish National Orchestra.

This album contains recordings from 1946 to 1954, with inferior monophonic sound reminiscent of the claustrophobic Studio H sound on Toscanini's NBC Symphony recordings (and worse). Three works (Beethoven's Symphony 1, and Wagner's 'Funeral March' and 'Flying Dutchman Overture') were recorded in 1969. Only the 'Funeral March' is in stereo.

As for the performances, my standard criticism for each work is that, when the music is slow, the tempos are lumbering and ensemble is not tight, but when things speed up the ensemble is tighter and the playing can become exciting (sign not only of an amateur but of many younger soloists and conductors). Thus the king waxes hot and cold in Kuhlau's Overture to *Elves' Hill* but turns in a fine three-minute Galop from Lumbye's *Salute to August Bournonville*. And Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* lacks cohesion in I and is four-square and lumbering in II.

'The Last Spring' by Grieg and the *Tannhauser Overture* have so much surface noise that they must have been transferred from very grainy 78 rpms. The Grieg at six minutes is strung out enough to last all summer! *Tannhauser's* initial tempo is lethargic, especially with very slow-moving triplets. In the *Rienzi Overture* I sat nodding my head to each tedious beat. When the tempos picked up, both overtures edge toward interesting.

But, oh boy, Beethoven's Symphony 7! Right off the bat, woodwind tuning is excruciating, the French horns are wobbly, and the oboes sound like Morse code. From start to finish the tempos have to be the slowest on record. And the trio in III is really awful.

The king gives Niels Gade's *Echoes of Ossian* a decent, nicely shaped performance, but it's not the last word in refinement. Nor does the canned 1949 radio-type sound help. Hakon Borreson's Prelude to *The Royal Guest* (1919) is rather Elgarian with its touches of nobility and playfulness. The performance confirms another generalization about the king's conducting: he's better with one-movement works because he's able to get a firm grip on the structure, giving the flow form and aim.

In Beethoven's Symphony 3 once again the woodwinds are immediately sour and tempos are slow. But this time the conductor's concept is indeed heroic or emperor-like. Accents from the strongly effective timpani define I's delib-

erate character. The 'Funeral March' is very slow but deliberate. III has farting horns, and IV is soggy. Consider it a triumph compared to Beethoven's Symphony 1, which is soggy, with poor ensemble and the most excruciating sound on the album; it says "recorded in 1969" but it sounds more like 1929.

'Siegfried's Funeral March' from *Götterdämmerung* has poorly tuned brass and loses pulse. Why is it in stereo and the unremarkable performance of *The Flying Dutchman Overture* from the same year is not? The album's worst engineering is in the two Weber overtures, which sound like they were recorded in the 1920s.

Why anyone would want this album other than fans of the king and his family is beyond me.

FRENCH

Eugen Jochum

BACH: *Prelude & Fugue in G*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Symphonies, all*; *Piano Concerto 1*; *Consecration of the House*, *Coriolan*, *Egmont*, *Fidelio*, *Name Day*, *Leonore Overtures 1, 2, 3*; **BRUCKNER:** *Symphony 5*; **BRUHNS:** *Praeludium 3*; **DAQUIN:** *Noel 10*; **MOZART:** *Symphonies 35, 36, 38, 41*; *Piano Concerto 14*; **MENGELBERG:** *Magnificat*; **SCHUBERT:** *Symphonies 4+8*; **SCHUMANN:** *Symphony 4*; **STRAUSS:** *Rosenkavalier Waltzes*, *Till Eulenspiegel*; *Don Juan*; **WAGNER:** *Preludes to Flying Dutchman*, *Meistersinger*, *Tannhauser*, *Tristan*
Liselotte Rebmann, s; Anna Reynolds, mz; Annie Wood, a; Anton de Ridder, t; Gerd Feldhoff, b; Veronica Jochum, p; Adalbert Meier, organ; Netherlands Radio Chorus; Concertgebouw, Bamberg Symphony, Bavarian Radio, Berlin Philharmonic

Decca Eloquence 4840600 [15CD] 980 minutes

Eugen Jochum (1902-87) was among the last of the old-time German romantic conductors, a musical descendant of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, and one of the great Bruckner interpreters. He was a conductor of great energy who inspired orchestras to warm, spirited, and disciplined music-making. Niek Nelissen's excellent booklet essay on the conductor and these recordings tells us that Jochum talked often in rehearsals, yet musicians who played for him believed it was his musical spirit that inspired their performances.

The son of an organist and conductor, Jochum attended Augsburg's Academy of Music and the Munich Conservatory, where he studied conducting under Siegmund von

Hausegger, a composer recognized now, but for a long time, famous only for leading the first recording of Anton Bruckner's Ninth Symphony. Jochum began his own association with Bruckner on his conducting debut in 1926 when he programmed the Seventh Symphony with the Munich Philharmonic. He moved on to the Kiel Opera, then Mannheim, where he caught the attention of Wilhelm Furtwängler. In 1932 he took over the Berlin Radio Orchestra and two years later the Hamburg Philharmonic, despite not being a member of the Nazi party. Apparently, his claim that to join the part would violate his Catholic religion satisfied the less-than-fanatic party leaders in Hamburg, though his presence on Joseph Goebbels's *Gottbegnadeten-Liste* [God-gifted List] of artists probably gave them—and Jochum—cover. He remained at that post until 1949. Meanwhile, 1941 to 1943 he worked with the Concertgebouw in the Netherlands, thanks to their efforts to engage “acceptable” German conductors. After the war, he cleared de-Nazification only when the Americans withdrew their objections in 1948. A year later, he became the first music director of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, remaining until 1961.

This collection contains all of Jochum's recordings for Philips save for four large Bach religious works and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. His first recording for the company was of the Beethoven Fifth in 1951 with the Berlin Philharmonic (BPO). The performance displayed expressive breadth and grandeur without losing energy, momentum, or clarity, all in good monaural sound. A year later, he and the Concertgebouw recorded an excellent Schubert *Unfinished*, marred slightly by sound that is too bright in the highs. That year he also recorded Rudolf Mengelberg's Magnificat plus Strauss's *Don Juan* and *Till Eulenspiegel* in performances that are aggressive and dramatic thrillers. In 1957 he made a Wagner disc with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra (BRO). The performances are spiritual, drawn out, sinewy, and energetic when called for. Particularly effective is the gorgeous *Tristan* prelude. That was his only project with the BRO associated with Philips, but he made many recordings with that orchestra for DG, including a Beethoven symphony set and part of a Bruckner symphony set the orchestra shared with the BPO. (The only Wagner operas he recorded commercially were *Lohengrin* and *Meistersinger* for DG, but there is a wonderful, good sounding 1953 broadcast recording of *Tristan* with that orchestra on Andromeda and

Youtube with Astrid Varney and Ramon Vinay.)

In 1958 Jochum returned to the Concertgebouw podium and in 1960 recorded the Schumann and Schubert Fourths in performances that are full and energetic. He also taped Beethoven's *Consecration of the House*, *Coriolan*, *Egmont*, *Name Day*, and *Leonore* No. 3 overtures. The performances are good, though *Egmont* is so fast that it loses some power. The sound is OK but not great, especially in the *Leonore*. 1960 also gave us stereo remakes of *Don Juan* and *Till Eulenspiegel* plus *Rosenkavalier Waltzes* that are too driven and fast. Things settle down, but more delicacy and sensitivity would be welcome. The tone poem recordings are similar to their predecessors.

From 1961 to 1963 Jochum split the directorship of the Concertgebouw with the young Bernard Haitink, serving as mentor for the man who would become the orchestra's long-time music director. In 1960 and 1961, he recorded Mozart Symphonies 35, 36, 38, and 41 in performances that are vigorous, regal, songlike, and in some outer movements fast. I wish he had recorded more Mozart symphonies with the Concertgebouw, but Philips and the orchestra did give us great performances of the middle and mature ones with Josef Krips that are somewhat heavier than Jochum's.

Jochum's association with Bruckner is represented by two sets of the composer's symphonies: the DG and a superior EMI with the Dresden Staatskapelle. From Philips, there is only this 1964 recording of the Fifth from a concert with the Concertgebouw in a Bavarian church that had a wonderful acoustic for this music. The performance is typical Jochum Bruckner: organic, breathing, emotional, and spiritual. The outer movements are powerful, the Adagio glorious with a stupendous climax, and the Scherzo surging and churning. The orchestra sounds great save for a bright trumpet that becomes annoying after a while.

Jochum's Beethoven symphony set, plus *Fidelio Overture*, *Leonores* 1 and 2 and a (superior) remake of 3, was made from 1967 to 1969. It was his second set of the symphonies, made between the BRO set for DG and one with the London Symphony for EMI. The Philips performances are straightforward, rich, powerful, elegant, lyrical, and beautifully played with reasonably consistent tempos. The First is laid back, but the Second exhibits more life than usual, making for one of the best performances of it. The stellar *Eroica* is strong,

vigorous, and cleanly presented, with trumpets that sound like stentorian gods when they sound forth near the end of the slow movement. The Fourth can seem insignificant between 3 and 5, but this strong performance holds its own. No. 5 displays expressive breadth and grandeur without losing energy, momentum, or clarity. It is similar to the 1951 Fifth, though a little faster in I and II. 6 is rich and full-bodied. I could be a bit more relaxed, but II is glorious, and the rest is first-rate. 7 is terrific, mainly because Jochum does not concentrate too much on rhythm and maintains a full sound and strong line. 8 is fast and serious, but great in any case. The 9th is regal, stately, and full sounding, with all lines clear. II is well controlled, animated, and displays fine woodwind color. III flows like the river in the Sixth, and the violins are stellar. IV is clean, clear, and powerful with great climaxes and terrific fugues. The quartet is fine, with a warm bass entrance and a soprano singing like an angel just before the ending. The chorus is big and wonderful. This set was highly praised in an ARG review (M/A 1991) but overlooked in the *Beethoven Symphony Overview* (J/A 2003) and unforgivably by me (since I have the LPs) in a roundup of sets in my review of Andris Nelsons's mediocre one with the Vienna Philharmonic (M/J 2020). It belongs with the elite cycles mentioned there, along with the Krips, a recent discovery that I find underrated in the Overview.

In 1969 Jochum became principal conductor of the Bamberg Symphony (until 1973) and recorded these Mozart and Beethoven concertos with Bamberg and pianist Veronica Jochum, whose rich full pianism resembles her father's conducting. The recording is somewhat close to the piano but not enough to prevent enjoyment of some powerful readings. As for the "bonus" disc, the Bruhns, Daquin, and Bach organ pieces are attractive, upbeat, and very well played; Mengelberg's Magnificat is warm and nicely spiritual.

The stereo sound is rich, full, colorful, and detailed. The Beethoven LPs sound a bit warmer, but these CDs are fine. The entire collection is a joy—and inexpensive.

A few minor caveats. The front covers of the CD containers of the Beethoven symphony discs are taken from the Philips Festivo single LP issues. The pictures are beautiful, but the program labeling is wrong on all of them, e.g., the disc in the one that reads Symphonies 1 and 8 contains 1 and 2! The correct listing is on the plain back covers. According to the front

disc covers, the Bruckner Fifth takes up two discs; it only takes one—the other has the bonus works. Finally, the remake of *Leonore* 3 was in 1968, not 1969 as listed in the booklet.

HECHT

Armin Jordan at Lucerne

DEBUSSY: *Afternoon of a Faun; Epigraphes Antiques*; **ROUSSEL:** *Bacchus & Ariane* 2; **CHAUSSON:** *Poem of Love and the Sea*

Felicity Lott, Suisse Romande Orchestra

Audite 95648—75 minutes

The *Epigraphes* are Debussy piano pieces orchestrated by Ernest Ansermet, who also recorded them (I have that recording). They have not been recorded much as orchestral pieces. This is Ansermet's orchestra, but he died in 1969. Still, it sounds the way he made them sound—even in Lucerne at the festival in 1988 and 1994.

Despite the generally beautiful sound, I don't find the Chausson an attractive recording. Maybe it's the way Felicity Lott is miked—or maybe she was just out of sorts that day. She has an irritating edge to her sound. It may be that I am used to a more subtle sound: my favorite recordings are by Victoria de los Angeles and Montserrat Caballé. Chausson was a student of Massenet and Franck, but he was also friends with—and influenced by—Debussy and Albeniz. It is not a mistake to give this song cycle a slight Spanish edge.

And I cannot now like the Roussel—the 19-minute Suite 2 from the ballet. I say "now" because when I was a student in Chicago Jean Martinon made quite a convincing case for the composer. Here his music seems brash and dissonant.

I saw Jordan conduct this orchestra, and I thought he was excellent. I expected to be disappointed, because I remember seeing Ansermet; but Jordan maintained the orchestra's tradition quite well.

VROON

LCO Live

Vaughan Williams, Suk, Dvorak

Christopher Warren-Green

Signum 638—71 minutes

This is a group of 32 strings—too few to be really lush (and, after all, they are English!). Still, they vary from gentle to emphatic, and they put the Suk across well (or is it just because it's the least known of the three serenades?). Great care is taken in phrasing in all

three pieces, but I'd prefer more strings and some majesty. Think of Ormandy and Slatkin in the Vaughan Williams *Tallis Fantasia* and Stokowski in the Dvorak.

The "live" is meant to tell us that this was recorded in concert, before an audience (2019). It does have the immediacy one sometimes senses in concert recordings. There is no applause.

VROON

Charles Munch Decca Recordings

BARRAUD: *Symphony 3*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony 8*; **BERLIOZ:** *Benvenuto Cellini Overture*; *Romeo & Juliet excerpts*; *Les Troyens—Chasse royale et Orage*; *Corsaire Overture*; *Symphonie Fantastique*; *Requiem*; **BIZET:** *Symphony*; *Danse Bohémienne*; *Arlesienne Suite*; *Carmen Suite*; **BRAHMS:** *Violin Concerto* (Renardy); **DEBUSSY:** *Iberia*; *Berceuse Heroique*; **FAURE:** *Pelleas & Melisande Suite*; *Pavane*; **FRANCK:** *Symphonic Variations* (Joyce); *Symphony*; **HAYDN:** *Sinfonia Concertante*; **D'INDY:** *Fervaal Prelude*; **MENDELSSOHN:** *Symphony 5*; **MOZART:** *Adagio & Fugue*; **OFFENBACH:** *Gaité Parisienne*; **PROKOFIEFF:** *Symphony 1*; **RAVEL:** *Piano Concerto Left Hand* (Blancard); *Bolero*; *Daphnis & Chloé Suites*; *Piano Concerto* (Henriot-Schweitzer); **RESPIGHI:** *Pines of Rome*; *Fountains of Rome*; **ROUSSEL:** *Petite Suite*; *Festin de l'Araignée*; *Suite in F*; *Bacchus & Ariane Suite 2*; **SAINT-SAENS:** *Danse Macabre*; *Rouet d'Omphale*; **SCHUMANN:** *Symphony 4*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Symphony 6* (P); **WIDOR:** *Fantaisie* (Herrenschmidt)

Paris Conservatory, French Radio Orchestra, Hungarian Radio, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Concertgebouw, Bavarian Radio

Decca Eloquence 484 0219 [14CD] 4:18

Munch (1891-1968) was born in Strasbourg, on the border between France and Germany. Strasbourg had been given to Germany after the Franco-Prussian War (1870), so Munch was raised in German territory and served in the German army in WW I. After that war the Alsace region was returned to France, and by WW 2 he had become a staunch French patriot. He began as a violinist at the Strasbourg Conservatory (run at that time by Hans Pfitzner), but then studied at the Paris Conservatory and later in Berlin with Carl Flesch. His youth, then, brought him into close contact with the musical cultures of both France and Germany. He became a fine orchestral violinist, serving for eight years as concertmaster of the Gürzenich Orchestra in Cologne (under Abendroth), and then as concertmaster of the Leipzig

Gewandhaus Orchestra under both Walter and Furtwängler. So, by the time Munch made it to the podium he was well seasoned in the orchestral repertory.

His debut as a conductor came relatively late—he was 41—but he leapt to the top ranks very quickly. In this he was aided by his wealthy wife, who was the granddaughter of the founder of Nestle. So, right at the start Munch was able to hire the Walther Straram Orchestra and rent the Theatre des Champs-Élysées to launch his career in 1932. By 1935 he was making recordings with Cortot (Saint-Saens's Fourth Concerto), and soon after he was entrusted with a new orchestra, the Paris Conservatory Orchestra. The first effort with this group, the recording premiere of Ravel's Left-Hand Concerto, came in 1938 and is included in this collection. Munch was active through the war; and in 1949, aged 58, he was appointed successor to Koussevitzky at the Boston Symphony, where he remained until 1962. Following Boston he moved to Paris, guest-conducted, and presided over the founding of the Orchestre de Paris in 1967, shortly before he died from heart attack while on tour in Richmond, Virginia.

These 14 CDs contain all the recordings Munch made for Decca, as well as records done for L'Oiseau-Lyre, DG, Philips, Polydor, and Vega. This is a great deal of music, but a lot of Munch's recordings are not here. Missing are many early performances including wartime ones, which can be found in the 13-CD Warner set. And hundreds of pieces are on the blockbuster 86-CD set of (mostly BSO) recordings for RCA Victor, issued by Sony. (See also N/D 2012.)

The recordings here fall into three neat categories: 1. early pre-war, all 1938-39 and fitting on one CD (Ravel Concerto, Widor, Haydn, and Mozart); 2) eight monaural discs of post-war recordings from 1946-1949, mostly with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra; and 3) five discs from the very end of Boston through the Berlioz Requiem of 1968, his last recording. It adds up to 9 monaural CDs, all before the Boston years and 5 CDs in stereo after Boston.

The earliest performances all sound quite good; you wouldn't guess "pre-war". The Haydn and Mozart are a little dated stylistically, but they are sprightly and never objectionable in a romantic way. The Widor *Fantasy*, new to me, is quite a nice piece, and we hear the premiere recording of the Ravel concerto, nicely done by Jacqueline Blancard.

Munch specialized in French repertory,

and, once established with his Paris Conservatory Orchestra, he seems to have exhausted the French orchestral catalog. Central to his work was Berlioz, represented here by late, stereo recordings of *Symphonie Fantastique* and the *Requiem*, along with earlier monaural recordings with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra: some overtures and instrumental excerpts from *Romeo et Juliette* and *Les Troyens*. None of these pieces strikes me as poorly done, but Munch here faces his stiffest competition: himself! The overtures are very good, particularly the exciting parts of *Benvenuto Cellini* and *Le Corsaire*; but Munch covered this repertory in a much-admired recording of overtures with the BSO, where the sound is stereo. The big pieces—*Symphonie Fantastique*, originally done for Philips, and the *Requiem*, recorded for DG—are both with “guest” orchestras—non-French groups that Munch did not conduct regularly. In both pieces these groups certainly perform well; but Boston, where Munch had imprinted his style over the years, has the more exciting playing. The symphony sounds too refined for me and lacks the grotesque and terrifying moments that other performances have. In the *Requiem* the choral work (Bavarian Radio) is very good, particularly in quieter places like ‘Quaerens me’; but in Munch’s Boston recording the collegiate group (New England Conservatory Chorus) brings a youthful enthusiasm and commitment that are more exciting. And Peter Schreier, who overdubbed the ‘Sanctus’ solo months after the main recording was finished, is little more than satisfactory; he is no substitute for Leopold Simoneau in the Boston recording—in this work Simoneau alone is worth the price of admission.

French composers, coming shortly after Berlioz, are well represented in the postwar monaural recordings, mostly with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra. One disc is given to Franck—the *Symphonic Variations*, with sensitive piano playing by Eileen Joyce and a fine account of the D-minor Symphony—and two colorful tone poems of Saint-Saëns: the wonderfully delicate *Rouet d’Omphale* and the *Danse Macabre* (with the Concertgebouw Orchestra). Except *Danse Macabre* they were recorded in London in 1946 and sound quite good; the *Danse* was done in Amsterdam in 1948.

Bizet is represented by two early recordings (Symphony in C and *La Jolie Fille de Perth*, both 1947 with the LPO) and late stereo performances of the *Carmen* and *L’Arlesienne*

Suites (both 1967 with the New Philharmonia). All of these are quite good. The light, effervescent Bizet symphony is a perfect vehicle for Munch’s talents, and it’s hard to find anything you would want to change in the suites. The music always sounds fresh and spontaneous, never calculated or over-rehearsed.

In addition to Franck, Saint-Saëns, and Bizet, the generation after Berlioz is represented by Fauré (*Pelleas et Melisande* and *Pavane*) along with D’Indy’s overture to *Fervaal*. What pleases me here is Munch’s ability to capture the light, delicate textures of French music without losing backbone and strength. The opening of the Bizet symphony, which crackles and explodes like a sprung trap, has no lack of energy.

One additional piece should be mentioned, *Gaité Parisienne*, which is a collection of excerpts from Offenbach’s stage works, arranged by Manuel Rosenthal (1904-2003). The music was used for a ballet that premiered in 1938, and later orchestral versions have included different numbers of pieces. Here we have 21 little pieces, ranging from half a minute long to about 3-1/2 minutes. These miniatures, some delicate, some rhythmic and dancey, are a perfect vehicle for Munch.

The later French repertory includes, unfortunately, too little Debussy (only *Iberia* and a berceuse); but Ravel and Roussel (whom Munch programmed often) are present in good measure, along with the Third Symphony of Henry Barraud (1900-97). The Ravel pieces—*Daphnis*, the Piano Concerto in G with a fine Nicole Henriot-Schweitzer, and even good old *Bolero*—are all delightful. It is also good to hear several works of Roussel, who was a fine neo-classical composer. Barraud’s work is certainly worthy, but I wouldn’t seek it out. All of these pieces are nicely done, and again you’re hardly aware you’re listening to 70-year-old monaural. As before, though, Munch has to self-compete; I would prefer the later stereo recordings with the BSO, particularly their *Daphnis et Chloe* suites.

We also have some Russian and Italian music. Prokofiev’s *Classical Symphony* is a delight when played with the effervescence that Munch gets from the Paris players; the performance, though a little unkempt, is alive and spontaneous. Even more impressive—in fact one of the finest performances on all 14 discs—is Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique Symphony*. The second theme in I has rarely sounded so lush and lovely, and the finale with its tragic end is perfectly calculated.

The Italian side is covered by two works of Respighi: *Pines of Rome* and *Fountains of Rome*. These are perfect for Munch, who brings excitement to the bigger parts. More impressively, he brings wonderful atmosphere to the many quieter sections; I particularly liked the third of the *Pines* (Janiculum), where the ending (with the nightingale) is beautifully done.

While Munch's basic affinity was to French and Russian repertory, he didn't ignore German music. He certainly must have absorbed a great deal when he was in Leipzig, and he programmed German music regularly in Boston. It is interesting, though, that in the six years after Boston he was based in Paris and conducted almost entirely French music. Nonetheless, we have about 2-1/2 discs of German music here. The Haydn and Mozart were recorded 1938-39. The playing reflects an older style, but it is sprightly and buoyant, not at all embarrassing to modern tastes. The others—Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms—are from the monaural post-war years. Munch tended to take this kind of music fast, and the Beethoven Eighth is a great example. The opening movement is quick, almost driven, but he slows for the second theme, and then (no repeat) charges through the development at fever pitch. This is not grand, reverential conducting, but it is musical and very exciting. It sounds like a real performance, where the musicians have thrown some caution to the wind and gotten excited themselves. Later movements bear this out. The music is never heavy, ponderous, or philosophical. French charm has replaced German weight. The Mendelssohn *Reformation* Symphony and Schumann's Fourth are in the same mold: a little quick, flowing and never heavy, but also exciting and spontaneous. Conductors like Furtwängler and Klemperer have made a majestic statement out of the Schumann (and one wonders if Munch played it under Furtwängler in Leipzig). Munch achieves similar excitement, but without the philosophical musing. In the Brahms Violin Concerto the star of the proceedings is soloist Ossy Renardy, a Viennese violinist (born Oskar Reiss) who immigrated to the US and had a promising career ahead of him when he was killed in an auto accident while traveling on icy roads in New Mexico in 1953, aged only 33; this was apparently his only concerto recording with orchestra. It's a wonderful youthful performance with a splendid cadenza (Kreisler's). Munch gives fine support, but I

would not place it in the first rank if only because the sound and balances are not. All in all Munch makes a good impression in the German repertory, and it is interesting to note that the most "Germanic" pieces (Schumann and Brahms) are done with non-French orchestras, the London Philharmonic and the Concertgebouw.

Recommendations are a little tough. If you are interested by historical performance and Munch's specialties, he is someone you should know. I wouldn't steer you to Munch for German repertory, but for everything else he is very fine. Both this and the Warner set are bargains (about \$45 to \$52. The various boxes of RCA material, which would probably be first choice, seem to be unavailable now, but they will probably show up again.

Munch was said to be much better in the concert hall than in a recording studio because his music was so alive and spontaneous. He did not particularly like to rehearse, and in recording he hated splicing and re-recording. In a sense, then, we'll never get the best of the man. That said, though, there is a sense of moment, of spontaneity that comes from these recordings. Everything is in very good sound for the period, and the monaural selections sound almost as good as the stereo ones. Congratulations, then, to Decca and particularly Mark Obert-Thorn, who restored all the monaural recordings.

ALTHOUSE

Great Classic Film Music 2

Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra/ Iain Sutherland—Ariadne 5009—74 minutes

This rather odd collection is music that appeared in films, but not necessarily written for films. Authenticity to the source material doesn't seem to matter. For example, you get the Overture to Gershwin's *Funny Face*; it was not used in the 1957 film, but for the 1927 stage show. You also get 'September Song', used in the 1950 film *September Affair*, but written by Kurt Weill for the 1938 stage musical *Knickerbocker Holiday*. Also included is John Lanchbery's arrangement of Cole Porter film and stage songs for the 1982 film *Evil Under the Sun*. There is also a medley of music from *Finian's Rainbow* and "themes" from Maurice Jarre's *Lawrence of Arabia* in kitschy arrangements that aren't attributed to anyone. The *Lawrence of Arabia* medley starts with Gershwin's opening notes for 'Wintergreen for Presi-

dent' from *Of Thee I Sing*, which I don't recall being in the *Lawrence* film.

The only tracks of interest are Robert Stolz's 'March' from the 1940 film *Spring Parade* (the only recording I'm aware of) and Benjamin Frankel's jaunty 'Carriage and Pair' from the 1950 film *So Long at the Fair*. These reissues, from apparently other "classical pops" collections, were recorded over several years in various studios and concert halls with widely varying sound and volume. The orchestra playing ranges from acceptable in the studio recordings to under-rehearsed and sloppy in the concert recordings. Iain Sutherland's pacing is flaccid (as in other recordings I've heard from this conductor). Sloppy and flaccid are two terms you don't want connected to a recording of Korngold's Main Title from *The Sea Hawk*, but that's what you get here. This is not recommended.

FISCH

Turkish Piano Trios

Alnar, Tuzun, Baran, Balci

Bosphorus Trio—Naxos 579071—69 minutes

These four trios blend traditional Turkish music and Western forms quite well. All were written from 1950 on, and their nationalism isn't in a fervent romantic style but more influenced by impressionism. Hasan Ferid Alnar especially wrote with spare textures; his 1966 trio rewards careful attention and a willingness to be satisfied with less. The piano part is often merely in octaves. Ferit Tuzun's brief offering from 1950 is fuller and has a little more visceral excitement. It finally isn't compelling, needing either contrast or increasing intensity toward the end.

Ilhan Baran's *Transformations* (1975) does have the needed contrasts, ranging from ethereal pizzicato sections to vibrant dances. The Morgenstern Trio (Azica 71326, Sept/Oct 2019, p170) is more inventive and engaging; the Bosphorus Trio doesn't quite do enough to sell it. Oguzhan Balci's Trio 1 (2019), with movements titled 'Sunrise Red', 'Pure Water', and 'The Mare', brings out the best in the players with its gleaming, tense lines and propelling rhythms. I would like more intensity at the highest swell of 'Pure Water'. Also, as the movement wound down, the different speeds of the violinist's and cellist's vibrato became distracting. Though the musicians need more fire, I'll happily return to the Baran and Balci trios. Sound is fine; notes are in English.

ESTEP

20th Century Polish Chamber Music

SZYMANOWSKI: *Violin Sonata*; **BACEWICZ:** *Sonata 4*; **PANUFNIK:** *Trio*

Huberman Trio—Divine Art 25206—55 minutes

The Huberman Trio is named after one of Poland's greatest violinists, Bronislaw Huberman (1882-1947). Violinist Magdalena Ziarkowska-Kolacka and pianist Barbara Karaskiewicz are joined by cellist Sergei Rysanov. Ziarkowska-Kolacka studied music at the Paderewski Academy of Music in Poznan and is deputy concertmaster of the Leopoldinum Orchestra in Wroclaw. She is writing her doctoral dissertation on Bronislaw Huberman. Karaskiewicz studied at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice and the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw. Rysanov attended music conservatories in Baku and Moscow and is principal cellist of the Czestochowa Philharmonic. All three musicians are excellent and do full justice to the music.

The best-known work here is Szymanowski's (1882-1937) late-symbolist masterpiece, the Violin Sonata from 1904. This is one of the very best performances of it that I have heard, rivalling the accounts by David Oistrakh, Tasmin Little (Nov/Dec 2017), and Chee-Yun Kim (Sept/Oct 2020) and with better sound than the Oistrakh or Kim.

Andrzej Panufnik (1914-91) and Grazyna Bacewicz (1909-69) were from the next generation of Polish composers. Panufnik's trio is late romantic with slightly modern harmonies scattered here and there. It is his Opus 1 and he wrote it when he was 20. Sometimes it has a slight air of foreboding and touches of the kind of sardonic humor that are common in the music of Soviet composers like Prokofieff and Shostakovich. The composer would later have to endure the same kind of bureaucratic oppression that his Soviet counterparts were subjected to.

Bacewicz wrote her Violin Sonata 4 in 1949. It is in a similar late-romantic vein as Panufnik's Trio with the same 20th Century Slavic sardonicism. It is remarkable how this style became popular when the authorities would probably have preferred a more optimistic, naive mood. Both the Trio and Sonata 4 are very fine works, but many may prefer the sunny optimism of Szymanowski's Sonata, which was written before the skies of Europe had been clouded by two horrible wars and several oppressive regimes.

Rysanov's cello was made in Brescia around 1650 by Giouita Rodiani. Good sound.

MAGIL

Premier!

Cheetham, Rheume, Johnston, Koetsier
American Trombone Quartet; Peter Marshall, p
Mark 54634—40 minutes

This quartet consists of tenor trombonists Nathaniel Lee (University of Virginia, Charlottesville Symphony), William Mann (Georgia State University, Des Moines Symphony, Columbus Symphony), Zsolt Szabo (Western Carolina University), and bass trombonist Jemmie Robertson (University of Florida, Gainesville Orchestra). I must say that the group's name is audacious. It must have seemed like a bold move, for four people to name themselves the American Trombone Quartet. But I suppose the name was unclaimed, so why not? All they have to do is prove themselves worthy. Are they?

It is a program of first recordings. I really like the idea behind John Cheetham's 11-minute *Variations on a Brahms Chorale*, where the chorale is the one orchestral trombone sections wait a very long time to play in the finale of Brahms's Symphony 1. That chorale is only four measures long, so Cheetham extends it by repeating the third and fourth measures in a different key, and then in another; and then by repeating the four measures in yet a different key; and then by continuing to extend and work the idea out. It is a beautiful, dignified, and ingenious theme, as are the seven variations that follow.

Mark Rheume's four-movement, 11-minute *American Suite* is based on the interval of a perfect fourth, an interval Aaron Copland used extensively in music that sounds very American. I especially enjoy the fast and intricate II (Scherzo). III is a Coplandesque setting of the song 'Ten Years.' IV is an 'Anthem' with alternating declamatory and lyrical materials. I enjoy the questions this piece raises, the enigmas it leaves unanswered.

A little five-minute Quartet 1 by Paul Johnston begins as a lovely chorale with a high-pitched melody, then takes on gentle swing elements, works its way through various keys, and gives each member of the group chances to shine.

The album ends with a 3-movement, 14-minute Concertino for trombones and piano by the prolific Belgian composer Jan Koetsier (1911-2006), whose music is always skillfully

crafted and usually includes sly humor. I is fast, intricate, and rhythmically vigorous. II is a waltz-like Intermezzo, and III has the intricacy and energy of I. Pianist Peter Marshall delivers a lively reading, even though he is rather overwhelmed at the end.

So, is American Trombone Quartet worthy of the name? Yes, it is an outstanding ensemble with big, resonant, well-matched tone qualities and technical skills. They sound terrific, and I look forward to hearing them again.

KILPATRICK

The Precious Sun's Light and Splendor

Telemann, Handel, Bach, Purcell, Philidor,
Beethoven, Gluck, Brahms, Dubois
Pfeiffer Trumpet Consort
Cantate 58051—67 minutes

It is always a pleasure to hear this fine ensemble: trumpeters Joachim, Harald, and Martin Pfeiffer; timpanist Mathias Muller; and organist Matthias Neumann. This was recorded in Hamburg in 2014, three years before the group's previous release (Jan/Feb 2020: 161).

The program, with plenty of ensemble changes to keep things interesting, opens with two pieces from Telemann's lively *Hamburg Admiralty Music* (1723). A suite by Handel combines a movement from his early oratorio *La Resurrezione* with several from *Water Music*, each movement played by a different ensemble—including solo organ. A Bach set has a little three-minute Concerto from a cantata, then continues with a chorale for trumpets and organ, a dramatic organ fantasia ('Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herr Gott'), and finally the ubiquitous 'Jesus Bleibet meine Freude' for solo trumpet and organ. Another Bach set offers imaginative settings of three chorales.

Seven little selections from Henry Purcell's *King Arthur* also show great imagination in arranging and varying. The Overture passes passages around between the trumpets, organ, and timpani. In an Air, timpani are heard in duet with organ, giving them unusual prominence. Glockenspiel is a tinkling presence in an organ solo; the rare sound of three flugelhorns with organ is warm, and the Finale is suitably splashy.

Timpani is heard without accompaniment in Philidor's little 'Marche de Timballes' and as accompaniment with organ in an unusual setting of Beethoven's 'An die Freude.'

The program ends with 3 romantic songs by Brahms and two Gluck miniatures.

KILPATRICK

Bassoon Alone

Scott Pool—MSR 1734—78 minutes

I have always liked the mellow sound of the bassoon, and I find a program of solo bassoon music much easier to listen to than solo flute or oboe or clarinet. Do remember, though, that this is 78 minutes of one sound. In the first piece, an arrangement of 'Carnival of Venice,' you keep expecting an orchestra to push its way in—or at least a piano, as in the original. The second piece is by Persichetti and involves pitch-bending, which I hate. It dates from 1969. The most recent work here is from 2015 and by Alexandre Ouzounoff. It just sounds like rehearsal exercises to me.

Antonio Lauro died a year before Persichetti (1986) and was known for guitar pieces. These bassoon pieces reflect their guitar origins—and I certainly would rather hear them on guitar! Among the other pieces here are Libby Larsen's 'Jazz Variations' and George Perle's *Inventions* (which begin with a loud and repeated fart-like noise).

Scott Pool was once principal bassoon in Savannah, Georgia and now teaches at Corpus Christi in Texas. But he has played and taught in many places in Europe as well.

VROON

Russian Tales

MIASKOVSKY: *Cello Sonatas 1+2*; **GLAZOUNOV:** *2 Pieces*; *Chant du Menestrel*

Andreas Brantelid; Bengt Forsberg, p
Naxos 573985—55 minutes

Russian Impressions

MIASKOVSKY: *Cello Sonata 2*; **RAKOV:** *3 Pieces*; **GRECHANINOFF:** *Sonata*; **BALAKIREV:** *Romance*

Ramon Jaffe; Andreas Frolich, p
Paladino 110—67 minutes

Here we have two similar productions, held together by Nikolai Miaskovsky (1881-1950), whose strong and lovely Cello Sonata 2 of 1948 suggests that you might not want both recordings. Sonata 1, written back in 1911, is also well worth our attention as are the Glazounov works, the 'Melodie' and 'Serenade Espagnole' that he originally wrote in 1888 for cello and orchestra and then arranged with piano, and the 'Minstrel Song' of 1900.

Brantelid and Forsberg have written their own liner notes. Brantelid is a 33-year-old cellist, but Frolich is up in his later 60s. They have played together since 2002 and put across this program to fine effect.

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Jaffe and Frolich are more alike in age, judging by their photographs. They work together with notable warmth and dexterity. Nikolai Rakov's *Poeme*, *Romance*, and *Serenade* are from 1943, and Balakirev's *Romance* was written back in 1856.

When you come right down to it, it isn't easy to tell these players apart. The cellists both use consistent vibrato and have similar phrasings. This is Russian music played to a turn by European musicians. Both are fine programs, played and recorded beautifully. I am lucky that I don't have to choose between them.

D MOORE

Music We Love

Victoria Mullova, v; Misha Mullov-Abbado, db
Onyx 4220—54 minutes

This is an unusual collection of works from a variety of sources played by a violinist mother and her double-bassist son, who does not pick up a bow.

The music includes three pieces composed by the bassist, called 'Blue Deer,' 'Brazil,' and 'Little Astronaut.' They are attractive and substantial and go well with their comrades, which include Schumann's 'Traumerei' and Bach's Violin Sonata in B minor (if you can take these without keyboard accompaniment) and lesser-known recent composers like Laercio de Freitas (b. 1941), who wrote 'O Cabo Pilanga,' Shalom Hanoch (b. 1946), who turns in 'Shir Lelo Shem,' John McLaughlin (b. 1942), who depicts 'Celestial Terrestrial Commuters'; Lenine (b. 1959) and Dudu Falcao (b. 1961) who share 'O Silencio des Estrelas,' Antonio Carlos Jobim (1927-94) whose 'Sabia' brings him back to life, a traditional Brazilian folk song, 'Caico,' and Lepo Sumera (1950-2000), who ends this attractive program with a theme from *Kavadine Karbes*, otherwise known as Spring Fly.

All of this is pleasant listening and played with clarity and warmth by these relatives. We are given pictures of them but not informative liner notes. My ears took it well and I hope to hear from them again.

D MOORE

Rossini for Cello

Andrea Noferini; Massimo Giorgi, db; Denis Zardi, p—Tactus 791817—75 minutes

'All About Rossini' might have been a more accurate title for this program, since it includes

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Bohuslav Martinu's Variations on a Rossini theme, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's setting of 'Figaro' from *The Barber of Seville*, Gaetano Braga's 'Leggenda Valacca' (Angel's Serenade), and Vittorio Monti's 'Czardas'. Rossini is represented by his big 3-movement Duet for cello and double bass, here played to a turn by Noferini and Giorgi.

Zardi enters, and we have Rossini's own variations on 'Une Larme', 'La Promenade en Gondola', Tarantella from *Soirees Musicales* 8, the Ballet from *Moise et Pharaon*, 'Un mot a Paganini', and an Allegro Agitato, all played with piano.

Noferini has been with us for a while. I have him playing Alfredo Casella's Concerto (Naxos 572416: March/April 2011); Offenbach Duets (Brilliant 94475; July/Aug 2014) and The Cello Virtuoso (Bongiovanni 5073: Sept/Oct 1998, p. 266). He is one of the most virtuosic and musical cellists around, and he works so well with his musical companions that I have no hesitation in recommending this.

D MOORE

Double

Bach, Mendelssohn, Stamitz, Telemann, Tchaikovsky
Michel Portal, Paul Meyer, cl; Wallonia Chamber Orchestra—Alpha 415—65 minutes

In January 2018 the legendary French clarinetist, saxophonist, composer, and crossover artist Michel Portal visited Swiss-born clarinetist and conductor Paul Meyer and the Royal Chamber Orchestra of Wallonia in southern Belgium for a concert designed to delight clarinet fans of all ages. The program includes the Telemann Concerto for Two Chalumeaux, the Stamitz Clarinet Concerto 4 for two clarinets, the Mendelssohn Concert-pieces, and the Tchaikovsky 'Autumn Song' from his piano suite *The Seasons* in a transcription for clarinet and string quartet by Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996). Portal and Meyer conclude the album with a piece for musical clock by Carl Philipp Emmanuel (CPE) Bach, rendered as a duet for two clarinets.

Overall, the performances are good, full of nimble technique and lively phrasing. The orchestra is professional, presenting the concertos and concertpieces with polish and vigor and painting a gorgeous backdrop in the Tchaikovsky. Portal and Meyer share the same creative intent; yet their timbres are strikingly divergent: one clear and resonant, the other

hazy and spread. As a result, the blend and teamwork vary from passage to passage and from satisfactory to disappointing. Clarinet fans should find enough to enjoy; but better duet albums have been made.

HANUDEL

Baroque Recorder Pieces

Tabea Debus; Jonathan Rees, gamba; Alex McCartney, g & theorbo
Delphian 34243—70 minutes

The Young Classical Artists Trust, a British charity akin to the American Concert Artists Guild, presents this program of selections mostly from the 14th Century to about 1750. Many are arrangements or originally were sung. Two others are new and were written in 2019. Details of the instruments are given in the booklet along with dates for composers or when pieces were published. All three performers are entirely beyond technique. From her treble and alto voicings, German Tabea Debus gives us serenity and spunk; her collaborators support with perfect precision. Their affinity and energy just might inspire you to dance during the *Spagnoletta* by Caroubel published back in 1612. Try to resist it!

GORMAN

Brandon Patrick George, flute

Steven Beck, Jacob Greenberg, p
Hanssler 18039—67 minutes

Exceptionally neat, clean, and unobtrusive articulation and breaths that interrupt the flow characterize the approach to the Bach Partita in A minor. I also don't get the sense that he's really communicating anything much here. It sounds intentional, and I'd like to contrast that with natural or inspired. Occasional ornaments and the general approach to the line(s) neither harm nor help. There are many better performances. He's much better on the weirdnesses in Kalevi Aho's two-movement *Solo 3* (1990-1), the first movement of which constantly alternates among notes played ordinarily, altered fingerings, harmonics, and other such stuff.

Flute and piano sound absolutely great together in the Prokofieff Sonata and Boulez Sonatina. Our flutist seems to have a lot of power while still sounding gentle—the legacy of his French training from Michel Debost at Oberlin and Sophie Cherrier at the French National Conservatory. For the Prokofieff, he and Greenberg give us a great rendition. I can't

believe he chooses to tongue the Ds at the top of the triplets in the first movement, but maybe it's easier for him that way. A moderate tempo for II, but the music works fine with more whirlwind or relative leisure. Same approach for the finale: not trying to use speed to make the writing work. With Beck, the Boulez also gets an exemplary treatment. Only a few people have recorded this piece, and these two nail it to the wall. Whether you might enjoy the piece even done this well is another matter, but here's the opportunity to find out.

GORMAN

French Flute & Voice

Caplet, Debussy, Delage, Emmanuel, Gaubert, Hue, Ibert, Koechlin, Ravel, Roussel
Alexis Kossenko, Magali Mosnier, fl; Sabine Devieille, s; Anna Reinhold, mz; Emmanuel Olivier, p—Aparte 227—68 minutes

The distinguished French performer, composer, music teacher, and conductor Paul Taffanel (1844-1908) has been commemorated in text by Edward Blakeman through a biography published in 2005 and in sound by Kenneth Smith and Paul Rhodes in a 3-disc set from Divine Art (May/June 2011: 198). His playing became the international standard even before the French flute school's transatlantic exponents came to New York and Boston in the early 1900s, having been invited by Walter Damrosch and Pierre Monteux.

Louis Lot (1807-96) was the preeminent French flute maker of the late 19th Century. The two instruments lent for this recording by French flutist and saxophonist Bernard Duplaix were owned by the eminent performers and teachers Adolphe Hennebains (1862-1914) and father and son Joseph (1895-1983) and Jean-Pierre Rampal (1922-2000). The Hennebains instrument was made in 1877 and the Rampal was made in 1880. Accompanying them is an Erard piano from 1902.

Behind much of the program is the neoclassicism that led to the revival of the Olympic Games by educational reformer Pierre de Coubertin, Baron of Coubertin, and the architectural style of the Columbian Exposition of 1893, having been brought from the French School of Fine Arts by Richard Hunt. Thus references such as Anacreon, Apollo, and Diana permeate the largely contemporary texts. In addition, we have the rare opportunity to hear Debussy's *Flute of Pan* or *Syrinx* with narration from the naiad and the oread.

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The young French mezzo-soprano Anna Reinhold sings most of these selections. As a native speaker and graduate of the French National Conservatory, where she studied with Isabelle Guillaud, there are many ways she is ideally suited to this repertory. Her vibrato seems a little too big and delivery a little too operatic, so she doesn't always communicate the intimacy and simplicity many of us might think French songs ought to have. Understatement and mystery and reverie are what these texts are about. The potency and poetry of the flute sounds is not too much—it is just right. Kossenko and Olivier intertwine with and support the voice wonderfully. We even get to hear an early example of flutter-tonguing in Caplet's 'Listen, my heart' from 1924. Thus it is largely satisfying performances that are presented to us in sound that is absolutely accurate and clear. A substantial booklet includes texts and translations.

GORMAN

20th & 21st Century Flute by Women

BONIS: *Sonata*; **BOULANGER:** *Nocturne*; **GALBRAITH:** *Atacama*; **GRIER:** *Sonata*; **TAILLEFERRE:** *Forlane*; *Pastorale*

Erin K Murphy; Kirstin Ihde, p
Albany 1829—53 minutes

These selections were written between 1902 and 2001. Lita Grier's *Sonata* is the companion to the Eldin Burton *Sonatina* we never knew we'd been missing all along—that is, a delightful addition to our mid-20th Century Americana most characterized by Blitzstein, Copland, Foss, Harris, and Schuman. Although Nancy Galbraith (b 1951) uses extended playing techniques such as flutter tonguing, whistle tones, circular breathing, singing while playing, pitch bends, and air sounds, her piece is a very accessible and musical composition. Whether or not it evokes a Chilean desert to you, it has something to say worth hearing.

Erin Murphy has a sound with lots of body. Her very vocal and relaxed approach to playing is maintained from the softest to the loudest moments. Since this concept traces finally back to the great French flutist Marcel Moyse, one of the teachers of her teacher Trevor Wye, it comes from the French tradition behind three of these composers and indicative of the sound that became the international standard. The Scherzo of the Bonis *Sonata* has some unevenness that ought to have been worked out, and I would have liked it faster. From the

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keyboard, Kirstin Ihde sounds marvelous, is balanced well, and contributes much.

A booklet has notes by our flutist with biographies and photographs of the performers; on the cover is an oil painting, *Day and Night* (2017) by Canadian-born and Oklahoma-based Benjamin Murphy.

GORMAN

20th Century Flute & Harp

ALWYN: *Naiads*; **BEDETTI:** *Marsyas & Apollo*; **DEBUSSY:** *For Invoking Pan*; *Syrinx*; **GAUBERT:** *Greek Diversion*; **INGHEL-BRECHT:** *Antique Sketches*; **MAZZONI:** *Caprice 3*; **MOUQUET:** *Greek Diversion*; **SCIARRINO:** *Faun Whistling at a Blackbird*; **SHILKRET:** *The Nymphs*

Claudio Ortensi & Anna Pasetti

Brilliant 95925—72 minutes

This program collects little known pieces, mostly short and neoclassical. The exception is William Alwyn's "fantasy-sonata" *Naiads*, which runs just under 15 minutes. Several by Debussy, Gaubert, Mouquet, and Shilkret are heard for the first time in their original instrumentation.

Claudio Ortensi has an attractive sound, but his tendency of just cutting notes off to breathe strikes experienced ears as amateur and crude. He doesn't have much resonance. Comparing his playing with Kenneth Smith, who has recorded a movement of the Mouquet, will reveal the vast difference between them. A deeper difference is the overall level of expression in his playing: it's limited. Paula Robison comes to mind as the polar opposite of this, although others such as Rachel Brown and Leonard Garrison come to mind as well. Occasional unclear technical passages clinch the decision that the flute playing would not be a reason to get this album.

Anna Pasetti comes through clearly, though the bass notes seem recessed. The extent to which her playing is fine, though, is undone by another factor. The sound is close enough to have the sort of nuances that are lost from a greater distance. That's mostly positive. Final notes finish with a halo rather than a resonant kind of echo. It gives the impression of a low-quality production. Track 5 sounds downright weird. A little more than 10 minutes of this was enough.

GORMAN

Banter

GLASS: *Etude 6*; **RAVEL:** *Mother Goose*; **STACKPOLE:** *Banter, Bicker, Breathe*; **FALLA:** *El Amor Brujo*

Davin-Levin Duo

IRIS 0—69 minutes (440-225-5725)

The unusual duo of guitar and harp presents numerous challenges. The instruments are so alike in their plucked-string sound, yet tonally identifiable. This effort brings together two excellent performers, savvy arrangements, and technical expertise in recording.

Opening with Davin's arrangement of Philip Glass's *Etude No. 6*, the duo demonstrates exquisite precision both rhythmically and musically, maintaining interest in a piece that might, in its minimalism, be boring. Not so here, with perfect coordination in phrasing and dynamics between the players.

Maurice Ravel's *Ma Mere l'Oye*, arranged by the duo, is a treat for the ears, with a particularly effective movement, 'Laideronnette, Imperatrice des Pagodes', well-rendered with its contrasting sections. The arrangement of the Falla presents balanced roles where each instrument alternates between melody and accompaniment—very nice!

Will Stackpole's 'Banter, Bicker, Breathe' is a virtuosic contemporary work commissioned by the duo, musically portraying each activity in the title. The ten-minute work maintains the listener's interest and speaks volumes.

A second commissioned work, Dylan Mattingly's 'Vita Nuova', opens with repeated-note pentatonic sequences with a variety of time offsets which sound harsh with the guitar, recorded at a high level, creating an irritating effect, saying very little. There is beauty here in the tone and relaxed spaciousness of the two instruments in the second section and the delicate interplay of crystalline notes in the conclusion. Very imaginative!

Liner notes, of which there are none, or a link to them on a website, would be helpful.

MCCUTCHEON

Tales from Malaysia

Nathan Fischer, g—Soundset 1114—47 minutes

What a unique recording! This music is all new to my ears, and it is delightful!

The works are framed by variations on Malaysian and Indonesian songs written by the late John Duarte (1919-2004), a British guitarist and writer who composed these for a Malaysian guitar camp he attended in 1996.

Los Angeles-based composer Amirah Ali's 'Salji' (which means snow) was originally written for the piano and is artfully transcribed by Fischer himself. His flowing phrasing along with dynamics enhanced by the reverberation of the hall (and possibly the studio settings) yield a beautiful recording.

Fischer's arrangements of Three Popular Malaysian Songs by Az Samad, who lives in Kuala Lumpur, offers a nice contrast in style and texture, with the second piece, 'Welcome, Love' and the third, 'The Sunset Begins to Weep', delivered with engaging emotion. This is music that touches us deeply.

A poignant piece, 'Wasted Love' by jazz saxophonist Patrick Terbrack, is framed by two short pieces by British composer Vincent Lindsey-Clark, 'Malaysian Sunrise' and 'Malaysian Landscape'. The sequencing of these three pieces speaks to the eternal qualities of nature and the comparative transience of human feelings.

Fischer, who is a Career Advisor with the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, is simultaneously a mature artist with all the necessary performance attributes—tone, clarity, and sensitivity—as well as the ability to envision and produce a unique project such as this, which points to the value of music to bring the people of the world together with respect and appreciation for each other's art.

Take a trip to somewhere you've never been with this recording.

MCCUTCHEON

Kharacter

KHALIL: *Suite Apuntes; The Cascade Summoning; Fantasia Bachiana*; **DUPHLY:** *La Forqueray; La Victoire*; **HENZE:** *Cello Serenade*

Jonas Khalil, g—Hänsler 2004—41 minutes

Opening with an original work, *Suite Apuntes, Homenaje a Leo Brouwer*, Khalil delivers a technical *tour de force*: a fantasy using quotations from Brouwer's better-known works, including *El Decameron Negro* and *Cuban Landscape with Rain* in the first movement and *Elogio de la Danza* and a snippet from *Danza Caracteristica* in III. It was composed to honor Brouwer's 80th birthday, and Khalil has truly captured his spirit.

Khalil's two transcriptions of keyboard works by mid-18th Century composer Jacques Duphly are quite listenable, and 'La Victoire' is delivered with aplomb. His transcription of Hans Werner Henze's Solo Cello Serenade is delivered expressively, with each short move-

ment (the longest is 1:20) making its point in a succinct manner.

Khalil's original work, *The Cascade Summoning*, is created almost completely with arpeggios that make creative use of the guitar's harmonic possibilities, going beyond what many players create by chord planing, i.e. simply moving chord shapes up and down the neck. This music clearly is on a higher level and becomes a six-minute cosmic journey. The combination of Khalil's sense of tone and his dexterity are emotionally engaging.

Khalil's 'Fantasia Bachiana', unconsciously based on a Bach chorale tune, is not as good. While the writing makes good use of the instrument, it lacks the tightly-knit construction one would have hoped for in a piece based on Bach's music.

The album concludes with Khalil's restful performance of his arrangement of the 'Anthem' from Gluck's *Iphigenie en Tauride*. Ahhh.

Khalil shows himself to be quite competent on the classical guitar, and this is unusual, because his other career is with a heavy metal band—none of that is evident here! Just music from a very open-minded and serious musician.

MCCUTCHEON

Fandango!

Aguado, Giuliani, Coste, Sor, Regondi, Boccherini
Johan Lofving, g; Consone Quartet; Nanako Aramaki, castanets—Resonus 10260—73 minutes

Swedish-born Johan Lofving presents a program of mostly solo romantic guitar works played on a restored period instrument from 1850. It is nicely recorded here so the listener can truly hear the difference from current classical guitars.

Staples of the guitar repertoire follow the delightful opening piece, 'Fandango' by Dionisio Aguado—not often recorded. The oft-heard Op. 15 Sonata by Giuliani is played with certainty and a wide range of dynamics, tone, and articulation, perfect for this style period. II, the adagio, is played with expression, Lofving taking just the right amount of time to say what he has to say, transporting us into that world which eludes so many performers.

In Napoleon Coste's 'Soirees d'Auteuil', Lofving sings with a beautifully balanced melody made interesting with frequent changes in tone color. His performance of Giulio Regondi's Introduction and Caprice confirms his mastery of this period's music.

The much-recovered Boccherini quintet,

with its concluding 'Fandango' movement is played with energy and grace.

MCCUTCHEON

Mandolin & Guitar

Marucelli; Mozzani; Munier

Duo Zigliotti Merlante—Tactus 860003—66 min

This recording includes music composed by three late 19th Century and early 20th Century Italian composers who wrote for the guitar and the mandolin, parlor instruments that were flourishing at the time. This was recorded in Bologna on Italian instruments made in the late 1800s.

The lighthearted 'Valzer-Concerto', by Carlo Munier begins the program. Munier was a mandolinist and founded the first classical mandolin quartet. He had also studied the guitar. Later in the recording, keeping with a tradition in this period of transcribing works from popular operas, Meunier's *Rossiniana* includes familiar operatic themes and energetic, attention-getting tremolo octaves in the mandolin.

Guitar accompaniments are reminiscent of Paganini's works for guitar and violin, such as the *Centone di Sonate* with clear harmonic progressions and effective bass lines played by the guitar.

To maintain variety, the recording sequences the works so that no composer has two in a row. Mood transitions are effective, especially when Munier's lyrical 'Preghiera' is followed by Marucelli's lively 'Moto Perpetuo'. There follows the only multimovement work here, Munier's *Dances Bijoux*, a delightful group of five contrasting pieces played with a variety of sensibilities. The duo is always of one mind, so we can enjoy the artistic fruits of their two-decade history.

Though the one piece included here by Luigi Mozzani is lovely, and the pieces by Enrico Marucelli are stylish and rich, Munier's music, chosen to both open and close, shines brightly. His 'Capriccio Spagnuolo' brings this recording to a climactic, exciting conclusion.

Having performed over 20 years on modern instruments, Duo Zigliotti Merlante searched for a more authentic sound and have achieved their goal with this charming mixture of pieces. With such well-recorded tone colors, this alone would be a reason to hear the disc. The liner notes are quite informative, and include excellent photos of the instruments—a delight for the eyes as well!

MCCUTCHEON

Guitar Double Concertos

DEL PUERTO: *Mistral*; **ABRIL:** *Concierto de Gibralfaro*; **GUERENA:** *Concierto Ecuanime*

Miguel Trapaga; Teresa Folgueira, g; Angel Luis Castaño, accordion; Fernando Arias, vib

Naxos 573816—71 minutes

The program opens with *Mistral*, a 20-minute work by Spanish composer David del Puerto, who won his homeland's National Music Prize in 2005, and who plays classical and electric guitar. The piece is dedicated to the soloists heard here, guitarist Miguel Trapaga and accordionist Angel Luis Castaño, who premiered the work in 2012 and thus have had time to absorb it fully.

The writing and scoring are brilliant, the guitar taking more of the spotlight. The orchestral accompaniment is fluid and spacious. The language is modern, but accessible. The accordion could have a little more presence; it is not often as well-defined as the guitar, but Castaño's virtuosity is still audible.

Serenely melodic, reminiscent of Castelnuovo-Tedesco, this world-premiere recording of *Concierto de Gibralfaro* (2003) for two guitars and orchestra by Anton Garcia Abril (b. 1933) is simply sweet music, with Trapaga's guitar interlocked precisely with Teresa Folgueira's. The scoring gives the guitars the aural space to weave their magic, with the orchestra providing a variety of *pianissimo* accompaniments during solo sections and well-written interludes in between. Even at a length of almost 30 minutes, the music is never boring or superfluous.

Concierto Ecuanime for guitar, vibraphone, and orchestra is by Javier Lopez de Guereña (b. 1957). It is the most contemporary-sounding work on the recording. The more listener is prepared for it by the previous excellent music as well as the high caliber of the musicians. The contrasting timbres and attacks of the guitar and vibraphone are skillfully handled and recorded.

Bravo! to producer, engineer and editor Bertram Kornacher and Naxos for bringing this music to us! This is one of the most creative programs I have ever heard.

MCCUTCHEON

Baroque Masterpieces

Handel, Couperin, Weiss, Bach, Vivaldi

Artis Duo—Naxos 551420—51 minutes

This is almost entirely transcriptions for two

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guitars by the German husband-and-wife Artis Guitar Duo.

Fluidly moving from section to section in Handel's 'Chaconne in G,' the duo plays brilliantly with perfectly matched dynamics and phrasing that engage the listener with their vibrancy and immaculate playing.

Contrasting this large opening work is a series of delightful shorter keyboard transcriptions by Francois Couperin. As in the Handel, ornamentation abounds, with well-matched trills.

Sylvius Leopold Weiss's three-movement lute duo, Concerto in D, is a new piece to this reviewer.

The duo includes an interesting transcription of the Capriccio in B-flat by JS Bach, composed on the occasion of his older brother Johann Jakob leaving home to play the trumpet in the king of Sweden's orchestra. The six contrasting short movements grow in intensity to a climactic fugue which the duo delivers admirably.

Joined by baroque guitarist Olaf von Gonnissen and theorist Sergio Bermudez Bulido playing continuo, the duo continues with Vivaldi's Concerto in G, R 532 for two mandolins—an uplifting, often recorded work by guitar duos. What makes this recording special is the texture supplied by the plucked-string continuo. It sings here with lovely ornamentation. The baroque guitar offers a lively supportive role in the outer movements, with full chords and occasional *rasgueados*. III is a joyful *tour de force*, bringing the program to a fitting conclusion.

This is excellent, technically proficient playing of music both familiar and unfamiliar, performed with sensitivity that is a joy to hear.

MCCUTCHEON

The Hitchcock Spinnet

Abel, Burney, Geminiani, Loeillet, Mattheson, Telemann, Veracini

Anke Dennert, spinet; Gabriele Steinfeld, v; Simone Eckert, gamba—Genuin 20696—68 min

This seems like a nice disc to offer for sale as a memento in a museum's gift shop. It has music that made it to London in the 18th Century, before and after Thomas Hitchcock built this spinet there in 1730.

The spinet is a small single-manual harpsichord built sideways to fit into a tight space. This one belongs to a Telemann museum in Hamburg. Anke Dennert plays four multi-movement solos on it. One or both string play-

ers join her for the four other interspersed pieces, giving a nice variety to the presentation. The ensemble selections are my favorite parts of the program. Some listeners might not fancy the often astringently penetrating tone of Steinfeld's gut-strung violin.

This spinet sounds relatively undistinguished and deferential when covered up by the string players. Any generic one-register harpsichord would make a similar impression. I would welcome some thicker chords and bass octaves from Dennert to help the balance in these ensemble pieces, as recommended by CPE Bach in his book about the true art of playing keyboards. Some crushed non-harmonic tones would sound good here, too, as explained in Geminiani's treatises.

Among the solo pieces, some reading mishaps mar III and IV of John Loeillet's five-movement lesson in E minor. The left-hand part is missing some sharps, making the harmonic progressions odd. Dennert's interpretations here are generally glib and fast, anyway, rushing through the ornaments and not giving the spinet's tone much time to speak. That approach works fine in Charles Burney's more boisterous sonata (1776).

Someone neglected to list Veracini on the front cover. His Sonata 12 (1744) and Burney's are the most substantial pieces here, taking us beyond the genteel rococo smile of the other salon pieces.

Other records by Dennert are her set of Telemann's harpsichord overtures (July/Aug 2016) and some Hamburg chamber music in her duo with Steinfeld (July/Aug 2017: 200).

LEHMAN

Black Swans

First Recordings of Black Performers

Florence Cole Talbert, Antoinette Garnes, s; Hattie King Reavis, a; Roland Hayes, t; Harry Burleigh, bar; Edward H.S. Boatner, b-bar; R. Nathaniel Dett, p; Clarence Cameron White, v

Parnassus 96067—79 minutes

We are told these are the first recordings of black classical music performers, most not reissued in 100 years, and some evading extinction through a single copy. There are some excellent performances and some average ones. Based only on this recording, Burleigh was not a great operatic singer, but he has a compelling charisma and earnestness. His voice is powerful; his diction is perfect; but his sound is sometimes throaty and forced on higher notes. He was born one year after the

end of the American Civil War to a Union veteran and a daughter of a former slave. His grandfather taught him the spirituals and slave songs he learned in captivity. His big break finally came at 26 when he was admitted to the National Conservatory of Music, where he became friends with Dvorak during Dvorak's lengthy American sabbatical. He introduced many spirituals to Dvorak, who internalized the inspiration and infused several of his most famous compositions with their influence.

Dett proves himself with performances of warm and nostalgic pieces. Oh for the days when popular music sounded like this! White shows a keen musical intuition, of comparable quality to more famous artists of the time. Slight intonation problems remove some of the luster, but an old-world Kreisler-like charm will draw listeners in. Hayes is likewise irresistible; he sounds exactly as a tenor should, with a pure, natural, silky tone. Garnes and Talbert are top-shelf talents. Garnes displays stunning, breathtaking virtuosity in the Verdi arias, and I hope these recordings inspire research into her mostly unknown background. I suspect I will revisit Talbert's contributions many times. Many thanks to the wonderful work of Steve Smolian, Tim Brooks, and Leslie Gerber, and anybody else involved with the discovery and restoration of these recordings. Their importance as historical landmarks cannot be overstated. I am struck by the humility and optimism of the repertoire choices and performances. Mostly recorded during and shortly after the Great War, their message is an inspiring reminder of sincere art gazing longingly toward a brighter future.

KELLENBERGER

Ukrainian Organ

KOTYUK: *Fanfare; Song of Zechariah*; **MACHI:** *Piece in 5 Movements*; **GONCHARENKO:** *Fantasia*; **KOLESSA:** *Passacaglia*; **OSTROVA:** *Chacona*; **KRYSCHANOWSKI:** *Fantasy*

Gail Archer

Meyer 20042—55 minutes

Archer is on the music faculty at Barnard College, where she is Professor of Professional Practice and director of the Barnard-Columbia Chorus and Chamber Choir. She has pursued an active concert career, made several recordings, and is a fine player, but unfortunately this is not one of her most memorable efforts. I found these pieces tiresome and meandering, pointless noise all sounding the same. I could barely listen to the whole program. The bland,

slightly out of tune 3-manual, 37-rank Rieger-Kloss organ in the Armenian Catholic Church in Chernivtsi, Ukraine, doesn't help.

DELCAMP

Isabelle Demers, organ

MACMILLAN: *Cortege Academique*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Sleeping Beauty pieces*; **REGER:** *Introduction, Passacaglia & Fugue in E minor*; **LAURIN:** *3 Short Studies*; **MENDELSSOHN:** *Midsummer Night's Dream excerpts*; **DUPRE:** *Prelude and Fugue in B*

Acis 41752—71 minutes

This is played on the 4-manual, 132-rank 1928/2006 EM Skinner organ in Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago. Demers is Professor of Organ at Baylor University and has enjoyed an international concert career. The program contains her own transcriptions of Tchaikovsky and Mendelssohn excerpts, the lively march by Canadian composer Ernest Macmillan, a spirited performance of the Dupre; and three colorful pieces by another Canadian, Rachel Laurin. The centerpiece is Reger's massive Op. 127 which, at over 30 minutes, is one of the composer's longest. Unless you are a fan of Reger, this is an endless bore.

Demers is a fine player who uses the resources of this organ in imaginative and colorful ways. My problem is with the recording levels—you will need to turn the volume down for loud and up for soft.

Excellent notes on the music by the performer, with photos and specification.

DELCAMP

Organ 1530-1660

Du Caurroy, Attaignant, Titelouze, L. Couperin, H Praetorius, Hassler, Sweelinck, Scheidt, Tunder

Aude Heurtematte

Raven 165 [2CD] 82 minutes

This program of music from the 16th and 17th Centuries is played on a modern instrument (2010) built in the style of a French organ of about 1630. According to the booklet notes, the characteristics of the instrument owe much to innovations in organ design proposed by Jean Titelouze (1563-1633), who was appointed organist of Rouen Cathedral in 1588 and is widely regarded as the founder of the French organ school. Titelouze was Flemish, and he became versed in organ building during his youth in St Omer, then part of the Spanish Netherlands. He enlisted the assistance of his fellow countryman Crespin Carlier to

redesign the organ at Rouen, regarded by some as the birth of the French baroque organ.

The organ heard here is at the Church of the Assumption in Champcueil, France, about 35 miles south of Paris. It is the work of the Belgian builder Dominique Thomas, who in 2000 took over direction of the firm founded by his father in 1965. The organ has three manuals and is tuned in meantone. The manuals and pedals have two split keys per octave to enable the player to differentiate between G-sharp and A-flat and between D-sharp and E-flat.

The program consists of liturgical organ music and secular compositions. The opening work is the last of a set of 42 fantasies in 3 to 6 parts by Eustache Du Caurroy (1549-1609), published anonymously in 1610 to be played either by an instrumental consort or at the keyboard. The earliest music here is a group of four courtly dances arranged for keyboard and published by Pierre Attaignant (c1494-1552). Titelouze himself is represented by four organ verses of the plainsong hymn 'Exsultet Coelum Laudibus' from his first set of organ hymns published in 1623. Louis Couperin (1626-61) was the most important member of his musical family before François. Four organ fantasies dating from 1654-56 are included here.

The rest of the program consists of music by non-French composers illustrating the adaptability of the Champcueil organ to other musical traditions of the time. There are three Magnificat verses by Hieronymus Praetorius (1560-1629), four keyboard arrangements from 1601 of secular German songs by Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612), a majestic and expansive ricercar by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621), five variations on the Advent plainsong hymn 'Veni Redemptor Gentium' by Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654), and two pieces by Franz Tunder (1614-67), who was Buxtehude's predecessor at St Mary's in Lübeck: a chorale fantasia on 'In Dich Hab Ich Gehoffet, Herr' and a free North German prelude in G minor.

For most listeners this will be a rather esoteric program. Some performers have the gift of bringing such music to life, but I cannot say that is the case here. The playing here is not notable for flowing and coherent phrases. Sometimes it seems as if each note is in its own box with little connection to other notes. I had a similar response to her recording of the two Couperin Organ Masses on the 1768 Clic-

quot organ at the church of St Gervais in Paris, where she is organist (Raven 153; M/A 2020).

The Champcueil organ is remarkably attractive as recorded here. There is plenty of heft in full registrations; but they never scream, as do so many instruments, historical and modern. Here the *grand jeu* produces a majestic fullness that does not tire the ear. Meanwhile, the luscious quieter registers will charm the attentive listener.

GATENS

From the Ground Up

ALCOCK: *Introduction & Passacaglia*; **MURRILL:** *Postlude on a Ground*; *Carillon*; **WEST:** *Passacaglia in B minor*; **GRACE:** *Reverie on University*; *Resurgam*; **GIBBONS:** *Ground*; **WILLAN:** *Chorale Prelude on a Melody by Gibbons*; *Introduction, Passacaglia & Fugue*; **BLACKFORD:** *Prelude*; *Passacaglia*

David Hill, org—Regent 539—68 minutes

Hill is best known as a widely respected choral and orchestral conductor, with appointments as director of the Bach Choir, BBC Singers, Leeds Philharmonic Society, the Yale Schola Cantorum, and Associate Guest Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony. What is often overlooked is his distinguished career as an organist. He held posts at Winchester and Westminster Cathedrals, Westminster Abbey, and St John's Cambridge, producing over 80 recordings of a broad-ranging repertoire.

This program presents pieces by English composers in the form of a passacaglia or similar bass-oriented structures. The most familiar will be the Healey Willan, which has been recorded many times, but is distinguished here by a particularly magisterial performance. Also of note are the pieces by Herbert Murrill and Harvey Grace, which are well worth the attention of organists.

The 1879/1930/1981/2005 4-manual, 89-stop Hill organ in Peterborough Cathedral offers a perfect complement to the performer and the music. I can't imagine better performances. Intelligent notes on the music with specification. Rule Britannia!

DELCAMP

Le Grand Jeu—French Baroque

Marchand, Rameau, Dandrieu, Couperin, Grigny, Lully, Corrette, d'Anglebert, Charpentier, Purcell, Handel

Gaetan Jarry—Versailles 24—65 minutes

This recording shows off the 1711 organ in the

Royal Chapel at the Palace of Versailles. It was built by Julien Tribuot and Robert Clicquot after plans drawn up in 1679 by Etienne Enocq. It was inaugurated by François Couperin. Over the years, the organ was rebuilt many times, by succeeding generations of the Clicquot family in the 18th Century, by Aristide Cavaillé-Coll in 1872, and Victor Gonzalez in 1935. By then it bore little resemblance to the instrument of 1711. In 1994 Jean-Loup Boisseau and Bertrand Cattiaux restored the organ to its original design. Michel Chapuis inaugurated the instrument in 1995. The organ is mounted above the altar at the east end of the chapel. This is because the royal gallery is at the opposite end of the chapel, and that is where the organ would usually be placed.

Gaetan Jarry's program may rub some purists the wrong way. He plays a representative assortment of original organ pieces by Louis Marchand (1669-1732), Jean-François Dandrieu (1682-1738), François Couperin (1668-1733), and Nicolas de Grigny (1672-1703); but the greater part of the program consists of transcriptions of orchestral, vocal, chamber, and harpsichord works by French baroque composers. Among those pieces are instrumental dances from *Les Boreades* by Rameau (1683-1764), the overture and an aria from *Atys* by Lully (1632-1687), a chamber concerto by Corrette (1707-95), and the well-known orchestral prelude to the *Te Deum* in D by Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704).

To complete the program, Jarry looks beyond France for Henry Purcell's 'When I Am Laid in Earth' from *Dido and Aeneas* and Handel's 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba' from *Solomon*. Jarry has not hesitated to make use of current recording technology of edits and "re-recording" to produce rapid changes of registration and combinations that could not be managed on an instrument without modern registration aids.

As an organist and conductor, Jarry specializes in French baroque music. He is the founder of the choral and orchestral ensemble Marguerite Louise. His playing here is animated and engaging, exhibiting the stentorian glory of the *grand jeu* as well as many delicious quieter registrations. It is a fine document of an important instrument.

GATENS

The purpose of "marketing" is to make us want what they want us to want.
No one cares what we *really* want.

Voices of the Hanse 1

Stellwagen Organ, St Jakobi, Lübeck

H Praetorius, J Praetorius, Scheidemann, Weckmann, Tunder, Buxtehude, Lüneburg Organ Tabulature

Jonathan William Moyer

Loft 1165—65 minutes

The Hanseatic cities of northern Germany became prosperous from commerce, and a significant portion of that wealth was expended on city churches and their organs. The present recording is the first in a series to explore the instruments and repertory of that region. In this case it is the north or "swallow's nest" organ in the church of St Jakobi (St James) in Lübeck. It was originally a Gothic "Blockwerk" organ built between 1467 and 1515. It consisted of a principal chorus whose registers could not be drawn separately. The celebrated Lübeck organ builder Friederich Stellwagen (1603-60) was engaged to rebuild, enlarge, and update the instrument. His work was completed in 1637, producing an instrument of three manuals and pedals that retained much of the pipework of the old organ.

For this recording, Jonathan William Moyer has selected a program of music by eminent North German organists of the mid to late 17th Century. With the exception of the Prelude in G minor by Franz Tunder (1614-74), all of the music here is based on liturgical melodies in the form of Magnificat verses, pieces based on Latin plainsong hymns that were retained by the Lutheran Church, and preludes on German chorales. The program is framed by two expansive Magnificat compositions by Hieronymus Praetorius (1560-1629) to open and Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707) to close. Some of the pieces were intended to alternate with congregational singing, like the four verses of the Christmas chorale 'Vom Himmel Hoch' by Johann Praetorius (1595-1660) or three verses of the Pentecost hymn 'Komm, Heiliger Geist' by Matthias Weckmann (1616-74). Several pieces come from the *Lüneburger Orgeltabulatur*, a collection of mostly anonymous pieces compiled around mid-century by Franz Schaumkell.

The instrument is beautifully recorded with excellent presence but not oppressively close. The tone is rich and refined, whether in brilliant plenum registrations with or without chorus reeds or in the more delicate voices heard in some of the chorale preludes. Moyer puts the organ through its paces, exhibiting the breadth and variety of its tone colors in

performances that are elegant and animated. My only complaint is that he too often resorts to registrations based on 4-foot pitch that tend to sound squeaky or cute. In recent years, there have been several series of recordings of the North German organ repertory. If this is any indication of what is to come, it can take its place with the best of them.

The recording does not come with a booklet. The listener is directed to the label website for that. There are informative notes, the specification of the organ, registrations used for the pieces, and some beautiful photographs, but how long will they be available online?

Jonathan Moyer is currently on the faculty of the Oberlin Conservatory and is organist of the Church of the Covenant in Cleveland, Ohio.

GATENS

Organ in Southern Italy

Frescobaldi, Pasquini, Zipoli, others
10 organists—Digressione 87—71 minutes

By the numbers: 1 organ, 9 composers, 10 organists (5 men and 5 women), and 14 pieces. The occasion: to celebrate the organ playing heritage in the Puglia region of Italy by recording performances by alumni and students from the organ school at the Conservatorio Nino Rota in Monopoli. Monopoli is on the Adriatic Sea in southern Italy, at the top of the heel of Italy's boot.

The organ is in the Church of San Francesco in Monopoli. Installed in 1710 and made by an unknown builder, the instrument was restored for its 300th anniversary in 2010 by Francesco Zanin with the goal of returning it to its historic origins. Since the sound, size, and design of Italian organs changed relatively little from the 16th to the early 19th Centuries this instrument is a very good match for all the pieces here.

The program is arranged in chronological order, starting with Girolamo Cavazzoni (c 1525-after 1577) and ending with Giovanni Battista Ignazio Grazioli (1746-1820). Most of the pieces are from the 17th Century and include well known compositions by Girolamo Frescobaldi, Giovanni Mario Trabaci, and Bernardo Pasquini. The pieces are all fine quality and well played.

One adjective that is often used to describe the sound of Italian organs is "singing" and that aesthetic was also prized in all types of instrumental music in 16th- and 17th-Century Italy. One way this sound is achieved is

through low wind pressure, which means that there's a gentler, more "human voice" flow of air into pipes. We hear many of the most characteristic organ forms here, from dance-step clarity of two or three stops together and chromatic melodies often on just one stop (made all the more astringent and expressive by the meantone temperament) such as in the Frescobaldi elevation toccata—named for the devotionally intense elevation of the Host during Mass—and Trabaci's 'Canzona Franzesa Cromatica Settima' to cradle-rocking pastoral movements by Pasquini and Grazioli and sparkling joy of the well-named "ripieno" (full stops) registration.

The recorded sound captures the organ well, but it's a shame that when the recording was edited the full resonance is cut off too soon at the end of each piece. It's important that the sound be allowed to bloom fully, and it doesn't seem as if the church is so vast that the reverberation muddies and obscures the sound. But that's a small quibble about an otherwise very good program that celebrates the fine organ tradition in this part of Italy.

Notes are in Italian. There are photos of the organ and a stop list.

C MOORE

Badia Fiorentina Organ

G Gabrieli, Frescobaldi, Pasquini, Byrd, Farnaby, Sweelinck, Scheidemann, Correa de Arauxo
Giovanna Riboli
Brilliant 95957—61 minutes

The Badia Fiorentina is an abbey church in Florence that is currently home to the Monastic Fraternities of Jerusalem, an order founded in France in 1975. It is also home to one of the finest surviving Italian Renaissance organs, completed in 1558 by the Tuscan builder Onofrio Zeffirini da Cortona. The most recent restoration took place in 1978. Typical of its time, the organ's specification consists essentially of a principal chorus whose components can be drawn separately. There is also one high-pitched flute stop that is heard to good effect on this recording. The single keyboard has 54 notes with a pull-down pedalboard of 20 notes.

In the 16th and early 17th Centuries, most keyboard music was not specifically designated for the organ or a stringed keyboard instrument. Chamber organs were common, and compositions based on secular popular songs were often played on them. This program contains no explicitly liturgical organ music such

as organ Masses, hymns, or Magnificat verses. Even so, much of the music here, like the toccatas of Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612) and Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643) or the tiento of Francisco Correa de Arauxo (1584-1654), might have been played in the context of a liturgy. In reference to the present day, Giovanna Riboli, who is the titular organist of the Badia Fiorentina, observes that "in the monastic liturgies of the Fraternities of Jerusalem the organ participates mainly as a solo instrument, connecting different parts of the service".

The program contains works by three Italian composers and five non-Italians. The Fantasia in A minor by William Byrd (1543-1623) and the keyboard elaboration of the popular song 'Mal Sims' by Giles Farnaby (1560-1640) both appear in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* and illustrate how the same repertory might find a home at the organ or harpsichord. As organist of the Calvinist Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621) did not play for worship services, but gave regular organ performances that might have included the expansive fantasia and his take on Dowland's 'Pavana Lachrimae' heard here. Heinrich Scheidemann (1595-1663) was an important figure in the development of the North German school. Many of his works would not be playable on the Badia Fiorentina organ, but he is represented here with variations on the popular tune 'Englische Mascara-da oder Judentanz'.

Giovanna Riboli gives performances that are assured and shapely, but I would stop short of calling them exciting, even in cases where considerable virtuosity is required, as in Frescobaldi's Ninth Toccata from his *Second Book of Toccatas*. Sometimes, as in Sweelinck's 'Pavana Lachrimae', I wished for a more persuasive musical flow.

The organ itself has a somewhat breathy but pleasing tone that is well suited to the delineation of contrapuntal lines. I suspect that the recording will appeal chiefly to listeners with a special interest in this repertory and who will relish this aural document of an important historic instrument.

GATENS

Agnelle Bundervoet

Liszt, Brahms, Schumann

Decca Eloquence 4841507 [2CD] 145 minutes

I must confess that despite my years this pianist was totally unfamiliar to me. Part of that could be that her total recorded classical

output was on just five monaural LPs dating from 1954 to 1957. Despite her longevity (1922-2015) this French prodigy probably needed all that to squeeze in her activities as a coloratura soprano, chorus director, organist, teacher, composer, and (of course) pianist.

Her Liszt is incredible. Even in this day of virtuosic surplus it is refreshing to encounter a new name that deserves to enter the pantheon of Liszt naturals and knows exactly what to do with the *Rhapsodie Espagnole*, *Mephisto Valse*, and various etudes. The pedalling is minimal, and the instrument sounds forth with the clarity of sparkling champagne. I doubt if it will matter to many that these are monaural recordings, because the sound is near the highest quality.

The Brahms grouping consists of all three Rhapsodies and the Handel Variations. The Rhapsodies show a forceful attack and continue to demonstrate her spare use of pedal and maintenance of forward motion without much distracting rubato. Of special note is her refreshingly light touch in the central section of Op. 79:2. The Handel Variations is like a monster tamed, but not shorn of its structural integrity or power. It's an exciting reading that refuses to dawdle, but is never lacking for expression. Bundervoet maintains clarity in even the most forced passages, including the final fugue. Only the test of time might prevent me from claiming this as my favorite recorded performance (but I doubt that).

Schumann's Intermezzos, Op. 4, is not a cycle that is often heard these days. It is good to have them in these sensitive readings. They are somewhat quixotic pieces, with shifting rhythms and imaginative phrasing. The *Fantasy Pieces*, on the other hand, is one of the composer's better known works. Each of the seven pieces is characterized well, and the playing includes some beautiful rubato. The Toccata is a tour-de-force of relentless motion but allows for contrast when needed.

From the drawing of the artist that appears on the cover one would hardly expect such vivid and technically overwhelming sounds to have emerged from such a delicate creature. Sometimes she reminds me of Simon Barere. It's too bad that some collectors paid a small fortune for some of her much sought-after French Decca recordings. This reissue, at bargain price, now makes them available for all who value great pianism.

BECKER

Albert Ferber 1945-51

Decca Eloquence 4829390—77 minutes

Despite the early recording dates, these mostly unpublished recordings are in perfectly acceptable monaural sound. Few of our readers will cringe while listening.

Swiss pianist Ferber (1911-87) had a career that spanned four decades. If he failed to reach the realm of the greats, he was still an artist respected by his colleagues and appreciated by his audiences. Rarely given to outward display, he kept to sane tempos and emotional reserve. Outward display was not in his unpretentious psyche. His career led to the world of teaching, and his creative impulses even led to doing some film composing.

Schumann's *Kinderszenen* fits in well with Ferber's tasteful, quiet style. The music is well characterized but not set forth in bold relief. A selection of Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words* is pleasant, though there are a lot of very good readings out there.

Beethoven's Sonata 26 is somewhat under-characterized, but Schubert's little Sonata in A, D 664 is a gem of gentle beauty. The notes are decent enough, and help to complete the belated discovery of this almost forgotten pianist.

BECKER

Andor Foldes: DG Recordings

Decca 484 1256 [19CD] 21:19

Andor Foldes (1913-92)—actually Földes, but he himself dropped the dots later—was a Hungarian pianist of distinction who became an American citizen and later lived in Switzerland. As the magnitude of this compilation shows, he was a house pianist of DG in the 1950s and early 1960s, when these recordings were made. I had encountered some of them over the years but never kept any in my collection. Foldes struck me as a meticulous technician who played with great clarity and taste but little individuality or emotion. This impression was amply confirmed not only by these 19 discs but also by the excellent booklet essay of Stephen Siek, which gives a sympathetic account of the pianist's early career while also making room for critical observations. Even the photographs in the booklet are telling. Look at Foldes's typically impassive face and how he sits still and observes his hands at the keyboard. He played with his agile fingers and mind, but kept his body out of it. His interpretations are admirable because

of their lucidity, accuracy, and intelligence; but they are never moving.

The first two discs are from 1949-1951, predating his affiliation with DG. Disc 1 ("French Polydor Recordings") has Prokofiev's Concerto 1 (with Jean Martinon conducting), *Tales of the Old Grandmother*, and *Four Pieces* (Op. 32), as well as Bartok's Sonata and Concerto 2 (with Eugène Bigot). CD 2 ("The Mercury Recordings") contains Schumann's *Abegg Variations*, *Papillons*, *Impromptus on a Theme by Clara Wieck*, and *Toccata*, as well as a rarity—the complete *Norwegian Peasant Dances* of Grieg. Discs 3-5 are filled with music by Bartok, including excerpts from *For Children* and *Microcosmos*, the Sonata again, the Sonatina, and *Out of Doors*. Disc 6 has music by Kodaly, including Foldes's own transcription of three pieces from *Hary Janos*. Disc 7 includes Barber's *Excursions*, the sonatas of Copland and Stravinsky, and short pieces by Thomson and Albeniz.

CDs 8 and 9 have Mozart's Concertos 10 (with Carl Seemann as the other pianist), 15, 17, 21, and 25, and Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*. CDs 10-14 are all Beethoven. Here are Concertos 1 and 5 (with Ferdinand Leitner), Sonatas 8, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23-26, 28, 30, and 31, the 32 Variations, and a number of shorter pieces. Disc 15 carries three variation works by Brahms—on themes by Schumann, Brahms himself, and Paganini. CD 16 includes Schumann's *Carnaval* and *Fantasy*. 17 has the Sonata and several shorter pieces by Liszt. On Disc 18 are the two Liszt Concertos and Rachmaninoff's Second (all with Leopold Ludwig), which were also in a DG collection I reviewed two years ago (J/F 2019). On CD 19 ("Klavierabend") are Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue*, Beethoven's Sonata 6, and short pieces by Brahms, Falla, Poulenc, Debussy, Chopin, and Liszt.

I may be forgiven for not listening to everything in this large collection. Foldes's style of playing is very consistent. The performances I picked were all very fine stylistically and technically, and also musically satisfying because just rendering the text faithfully and lucidly goes a long way. They were never insensitive or mannered, just cerebral and hard of touch. How strongly I felt there was something missing depended on the work and was not always predictable. For example, I did not expect him to do so well with Schumann's *Carnaval*. Only his 'Chiarina' (Schumann's portrayal of young Clara Wieck) is exceptionally fast and loud, suggesting a teenage dragon. Schumann's

Impromptus, one of the early Mercury recordings, seemed a bit rigid. Brahms's Schumann Variations are very good, with only Variation 14 too literal. The Liszt Sonata is solid but lacks poetry sometimes. Foldes holds the initial two notes and the final note, which are commonly played short, with the pedal. This is the only time I noticed some technical slips, but they are very minor. The shorter Liszt pieces are a bit stiff and prosaic, with 'Au lac de Wallenstadt' especially fast and etude-like. But the two *Soirées Musicales* based on Schubert Waltzes are nice. I wonder how Foldes would have handled Schubert sonatas and impromptus.

In the only Mozart Concerto I listened to, No. 21, Foldes plays with the expected clarity and rhythmic precision but with hard touch, narrow dynamic range, and rigid timing, most notably in his own cadenzas. His Beethoven is really very fine, judging from Sonatas 6, 15, and 30, the *32 Variations*, and the *Choral Fantasy*. I skipped Bartok as I am not a fan of the composer—I am sure Foldes played those pieces very well—and the American music, but I did listen to Kodaly's *Dances of Marosszek*, an effective virtuosic work (orchestrated only later) that should be played more often. Here Foldes is hard and clangorous, and I prefer the recording by his fellow Hungarian Annie Fischer (BBC 4166). I thought the last CD would contain some concert recordings, but they turned out to be studio recordings, too, with the Bach *Chromatic Fantasy* rather etude-like and the Fugue rigid rather than majestic.

The sound quality of all but the earliest recordings is very good, and some are in stereo. A few appear here on CD for the first time. (We have not reviewed any of the previous reissues.) The presentation is excellent. Detailed information is supplied about each recording, the booklet contains a splendid essay with photographs, there are no careless errors, and each disc comes in a cardboard sleeve that reproduces the cover of an original LP. The contents listed on those covers do not correspond exactly to what is on the disc, but the real contents are found on the back together with smaller reproductions of the covers of other LPs from which pieces were taken—a nice and visually appealing idea. This is a valuable release, though it will be of interest mainly to comprehensive collectors and admirers of the pianist.

REPP

Idylls

Sofia Gûlbadamova, p
Hänssler 20047—78 minutes

I hesitate to say anything critical about this recording. The pianist, in her liner notes, explains that the program consists of gentle pieces close to her heart and that she wishes to bring comfort to music lovers in this difficult time, when musicians especially are hit hard by the pandemic. She plays everything with fine expression and gorgeous touch on a Bösendorfer. In my review of her most recent album (M/J 2020) I already noted her fine musicianship as well as a tendency towards slow tempos, occasional bombast, and a penchant for transcriptions, all again evident here.

There is a danger of monotony in a program consisting entirely of idyllic pieces, but this reservation can be put aside in the present case. Moreover, there are a few fairly lively pieces among the 19 here. But I do not intend to keep it in my collection, because the pieces, some of which I heard for the first time, seem of variable quality to me, and none of them comes even close in musical interest to the single great masterpiece that the pianist chose to include—Chopin's *Barcarolle*. Liszt's transcription of Schubert's song 'Du Bist die Ruh' is fine despite some bombast, as is an adaptation of Grieg's song 'Jeg Elsker dig'. Elgar's *Idyll*, Op. 4:1, is charming. Glazounov's *Idyll*, Op. 103, is a weak piece and much too long. Moszkowski's *Idyll*, Op. 94:3, is short but even less substantial; this is not a great composer. Prokofieff's Adagio from *Cinderella* strikes me as uninspired and awkward, though the pianist is especially fond of it. (I am a great admirer of Prokofieff's better works.) The transcription of Elgar's Serenade for Strings is not effective; it is unpianistic and boring. Six of Hahn's pieces from his large collection *Le Rossignol Eperdu* are delicate but shallow; they might have worked better as song accompaniments. Only the last one ('Matinée Parisienne') held my interest. Gûlbadamova takes nearly 5 minutes longer for these pieces than Yoonie Han in her recent complete recording (S/O 2019), but if anything this should increase the illusion of substance.

Finally, there are three of Earl Wild's Etudes based on Gershwin songs. I much prefer Gershwin's own straightforward piano arrangements to these showy abominations. The swirling notes Wild added are just so much fluff, and without his glib facility and

nonchalance they get in the way of the lovely melodies.

Still, this will make a fine gift for uncritical listeners ready to be comforted.

REPP

Nordic Master Composers

GRIEG: *Ballade Variations*; **SIBELIUS:** *6 Impromptus*; **STENHAMMAR:** *3 Fantasies*; **NIELSEN:** *Theme & Variations*

Maria Kihlgren, p

Sterling 1842—70 minutes

It is nice to see an album devoted to Nordic composers. Not only is the playing solid, but the program makes sure to show not only more familiar romantic era composers such as Grieg or Sibelius, but also from the 20th Century with Carl Nielsen. The Ballade is a lesser known Grieg work, though it is one of his most significant ones; it is 14 variations based on peasant folk songs. It was also a work that Grieg found taxing and emotional, owing to his depression and marital problems at the time of its writing. He himself rarely performed it in public. Kihlgren's performance is clean, well articulated, and brings weight to the composition. Stenhammar's 3 Fantasies are wild pieces, almost Brahmsian in texture, with rich Nordic harmonies. Kihlgren navigates the thick textures well, with good balance. Nielsen's Theme with Variations offers 20th Century harmonies.

KANG

Euntaek Kim

PROKOFIEFF: *Piano Sonata 2*; **SCRIABIN:** *Sonata 8*; **RACHMANINOFF:** *Sonata 1*

MSR 1745—70 minutes

The Center for Musical Excellence is an organization, under pianist and Director Min Kwon's leadership, dedicated to finding and developing a roster of international young artists through mentorship, training, professional development, and financial support. Euntaek Kim is one of the strong young pianists who has benefitted from the support of this organization through grant in 2017. This debut album is one result.

One of Kim's strengths is taking the tangle of passages, rhythms, and harmonies and simplifying them effortlessly. The clarity of his playing is clear in the dense Rachmaninoff, as he makes all the orchestral and piano elements legible. That is no easy feat. There are some interpretive choices. The Prokofieff

sonata is powerful, but there are some uneven tones in the Vivace movement. I have also heard it faster, which I prefer. The voicing often needs some work. With the Scriabin sonata, there is good playing, but there is something clinical about the way he delivers the work. It should be more sweeping and lush, with more forgiving pedaling. Overall, a good recording!

KANG

Israeli Piano

Stutschewsky, Natra, Avni, Partos, Seter
Kolja Lessing—CPO 555294—71 minutes

Joachim Stutschewsky (1891-1982), Tzvi Avni (b. 1927), and Odeon Partos (1907-77) all immigrated to Palestine from 1935 to 1938; Sergiu Natra went in 1961. Mordecai Seter (1916-94) went in 1926 with his family; he studied in France but returned to Palestine in 1937. All the works draw on both folk and religious music, and they are often arid and rhapsodic, thoroughly in the lineage of the Mediterranean School founded by Paul Ben-Haim (1897-1984) and others.

Stutschewsky's seven *Palestinian Sketches* (1931) are short and a lot like Bartok. I would like to hear them arranged for winds or strings; there are many places where the lines could swell and float, based on singing as they are. Three Pieces, from a decade later, are more dissonant and pungent; Stutschewsky's style can be crabbed and sour. Partos's Prelude is full of barely tonal flourishes and musings. Natra's Variations are from 1945, the same year he won the Enesco Composition Prize in his native Romania. The main theme is so slitheringly chromatic that it almost makes the piano seem tuned in quarter-tones. The theme-and-variations structure usually ends up sounding contrived to me, and this piece comes across like a string of unconvincing speeches. The spiky, free-form Sonatina comes from 1987, but it is a reworking of a harp piece from 1961. It works well on piano, and Lessing brings out a lot of color.

Avni's short Capriccio is harmonically biting but playful; the calls, responses, and turn-on-a-dime tempo shifts are exhilarating to follow. *In Spite of All That* depicts the violence that has marked the region, especially the Gaza Strip, but Lessing doesn't quite put that across. Seter's *Triptyque II* begins icy and grumbling and slowly slides into a quiet, ominous, pointillistic void.

Though some of the writing sounds tricky for the fingers, rarely is it virtuosic. I've fol-

lowed Ben-Haim for several years now because the Mediterranean School's style speaks to me even when the music isn't the most inspired. Even so, nothing here particularly moved me as Ben-Haim's Sonatina or symphonies do, for instance. This release is more for the specialist, and it is better to listen to a piece or two at a time.

ESTEP

Viv McLean

SCHUBERT: *Piano Sonata in B-flat*; **BRAHMS:** *Rhapsodies*; **BACH:** *Prelude & Fugue in E-flat minor*; **MEDTNER:** *Fairy Tale, op 8:2*; **LISZT:** *Mazeppa*

Stone 81014—75 minutes

This release is titled "Viv McLean: Live Recordings". The British pianist, who must be in his 40s, came to my attention last year through a fine Chopin recording (J/A 2020). But what led him now to come forth with performances recorded in recitals given many years ago? I presume it was his wish to honor Hamish Milne, his one-time teacher and a renowned champion of the music of Nikolai Medtner, who passed away in February of last year. The recording is dedicated to Milne's memory and contains a piece by Medtner, but why not make a new studio recording? What is so special about these old performances? Perhaps McLean studied these pieces with Milne? The booklet does not say.

The major work—the Schubert Sonata—and the two Brahms Rhapsodies come from a 2008 recital at Wigmore Hall and are played very well. The sonata is given a conventional but sensitive interpretation, without the repeat in I. Compared to the magisterial traversal by Gilbert Schuchter, whose comprehensive Schubert recording (J/F 2018) has become a firm benchmark for me, McLean has a lighter touch, takes I a little slower, II a little faster, III a lot faster than Schuchter (less charming and mechanical in the trio), and in IV he always takes the theme a bit slower than what follows—a nice individual touch. A few stifled coughs reveal an audience, and the pianist, quite accurate so far, hits a wrong note in the final chord! Such are the dangers of concert recording. The Brahms is also good, though not as clearly articulated as in Peter Rösler's excellent recording (Berlin 90322), which was my direct comparison here.

The other three pieces are from a 2000 recital in Hamamatsu, Japan, when McLean must have been in his 20s, and are less satisfy-

ing. The Bach fugue is too fast, and the voices are not well differentiated; it is boring. By comparison, Friedrich Gulda (Philips 446 545), though severe and hard of touch, builds an impressive slow crescendo and always brings out the theme in the different voices. The Medtner *Fairy Tale*, one of the many pieces with this title that Milne recorded so splendidly (and I have played some myself), was new to me. It is unusually virtuosic, and McLean's relentlessly loud traversal somehow seems inappropriate for Medtner, whose music usually has a more gentle and refined character, even when it is very intricate. In Liszt's *Mazeppa*, the hair-raisingly difficult fourth of his *Transcendental Etudes*, McLean is justified in letting loose, but the textures are muddy; and when, near the end, there is a brief respite in the turmoil, he misses the expressive significance of it, which Daniil Trifonov conveys very well in his splendid complete recording of the etudes (DG).

So, I am afraid this recording will appeal mainly to friends and admirers of the pianist. The liner notes, by the way, are by Jessica Duchon, author of a series of engaging novels with musical themes.

REPP

Nox

SCHUMANN: *Nachtstucke*; **ZUIDAM:** *Nox*; **RAVEL:** *Gaspard de la Nuit*; **JANACEK:** *On an Overgrown Path*

Hannes Minnaar, p—Challenge 72853—72 min

This recording is themed around *Nox*, the Latin word for "Night", ranging from Schumann to Zuidam's contemporary work. Though I did want Mr Minnaar's playing to be a bit faster, it is rich and solid, as he brings power and passion to Schumann's *Nachtstucke*. *Gaspard de la Nuit* is crystalline and sweeping. 'Ondine' has many gorgeous moments, though I do wish he could have picked up the pace a bit—sometimes the melody feels a little disconnected. 'Le Gibet' is haunting. Zuidam's *Nox* is a large-scale work for solo piano, inspired by a night owl. It has gorgeous melodies that weave in and out of each other in 'Nightfall'. 'Insomnia' creates wonderful contrasts, with restless figures in both hands.

There is one bonus track, from *On an Overgrown Path*. It is a delightful conclusion, with a simple melody that Minnaar allows to emerge and shine. The pacing is gorgeous.

KANG

French Album

Debussy, Rameau, Ravel, Chabrier, Fauré
Jorge Federico Osorio, p
Cedille 197—75 minutes

I gravitate primarily toward orchestral music. So it was striking for me to have been swept away by this piano album that opens and closes with piano originals that today are far better known in the composers' own orchestral transcriptions.

It took a second hearing for me to appreciate Fauré's Pavane minus the sumptuous grace of Thomas Beecham (EMI). Fauré makes sparing use of the piano's left hand below middle C, and when he does, he puts the bass accent on the third beat of the 4/4 measure, not the first, where one would expect it. Jorge Federico Osorio, 69, the elegant Mexican pianist and long-time resident of Chicago, uses this spare piece to introduce us to an unforced, transparent, floating, bell-like style where every note is clear yet integrated and where the lyrical line flows freely and musically—a foretaste of what's to come.

There follow eight selections from Debussy's Preludes and 'Clair de Lune'. In 'The Hills of Anacapri', if another pianist pedaled like Osorio, the sound would become cluttered, but not here. He phrases the music by holding down the pedals for measures at a time, yet the texture and leading motifs come through, leading the ear. All notes are clear, none are buried, and yet Osorio never sounds pedantic. Everything fits naturally as the music ripples and skips along. Then 'The Terrace Where the Moonlight Holds Audience' is just the opposite. In lesser hands it could be a blur of modulating chords. Here Osorio terraces the details and lets the very flow give life to what otherwise could be a miasma of techniques.

And so goes the album, a series of contrasts that seem to flow into one another without jarring. In a relaxed, unrushed 'Clair de Lune' the music is phrased by the resonance from the pedaling. Touches of rubato and retard create a five-minute integral masterpiece as gorgeous as I've ever heard it. 'What the West Wind Saw', arpeggios and trills and chords galore rendered into a musical whole, is followed by 'Voiles' (Sails or Veils—either is legitimate) with melody and harmony gently fused in a transparent whole-tone scale. The last two, 'Fireworks' (which makes one listen carefully in the quiet intervals) and 'Dead Leaves', are a perfect pair as Debussy makes

the listener linger in transparency, like a prelude to the dazzling clarity of a nighttime display, followed by a meditative resolution.

Osorio then shifts gears to three short works from Rameau's third collection of harpsichord pieces. Rameau, born in 1683, was a contemporary of Bach, Handel, and Scarlatti, all born in 1685. 'Le Tricotet', two Minuets, and 'L'Egyptienne' fit with the world of Scarlatti's sonatas, music that cleanses the air with steady rhythms under playful tunes (*tricotet* means knitting, here integrating the right and left hands like a knitting machine). Osorio is the farthest thing possible from a sewing machine; instead these three pieces in 7 minutes are a midway refresher in how to make impeccable technique sound musical.

From this point to the end I became especially conscious of how carefully and beautifully Osorio planned this album. The key where one piece ends fits naturally into the key the next one begins with. Sometimes it's the same; sometimes a mediant key fits easily with the following tonic key. In other words, not only do moods contrast (as in the Debussy works) and the air clears (Rameau), but the whole program is tonally integrated too.

Chabrier's 'Habanera' is simplicity itself, so it seems: a touch of Viennese waltz with a habanera beat, a melody with chords, rendered perfectly with an inimitable gait and flow. Debussy's 'Puerto del Vino' (one of the gates to Granada's Alhambra) continues the syncopated beat, here flamenco rather than habanera. After a dramatic modulation the music wants to relax but can't. Which leads to 'An Evening in Granada' from *Estampes*, which I once played imperfectly but have firm ideas about its musicality. Here Osorio is pure genius. He captures all of the many nuances while conveying a feeling of spontaneity rather than that super-professional feeling of having played it so many times that one has stopped finding anything new in it. As the Corn Flakes ad used to encourage, "Taste 'em again for the first time," and Osorio does.

There follows one of classical music's most impossibly difficult pieces to perform, whether in the piano original or Ravel's orchestration: 'Alborada del Gracioso' from *Miroirs*. I describe Fritz Reiner's performance of it with the Chicago Symphony (the JVC XRCD2 pressing is astounding) as "how to get a huge orchestra to dance on the head of a pin". Well, that's Osorio at the piano. He makes me aware of the scores of countless technical challenges, piled on top of one another, that he had to

have rehearsed ad nauseum. Yet here the music flows, counter-rhythms and all, just like it does with Reiner: never bombastic, crystal clear, with impossibly clear castanet-like articulations, floating, and with solid punch the few times it's needed. One integrated whole. How can a human being do it!

And what a stroke of genius to end the album with `Alborada's opposite: Ravel's *Pavane for a Dead Princess* (or a princess long ago), echoing Fauré's *Pavane* 68 minutes earlier: simple, clear, flowing but with melancholy, the end of a sublime journey through French piano music.

FRENCH

3 of 6

TAILLEFERRE: *Pastorale; Partita; Impromptu; Romance*; **AURIC:** *Sonatine; Nocturne; 3 Pastorales*; **DUREY:** *Romance sans Paroles; Nocturne; 3 Preludes*

Biliana Tzinlikova, p—Paladino 103—55 minutes

Les Six was a name originated by Henri Collet in 1920 and influenced by the Russian group of composers called the Mighty Five. The French group included Poulenc (1899-1963), Milhaud (1892-1974), Honegger (1892-1955), Auric (1899-1983), Durey (1888-1979) and Tailleferre (1892-1983) and was seen as a response to the music of Wagner and the Impressionism of Debussy and Ravel. Milhaud wrote that Collet "chose six names absolutely arbitrarily...simply because we knew each other and we were pals and appeared on the same musical programmes, no matter if our temperaments and personalities weren't at all the same! Auric and Poulenc followed ideas of Cocteau, Honegger followed German romanticism, and myself, Mediterranean lyricism!"

Bulgarian pianist Biliana Tzinlikova has chosen the three lesser-known composers of Les Six for an enlightening program of music that certainly is not well known. Recently Pascal and Ami Rogé had a release devoted to Les Six and Satie (Onyx 4219, July/Aug 2020), and there are only two duplications with this new one. Groups of three dominate this collection of pieces: Tailleferre's *Partita*, Auric's *Sonatine* and *Pastorales*, and Durey's *Preludes* are all three pieces or movements.

I cannot imagine any of these works getting a better performance. Every phrase is built with great attention to detail that never hides the main musical message. While there is no shortage of recordings of music by the other three composers who were part of Les Six, we

are indebted to Tzinlikova for giving us the opportunity to hear music not readily available and worth getting to know.

HARRINGTON

Journey with Piano 4 Hands

LISZT: *Scenes from Lenau's Faust*; **DVORAK:** *3 Slavonic Dances*; **GOUNOD:** *Love Duet & Waltz from Faust*; **GODARD:** *Berceuse*; **BIZET:** *Carmen Overture*; **MILHAUD:** *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*

Zeynep Ucbasaran & Sergio Gallo

Divine Art 25208—65 minutes

Piano duets, 4 hands at one piano, have attracted great composers since Mozart and Beethoven. Schubert brought the genre to another level with a vast quantity of great music. As the romantic era progressed, it fell to Liszt, Brahms, and Dvorak to add significant works to the repertoire. All along, there were tons of lesser composers writing original music and transcribing vast amounts of orchestral repertoire for piano duet. French composers enlarged the repertoire towards the end of the 1800s and into the early 1900s. By the mid 1900s and the proliferation of recorded music, the arrangements that were almost required to disseminate the music to a wider audience began to fade, although there are great arrangements of some Gershwin, Copland and Shostakovich for duet. The 2-piano idiom took over at that point for concert music by notable composers.

Here we get a well designed, enjoyable program that touches on most of what was mentioned above. Ucbasaran and Gallo have been an active duo for 15 years and have an affinity for this repertoire. Their ensemble and balance are spot-on, as is Divine Art's recorded piano sound. They begin with Liszt's duet arrangements of two of his early tone poems: *Der Nächtliche Zug* and *Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke*. While these titles may not be well known and the first is not often heard, the second also had a solo piano arrangement done by Liszt where the title became *Mephisto Waltz*. That has been a staple of many virtuoso's repertoire for well over 150 years. The differences between the solo version familiar to all and this duet version are not great, but are noticeable and interesting.

Three of Dvorak's *Slavonic Dances* follow. They are influenced by the quality and popularity of the Brahms Hungarian Dances. The remainder of the program is by French composers, both original music and orchestral arrangements. Milhaud's *Boeuf sur le Toit* is

the big final work here and one of his best known. It was inspired by Brazilian popular music (compare with Gershwin's *Cuban Overture*, arranged by the composer for piano duet). It became both a ballet and the name of a trendy Paris nightclub where the group of composers known as Les Six often gathered. I will return to this often.

HARRINGTON

The 3-Piano Project

ACIM: *Fikir Hucreleri*; **ZAMPRONHA:** *S'io esca Vivo*; **SAYGUN:** *Poem*; **ZARATE:** *Petit Nocturne Noir*; **INCE:** *Requiem for Mehmet*; **DALLAPICCOLA:** *Music for 3 pianos*

Zeynep Ucbasaran, Miguel Ortega Chavalda, Sergio Gallo—Divine Art 25207—54 minutes

Ucbasaran and Gallo, piano duo from the previous review, are here joined by an old friend, Chavalda for a most unusual program. Together they were preparing to make the world premiere recording of Ahmet Adnan Saygun's *Poem* when the 3-piano project grew into reality. It is an interesting collection of music composed in Brazil, Spain, Italy, and Turkey. This is music that, except Brazil, works its way around the Mediterranean. Though Dallapiccola was noted for his 12-tone writing, this early (1935) work is firmly rooted in tonality, as are the others here. With influences ranging from Orlando di Lasso and Turkish folk music to the extraverted and popular qualities of American music, this will entice you with unheard pieces, performed exceptionally well with dedication and conviction. The booklet essay is quite detailed and the recorded sound first class.

HARRINGTON

The Romantic Cornet

Brandt, Bohme, Bizet, Hahn, Damare, Bellstedt
Frank Anepool; Vaughan Schlepp, p
Challenge 5276—50 minutes

A very pleasant program of tuneful works played on a sweet-toned instrument. As mentioned in the notes, the cornet was the first brass instrument to embrace the new-fangled valve in the 1830s, well before the trumpet did. So the first brass virtuosos were cornet players, and these are some of the works that were written for them.

The album opens with Concertpiece 2, by Willy Brandt (1869-1923); Concertpiece 1 is also included. There are two works by Oscar Bohme (1870-1938): 'Liebeslied' and 'Russian

Dance.' Hermann Bellstedt (1858-1926) is represented by his ever-popular 'Napoli' and 'Carmen Fantasy.' 'A Chloris' (Reynaldo Hahn, 1874-1947) and 'Pandora' (Eugene Damare, 1840-1919) round out the program.

Frank Anepool plays a modern cornet fitted with a 19th-Century mouthpiece. He has the technical skills and sports a bright and colorful tone with a pleasant vibrato. Vaughan Schlepp plays an Erato grand piano from 1846.

KILPATRICK

Message in a Tuba

Lovelock, Dring, Cheetham, Mariano, Ellerby, Leidzen, Turrin, Payne, Reizenstein

Kent Eshelmanm; In-Ja Eshelman, p
Soundset 1118—79 minutes

I was quite impressed by the first album by Baylor University tuba professor Kent Eshelman and his wife In-Ja (March/April 2014: 210). How does this one compare? Quite favorably, with its mix of original and transcribed works for tuba and piano, and with the duo's skillful and heartfelt playing.

The transcriptions begin with two works by William Lovelock. A cheery *Vivo*, from the *Sonatina* (1960) for oboe and piano, has both musicians playing fast, lyrical, and contrapuntal lines. A more serious *Two Pieces* (1928) for clarinet and piano has a *Romance* with the same intricate counterpoint as the *Vivo* but at a slower pace. Eshelman's very long last note is quite beautiful. A *Waltz* is a wistful look at a simpler time.

There are several little works by Madeleine Dring (1923-77), all for oboe and piano. 'Italian Dance' (1960) is something of a *moto perpetuo*. 'Polka' (1962) is wry, 'Danza Gaya' (1964) graceful and witty. The 12-minute *Three Piece Suite* (1984), originally for harmonica but transcribed for oboe, has a fast and raucous 'Showpiece,' pensive 'Romance,' jaunty *Finale*. Also for oboe and piano is the *Humoresque* by Franz Reizenstein.

John Cheetham's 'Homage' is his own arrangement for tuba and piano of an emotional movement from his 2015 tube-euphonium quartet. 'Curumim' is Eshelman's transcription of a piano piece by Cesar Camargo Mariano. As heard here, it is a thoroughly captivating work, full of energy, subtlety, and surprise. In his notes, Eshelman praises his wife In-Ja for her remarkable ability to play so fluently in Brazilian style.

The program includes two works originally for tenor horn (a small-bore relative of the

euphonium): a poignant Elegy from Martin Ellerby's Tenor Horn Concerto (1998), and Eric Leidzen's 'Old Rustic Bridge' (1955), a nostalgic, old-fashioned showoff piece. Then Eshelman finally dips into original tuba literature.

The big piece is Joseph Turrin's 14-minute *Kronos*, which began life as a tuba-band Concertino (1976), was revised and renamed (2016), and was reduced for piano by Eshelman. It is a serious work, tightly organized around the first, seemingly abstract phrases. The harmonies are dissonant, though not atonal. There is intensity in the fast scalar lines and dauntingly high notes. The work seems to be in search of something, which I imagine it finally finds on the final, staccato major triad.

Having included Frank Lynn Payne's Tuba Sonata (1977) on his first recording, Eshelman was sent the three-movement, eight-minute Short Sonata (2014) heard here. As with Turrin's piece, the harmonic language is dissonant, but there are a few more moments of tonal clarity. Also by Payne is the technically challenging Six Bagatelles (2016) for solo tuba.

Wonderful album.

KILPATRICK

Study

Charlier, Britten, Mantia, Rachmaninoff, Reynolds, Bach, Hayden

Matt Tropman, eu, tu; Elena Miraztchiyska, June Okada, p—Mark 54633—64 minutes

A beautiful euphonium and tuba album by University of Arizona professor Matt Tropman and pianists Elena Miraztchiyska and June Okada. The title, *Study*, refers to the etudes instrumental students spend much of their time practicing, their teachers much lesson time teaching. For the teachers, who might teach certain etudes for decades, the best of them never grow tiresome. That includes these.

On euphonium, Tropman begins with a very expressive reading of what many would regard as the best trumpet etude of all: 'Du Style,' by Theo Charlier, from his *36 Etudes Transcendantes* (1926). Next come six more from that book, the last being the virtuosic 34, 'Fantaisie Rhythmique.' All of these have piano accompaniments that were composed in the 1980s by Jean-Marie Cottet. They are so good, so flavorful, that it is hard to believe they weren't part of the original work.

I am familiar with 'The Last Rose of Summer' in its traditional, sentimental form. This is my introduction to the very dark setting by

Benjamin Britten. I also did not know that the original poem is by Thomas Moore, who also wrote 'Believe Me, If all those Endearing Young Charms.' So it is a good idea by Tropman to play both here—Britten's gloomy 'Last Rose' followed by Simone Mantia's famous euphonium setting of 'Believe Me.' Tropman's reading is quite dazzling.

The euphonium portion of the program ends with Victor Venglovsky's arrangement of Rachmaninoff's anguished Elegy in E-flat minor (1892), not heard here since the decades-old account by the great trombonist Joe Alessi (Jan/Feb 1993: 186). Tropman's is just as good.

The tuba part begins with two solo horn etudes by Verne Reynolds (1926-2011). Each speaks a modern language while concentrating on a single interval: the somber 6 on a minor third, the whimsical 16 on a major sixth. Next comes Bach's Sonata in E, S 1035, originally for flute and keyboard. If a flute piece on tuba seems far-fetched to you, this reading might change your mind. Tropman's beautiful tone is on display in the opening Adagio, his superb technical skills in the lively II. He doesn't say why he omitted III, but his reading of IV is superb.

The album ends with Paul Hayden's eight-minute Chaconne (2000), where Tropman shows off remarkable technique and range on F tuba.

This is a wonderful album. The pianists are excellent—Elena Miraztchiyska in the euphonium pieces, June Okada in the tuba one.

KILPATRICK

Music for One Horn

Gomez, Carter, Barboteu, Karaivanov, Ramey, Piazzolla, Koechlin, Proust, Kogan, Raum, Yenque—Howard Wall—Affetto 2006—71 min

Almost all of these somber, contemplative works are recycled. Most were on a recent album, *Horn Monologues* (Sept/Oct 2020: 134). The big piece, Philip Ramey's 8-minute *Gargoyles*, was presented on a collection of Ramey's horn works in a performance I erroneously attributed to Philip Myers, who played most of the music on that album. My comments about that reading (Jan/Feb 2018: 142) are similar to what I wrote about *Monologues*: Howard Wall, a member of the New York Philharmonic since 1994, is a fine player, but we are uncomfortably close to him.

KILPATRICK

Solo

BACH: *Partita 2*; **YSAYE:** *Solo Sonata 3*;
PAGANINI: *Caprices 1, 2, 9, 14, 17, 20, 24*

Andrey Baranov, v—Muso 39—61 minutes

Andrey Baranov was born in St Petersburg in 1986 to a family of musicians. He studied at conservatories in St Petersburg and Lausanne, and his most important teacher was Pierre Amoyal. He has won prizes at numerous competitions, including the Queen Elizabeth Competition in 2012. Aside from performing as a soloist, he plays first violin in the David Oistrakh String Quartet.

Baranov does a good, academic job playing the Bach, though he does have a tendency to pomposity, as in the closing bars of the Allemanda. Others have given much more personal and cohesive accounts (Lara St John; Jan/Feb 2008).

The rest of the program is devoted to more virtuosic music, and Baranov seems to enjoy this much more, really letting his hair down. His problem is he lets it down too far. The impression he gives is that he enjoys playing the violin almost more as a physical exercise than as a means of musical expression. He certainly has an impressive technique, but these performances would have been more effective if had he placed it more at the service of the music rather than vice versa.

Baranov plays a violin made by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini in Cremona in 1758.

MAGIL

Crimson Duo

RENIE: *Andante Religioso*; *Scherzo-Fantasy*;
SCHOCKER: *Still/Nervous*; **DA SILVA:** *3 Violin & Harp Pieces*; **SORIANO BROBERG:** *Flutter*;
ROTA: *Flute (Violin) & Harp Sonata*

MSR 1607—47 minutes

The Renie is magical cinematic music, conjuring a tale of wonder and mystery, perhaps influenced by the Aquarium scene from Saint-Saens's *Carnival of the Animals* written a decade before. But this performance is bland and lacking in imagination, especially the violinist. Harry Potter would never get off the ground with his broom if this were in the background.

Brooding leads to a sudden explosion of chaos in the Schocker. Gentle undertones and repetition precede rapid, punctuated music written in the unbalanced and uneasy quintuple meter. Minimalist layering and eclecticism characterizes the Da Silva. Each of the three pieces includes different inspirations: jazz and

blues, atonality, and folk traditions. It is instantly forgettable.

The Broberg is built on a series of repeated rifts and syncopations. The composer appears well versed in the art of unpredictable chords. I of Rota is simplistic and hymnal; II is barren and unimaginative; III is pleasant and folklike. Unremarkable performances from the harp and violin.

KELLENBERGER

Northern Lights

AULIN: *Akvareller*; **GRIEG:** *Violin Sonata 1*;
SIBELIUS: *4 Violin Pieces*; **arr. FROSCHHAMMER:** *Folk Suite, Drowsy Maggie*

Duo Froschhammer—Solo Musica 314—61 min

The Aulin consists of four movements written in a late-romantic style. I is warm, peaceful, with no hint of conflict or trouble in the world. Therefore it has a sacred purity, because only faith or fantasy could produce such optimism, so far removed from the realities of an oppressive and unjust world. I wondered, as tears formed behind my eyes, if such music is too optimistic to be composed today, but I suppose the tears confirmed this sobering reality. Music now is usually obsessed with unearthing the baser elements of struggle and conflict. Modern “classical” music resides in dystopian movies: barren, percussive, bleak scores to accompany post-apocalyptic worlds, where every hero is an “anti-hero”, more bad than good, more tainted than pure, and more proud than meek. II is a precursor to Copland, with lively off-beats in the piano, a playful dance with simple ABA structure. The B section is lyrical, a sobering reflection in darker tones, a striking juxtaposition with the A material. III is tender and filled with ineffable love. Such deep and yearning love can only be expressed through wordless simplicity. Here it is lightly colored with sadness and regret—immense beauty that never fully blossomed. The true story is buried in the middle of the movement, where bleak winter suppresses vibrant signs of life. The purity of the opening theme is nostalgic of a brief Elysian moment long ago, swallowed in tragedy. IV is a traditional Swedish dance, shallow and trite, music that must not be enjoyed but tolerated.

Grieg continues the spirit of optimism. The younger Grieg was full of playful mischief, where even sorrow is tinged with joy and zest for life. The performers manage to draw poetry out of the music. The piano displays a keen sense for rubato in unaccompanied moments.

The violin sounds good in the section played on the G-string; perhaps his instrument is better suited for the lower range. II is obligatory, not a mature or well written movement. III contains heart-string moments. Melodies sometimes sound forced, and musical timing is not always effective. The performance never rises to a spectacular level, but it manages to promote the music at a professional level.

The Sibelius is weak. I is played in the right style. They are not the right performers for II, titled 'Romance'; it never feels romantic, falling flat in the most important way—in the transmission of emotion. III misses a personal connection to faith; this *religioso* is played with too much conflict; in their interpretation people are not looking at God but at each other. Eventually the protagonist loses track of who God is and also who he or she is. I do not like IV, and I do not see the connection of the movement to the others.

Drowsie Maggie sounds too classical and polite, but it is pleasant. Lots of minor-sounding modes characterize III in the folk suite. II is grave, sparse, and languid. Death has struck, and everybody is gathered together in the house of mourning. I is mostly simple embellishments over low-bass drones in the piano. It is lovely.

The folk contributions are easy to listen to; The Grieg and Sibelius are unremarkable when stacked against other performances; the performance of the Aulin lacks personality, but the music itself deeply touched me.

KELLENBERGER

Amihai Grosz, viola

PARTOS: *Yizkor*; **SCHUBERT:** *Arpeggione Sonata*; **SHOSTAKOVICH:** *Viola Sonata*

Sunwook Kim, p—Alpha 634—70 minutes

Amihai Grosz—founding violist of the Jerusalem Quartet and principal violist of the Berlin Philharmonic—has put together here a program seemingly on the basis of the impressive darkness and depth of his sound. Even in the *Arpeggione* he accordingly keeps the high-register material to an absolute minimum, in a way I have not heard before. There is no way to keep altogether off the A string in the first movement, but he comes as near to it as I have seen anyone do, doubling back down the octave twice in the space of a bar, or dropping an extra octave after the inevitable dizzy run up to the top near the end of the recapitulation. That this has nothing to do with technical difficulty is evident, not only because of his

surpassing mastery of everything he does, but because when he *is* genuinely called to go up there he does it without apparent effort. The main point, though, does seem to be his exceptional sound in the low register, where it is fluid, silky, dark, and melancholy.

The two pieces setting off the Schubert on either side emphasize the point. Odeon Partos's *Yizkor (In Memoriam)*, written in 1947 while he was principal violist of the Palestine Orchestra established in 1936 by Bronislaw Huberman, shows us the Budapest-born composer taking up a people's grief and making it sing for them. It begins and ends in somber and dignified mourning, but rises in between to heights of impassioned anguish. It's a piece new to me, and one I won't soon forget.

Dmitri Shostakovich's 1975 Viola Sonata is one I have seemingly known forever, and my chances of forgetting *that* have always been nil. It's the composer's last work, completed while Shostakovich was dying of cancer; and in common with other works of those last years, it seems to set about a sort of summation of his previous achievements. Hence the usual (by now) welter of self-quotations in the finale. He had done this much earlier, famously, all through the Eighth Quartet, but by now the self- (and other-) quotations are if anything both more numerous and more obscure. The last quartets all seemingly track each other; the finale of Symphony 15 begins with a bunch of Wagner quotations, and its first movement refers repeatedly to, of all things, Rossini's *William Tell* Overture; and so forth. Here the big reference is to the first movement of Beethoven's *Moonlight* Sonata in the finale, but I've often wondered whether the open-strings pizzicatos that open the piece might not be a sort of reference to the open strings that open the Berg Violin Concerto, and there is certainly a fragment of the opening of Shostakovich's own death-obsessed Symphony 14 in the far bass of the piano just before the viola's cadenza in the finale. It's as though the head of the dying man were teeming with vying musical allusions, all clamoring to be set out on paper.

Grosz doesn't glamorize this, just sets it out, compassionately and with melting tone. A very fine recording.

Grosz, incidentally, bucks the trend of violists using brand-new and apparently immaculate instruments; his is a Gasparo da Salo, 1570 (!), on loan, naturally, from "a private collector". It looks to have been considerably cut down—instruments those days were *huge*—

but you'd scarcely know that from the sound, which is deep and rich.

THOMSON

Sequenza

BIBER: *Passacaglia*; **SCIARRINO:** *Capricci 2+5*; **BERIO:** *Sequenza VIII*; **SCHUMANN:** *Violin Sonata*

Franziska Holscher, v; Severin von Eckardstein, p
Avi 8553446—65 minutes

The Schumann is aesthetically dense, dark, and turbulent. Yet as troubled and hectic as its sounds, its craftsmanship and formal construction is perfectly ordered and stable; voices and themes interact ensuring every idea ties to another idea, in and even across movements. The piece unravels as if carefully pulling a piece of thread from a spool, unrelenting, each transition seamless and unsuspected. Schumann is obsessive with his accentuation markings; he uses five different accent notations. The performers interpret each marking literally. But Schumann is a little too detailed, a composer who can micromanage in an impossible quest to control a performance's aesthetics. Every accent should be approached differently according to the tenor of the music, not as literally as Schumann writes or these performers play. This performance is above average, its strength in its exceptional attention to the score.

The Passacaglia is not too bad. Attacks are a little aggressive on chords; runs are too heavy-handed and clunky. The playing becomes prosaic because of a lack of imagination in playing in and around around the bass line. A hint of bow vibrato interested me.

The Berio and Sciarrino I can scarcely comment on. They are dreadful to listen to. Screeches and shrieks, whining and warbling—how can this justly be called music? This critic aligns with Mozart, who believed music should remain music, no matter what horror one wishes to depict. I wonder how I could judge if one screech is slightly more screechy and thus more effective than another? This is what happens when we remove beauty from art; music loses its ability to be constructive.

KELLENBERGER

Ellen Jewett

SAYGUN: *Violin Partita*; **TURKMEN:** *Beautiful and Unowned*; **CETIZ:** *Soliloquy*

Naxos 579043—65 minutes

Three Turkish pieces. An advertised novelty on

American Record Guide

the back cover is that this was recorded in a "hand-carved Cappadocian cavern" with "unique acoustics". At first glance this seems to add credibility and authenticity to the performance. This performer surely must have immersed herself in Turkish culture to have performed in such a space, must really understand the music. Yet to me it feels suspiciously like tokenism. What does "unique acoustics" mean? Every performance space has unique characteristics. Was this music specifically composed to be performed in this space? If not, why the fuss?

I do not like this music. The Saygun is full of chromaticism, dissonant intervals, and modal influence. The acoustics partly hide dreadful slapping sounds particularly in IV and short, clipped staccato. The Turkmen is unapologetically crass and crunchy, replete with ghastly glissandos, disjunctive leaps, and all sorts of dreadful sounds that a prankster child beginner would think were humorous. But I am not amused. The Cetiz is similar, sounding more like a construction site, with sawing, drilling, and hammering. Noise music. We can bang pots, punch walls, scratch chalkboards, and rub styrofoam together. I suppose there is something clever about joining this joyous cacophony of sound on a precious instrument steeped in hundreds of years of rich tradition—something novel about expressing anger, frustration, and desperation and simultaneously engaging in cultural desecration. Some say it is an expressive evolution, a natural outpouring of freedom, of testing limits, sounds, and aural possibilities; composition has entered the laboratory; hallelujah. I very politely call it devolution. No, thank you.

KELLENBERGER

Randolph Kelly, viola

HINDEMITH: *Sonata op 11:4*; **SCHUBERT:** *Arpeggione Sonata*; **GLINKA:** *Sonata*

John Novacek, p

IBS 122020—60 minutes

Three of Viola's Greatest Hits, though I don't think I have seen them programmed together like this before. Or in this order, which seems unsatisfactory, ending as it does with the slow second movement of the unfinished Glinka. It would have gone better in reverse order, with the Hindemith last and ending with a very definite "bang".

Randolph Kelly has had a long and exemplary career as soloist, section-leader, and chamber musician, and it's interesting to hear

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him for (I think) the first time. His sound is rich and even across all the strings, and his bowing deft. I could wish for more derring-do, especially in the Hindemith, which here comes across as timid. This might be spun as his desire to emphasize the Debussian-Straussian aspects of the score rather than the “forward-looking” aspects, but on the whole I think not, because even in the music’s most luxuriant passages he doesn’t indulge himself. It’s all neat, a little hesitant, and rather tightly controlled, even in the hilarious frenzy of the last page (well, the last several pages, for the pianist), where the ordinary player tends to get by on luck and a hefty dose of prayer.

Someday I will put together a list of who puts what things in what octave in the first movement of the *Arpeggione*. The instrument itself was an oddity when Schubert wrote for it, and by the time his sonata was actually published, nearly 50 years later, it was effectively extinct. Kelly’s choices are mostly commonplace, but he does take one bit up the octave—just before the recapitulation—that I’ve not heard that done to before. It’s a nice performance, warm and mellow in the slow movement, not obviously overtaxed elsewhere, and with an air of ease that brushes aside all those registral hurdles.

The Glinka is another late-born, long-posthumously-published work; it languished for more than a century between when its composer set it aside in 1825—presumably intending to pick it up again later—and 1932, when the violist Vadim Borisovsky pieced together the two extant movements and premiered it. The first movement has the early-19th Century viola vibe just right—moody, melancholy, sometimes snappish. It is more straightforwardly lyrical, though it never seems to stick around long in my memory.

In all this Kelly is ably partnered by John Novacek (more than ably in the Hindemith, which throws fistfuls of notes at the pianist whenever it gets a chance). If you want the three works together, this is it; but for each there are better options: Kashkashian or Schotten in the Hindemith, Imai in the Glinka, any number of people in the Schubert.

THOMSON

From *USA Today*:
“The body lied in state....”

This proves that they hire people to write who can’t even speak correctly. It also proves that if they have editors, they are just as stupid.

What's Next Vivaldi?

VIVALDI: *Violin Concertos; Lazzo Parlante*; **CATTANEO:** *Estroso*; **FRANCESCONI:** *Spiccato Il Volo*; **MOVIO:** *Incanto XIX*; **STROPPA:** *Dilanio Avvinto*; **SOLLIMA:** *Moghul*; **BARTOK:** *The Bagpipe*

Patricia Kopatchinskaja, v; Giardino Armonico/
Giovanni Antononi

Alpha 624—71 minutes

Patricia Kopatchinskaya has described herself as like a rose, beautiful but also thorny. I certainly agree with the latter half of her self-estimation. Her recordings tend to be exercises in exhibitionism designed to shock the bourgeoisie. The use of the noises in the first movement of ‘The Sea Tempest’ Violin Concerto that opens the program spoils it. I know that Vivaldi liked vivid program music, which this is, but this cacophony is ridiculous. She is inventive and much better in the other two movements, though she still provokes the listener. Whether or not you enjoy what she does depends on how much provocation you can tolerate. I will admit that she is spontaneous and never sounds stuffy. I doubt, though, that Vivaldi intended his ‘Lazzo Parlante’ to sound like the frightening noise emanating from a lunatic asylum as it does here.

The *Joke* is followed without a break by Aurelio Cattaneo’s *Estroso (Whimsical)*. It is more noise, sounding very aleatoric, though I can’t say for sure as I haven’t seen the score.

Vivaldi’s Violin Concerto in G minor is played in a more conservative manner, and I enjoyed it. When they are trying to serve the music, Kopatchinskaya and Il Giardino Armonico can be very effective if still a bit over the top.

The concerto leads directly into Luca Francesconi’s *Spiccato il Volo (Took Off)*, which is jarring. The piece is played largely with a bouncing bow (hence *Took Off*). It is avant-garde like the Cattaneo, and grated on my nerves like his piece did. I find this kind of avant-garde noisemaking empty and tedious.

The rest of the program continues in the same vein, with a Vivaldi violin concerto followed by another pretentious avant-garde work. I don’t hate the avant-garde. I was greatly affected by Penderecki’s *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*, and Gyorgy Ligeti’s soundscapes from the 1960s still strike me as remarkable achievements. For music to be worthwhile, though, it must do more than just shock.

The program closes with one of Bartok’s 44

violin duos, 'Bagpipes,' arranged for violin (Kopatchinskaya) and recorder (Giovanni Antonini). I love this duo and have played it myself, so I can honestly say that these musicians butcher it. Disgusting.

Kopatchinskaja's violin was made by Ferdinando Gagliano in Naples around 1780.

MAGIL

Violin Plus One

DVORAK: *Romance*; **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Serenade Melancolique*; **CHAUSSE:** *Poeme*; **SVENDSEN:** *Romance*; **MASSNET:** *Meditation from Thais*; **BLOCH:** *Nigun from Baal Shem*; **SAINT-SAENS:** *Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso*

Piet Koornhof; Albie van Schalkwyk, p
Delos 3577—67 minutes

A listener shuts his heart until he trusts the performers. An impressive biography is often sufficient to generate trust in a casual listener; as a critic, I do not put much stock in biographies; I have heard too many dreadful performances from people with the most distinguished and pristine hagiographies. Yet until this trust is established, a listener remains slightly detached, waiting, hoping, and wanting to be impressed. This detachment passes off as objectivity, but its true roots lie closer to dark forces of cynicism and snobbery. The only cure for cynicism is falling in love, and in the music world, the only way to fall in love is through good playing.

The piano introduction of the *Romance* augers a good performance; the violin enters with favorable sound, and we begin to feel at ease. But clumsy artistry soon surfaces in the pokey staccato in the piano in the Dvorak. The violinist's sound does not react to the vicissitudes of the music; in subtle places the tone is too rich; in crescendos he reacts linearly, not with organic swelling. A maudlin and aggressive vibrato sometimes plagues intonation and sound.

The recording quality is rotten. One gathers the impression this would be a good violinist in person, but he is trapped in a box, his sound distant, dead, and indefinite, disparate and disconnected from the piano. I have wrestled as much with this release as any I have ever reviewed. Normally I listen to a disc two or three times in the process of creating a review. This one I listened to 10 times, and I so despise the engineering and technical aspects of the recording that even after so many attempts, I still cannot recommend it, with

apologies to the performers, who give compelling performances. But they exist in such a strange fog.

Pianistic interludes justify purchasing the recording. It is very rare to hear bouts of playing this good in a tutti role. The violinist is enthusiastic and fearless, but the uneven tone and lapses in musical judgement, such as a stuck quality in the bow at the end of the Saint-Saens, hold him under his counterpart. I appreciate their finer moments, but I never trusted them.

KELLENBERGER

Liv Migdal

BACH: *Violin Sonata 3*; **BEN-HAIM:** *Sonata*; **BARTOK:** *Sonata*

Genuin 19656—67 minutes

Migdal chose fiendishly difficult repertoire. I of Bach reveals rare attention to sound and infectious connection to music. She opts for limited vibrato, a dangerous choice, but manages to not sound as dry as many who attempt it. II, the longest of the three fugues Bach wrote for unaccompanied violin, may be even more demanding than the infamous Chaconne. Her rendition is too slow and careful, clocking 12 minutes; Gil Shaham takes 8—the truth lies somewhere between. Predictable agogic accents are slightly overdone; she could find more areas of emphasis besides downbeats to drive the music forward. Episodes require color and dynamics and should not be treated as breaks. Her impeccable sound quality mitigates some of these sins, and I mostly like her taste.

The Ben-Haim is a pleasant discovery. I exhibits modal characteristics, an ode to his Jewish roots. The piece is tonal but with instances of parallel fifths and other temporary destabilizing gestures. I ends with a romp. II is slow, an elegy for the dead in hushed and reverent tones. III is full of perpetual motion, showing grand technique of chords and octaves and high G-string playing. I would appreciate more exposure to this work and this composer.

The Bartok is comparable to the best recordings. I opens well, displaying her sound quality, building to rousing achievement by the end. Beautiful colors surface in III. Defiance bleeds through the rhythm in IV. Finally a recording where this devilish invention does not seem that challenging! Migdal I did not know, but she is a marvelous player. Bravo!

KELLENBERGER

Mystical Violin

Roberto Noferini; Andrea Toschi, org
Tactus 870002—78 minutes

This is a most unusual enterprise. *Il Violino Mistico*, to give it its Italian title, is a collection of short pieces for violin and organ or harmonium (12 and 6 pieces), presumably for ecclesiastical use, written in Italy between the late 19th and the mid-20th centuries. Almost all of the composers are obscure, and seven of the 16 here don't even have birth or death dates. The three works by Lino Liviabella (1902-64) are unpublished and were supplied to the annotator by the composer's family.

So: a small but detailed snapshot, essentially, of a genre I didn't even know existed. As you might expect, the prevailing mood is tranquil and beatific, though not always without incident; Guglielmo Zuelli's 1922 *Passa il Natale*, the opener and much the longest work here at ten minutes, has some harrowing moments. The latest work, the 1958 *Augurio Nuziale* by Ildebrando Pizzetti (the only composer of the lot that I have encountered before) is a sort of back-composition. Written for the composer's son's wedding, it was later orchestrated, the orchestral part "summarized" for piano, and the organ part later reconstructed by Roberto Becheri and recorded here for the first time. I rather expect that most of these are first recordings.

The performances I would characterize as good rather than great. Despite sterling equipment (a Scarampella violin, a Dodd bow), Roberto Noferini seldom sounds entirely at ease. Partly this might be the acoustic of the Chiesa Parrocchiale della Madonna del Carmine in Cremolino, where the recordings with full organ were made. (The ones with harmonium were done at the Chiesa di Santa Maria delle Misericordia in Bologna.) Nor is either keyboard instrument perfectly in tune. Exhaustive details of organ and harmonium are supplied in the booklet for organists, the curious, or both.

THOMSON

Benjamin Schmid

PAGANINI: *Le Streghe; La Campanella; Caprices 13+20; Cantabile; Sonata 12; Non Più Mesta*; **MILSTEIN:** *Paganiana*; **MULLENBACH:** *Capriccio*; **TARTINI:** *Devil's Trill Sonata*
Lisa Smirnov, Ariane Haering, p
Oehms 1893—66 minutes

Avoid this offensive recording. Spare yourself

from scratchy and percussive sounds and crude musical tastes. There are a smattering of pleasant moments, but they are few and quickly ruined by rough playing. A lot of the problem is the ricochet and staccato, strokes that ought to be lithe, graceful, quixotic, whimsical, impish, and many other antonyms to the playing we hear.

KELLENBERGER

JS Bach's Precursors

BALTZER: *Praeludium in G*; **WESTHOFF:** *Suite in A*; **BIBER:** *Passacaglia*; **BACH:** *Partita 2*
Annegret Siedel, v
Musicaphon 56984—57 minutes

This is music for baroque violin, starting with smaller and shorter predecessors and working its way up to (naturally) Bach's Second Partita. But the execution is off. Kudos to Annegret Siedel for beginning with Thomas Baltzar's quirky Praeludium in G, one of a handful of his works found in the 17th Century English collection *The Division Violin*. This one, as the notes point out, has some rudimentary polyphonic characteristics that most of the contents of the book—"divisions", which is to say variation sets—don't.

Johann Paul Westhoff was first violinist at Weimar when Bach arrived there in 1703, and had been for some years. This "Suite pour le violon sans basse" is believed to have been the one Westhoff had played before King Louis XIV in 1682. It was then published in the "Mercurie Galant". It's in the standard four French dance-suite movements plus Prelude, all extremely brief, and is polyphonic practically everywhere, openly (via double-stopping) and implied. Before Bach it and the same composer's Six Partitas for solo violin (1696) were probably the high point of solo-violin polyphony, although Hans Ignaz Franz Biber's well-known Passacaglia, the companion piece to his 15 Sonatas on the Rosary, runs them close. The Biber's theme is far simpler than Bach's—just a four-note descending line—but it becomes ever more increasingly and intensively elaborated as the piece progresses.

So the Bach is, as it were, Westhoff plus Biber, a dance suite followed by a great chaconne, only quite a bit longer and an order of magnitude or so more complex. So the program's trajectory makes perfect sense. But Siedel is not at all the violinist I would choose for such a project. Even in the smaller works she is rough and tentative; when it comes to the Biber and especially the Bach, she

becomes almost terminally cautious. The fast movements of the Bach—the Corrente and Giga—are as slow as I have ever heard them, and the Ciaccona has no grandeur, no great arch. This is not in the least a matter of her using a baroque instrument (here, a Jacob Stainer, fully restored, with a modern bow after a 17th Century original). We have had great and stylish “period” recordings of the Bach for decades now, what with Rachel Podger (my own favorite) and Monica Huggett and Lucy van Dael and Elizabeth Wallfisch and Giuliano Carmignola. Andrew Manze’s account of the Biber (one of several excellent ones) blows Siedel’s out of the water. She’s not in the least perverse or ill-intentioned or even inept; she’s just out of her league.

Musicaphon’s packaging, incidentally, is excellent: a slim cardboard package, a plastic insert gently gripping the disc without either trapping it or dropping it, and a matching pocket for the booklet.

THOMSON

University Bands

Tribute

Oquin, Perrine, Curnow, Giroux, Stamp, David Vince Kenney, eu; Drake University Wind Symphony/ Robert Meunier

Mark 55597—55 minutes

American Symphony

Jager, Hall, Jenkins

University of Texas-El Paso Wind Symphony/ Bradley Genevro; Messiah College Wind Ensemble/ Bradley Jenevro

Mark 55872—69 minutes

BALMAGES: *Metal; Shrine of the Fallen; Industrial Loops; Trust in Angels; Within the Castle Walls; Spontaneous Beings; Rippling Watercolors; Primal Dances*

Steven Marx, tpt; Sunderman Conservatory Wind Symphony/ Russell McCutcheon

Mark 54617—50 minutes

Here are three albums by university or conservatory concert bands. The first time I heard the Drake University Wind Symphony, I was surprised and impressed that such a small school (3500 students) could produce such a fine recording (May/June 2014: 224). Two later albums also impressed me (Jan/Feb 2016: 209, May/June 2017: 105), so this time I’m not surprised, just impressed again. As before, I notice that director Robert Meunier holds his young players to moderate dynamic levels

much of the time, resulting in warmth and blend and making big moments quite effective.

The program offers two big pieces. Based on James Weldon’s poem of the same name, and on BF White’s hymn ‘Beach Spring’, the two-movement, 15-minute *Ghosts of the Old Year* (2016) is James David’s attempt to portray the South’s natural beauty that masks the brutality of racial violence. I am happy to make the acquaintance of the very tuneful, 16-minute Euphonium Concerto (1997) by James Curnow. The three movements are played without pause between, cadenzas serving as transitions. It is a work with modest technical demands on the soloist, except for some very high notes and fast scales here and there. Drake’s professor of low brass and assistant director of bands Mark Kinney is the fine soloist whose expressiveness, consistently full tone, strong high register, and solid technical skill contribute to a terrific performance. Also included are Wayne Oquin’s lively opener ‘Flashback’ (2016), Aaron Perrine’s depiction of Lake Superior in ‘Pale Blue on Deep’ (2011), Julie Giroux’s sad paeon ‘Hymn for the Innocent’ (2016), and Jack Stamp’s sound-the-alarm ‘Tocsin’ (2018).

In “American Symphony”, conductor Bradley Genevro presents his two bands in three big pieces. The University of Texas-El Paso Wind Symphony offers Robert Jager’s 4-movement, 22-minute Symphony 3 (*The Glory of God*), which takes as inspiration the words of Irish poet and priest Gerard Manley Hopkins. I is bombastic, II mysterious, III very slow and quiet, IV inexorable until the final exultant moments. Morton Gould’s 2-movement, 20-minute Symphony 4, *West Point*, is a well-known work with a dignified passacaglia in I (‘Epitaphs’), liveliness in II (‘Marches’). The UTEP band sounds very good; any weaknesses are minor. The Messiah College Wind Ensemble gives a spirited reading of Joseph Willcox Jenkins’s three-movement, 27-minute Symphony 5 (1979). The composer, best known to me for his ‘American Overture for Band’, slyly quotes various fifth symphonies and includes synthesized sounds. The Messiah musicians sound best in their tuttis; a few solo moments sound youthful.

Gettysburg College is the home of Sunderman Conservatory, where Russell McCutcheon is director of bands. The group offers eight works by Brian Balmages, a member of the Towson University music faculty. The centerpiece is the nine-minute *Trust in Angels*, with

faculty trumpeter Steven Marx as soloist. Much of the work is contemplative, but it has some soaring moments. Marx plays very well, handling high, forceful passages with aplomb. It seems a pity that there is not more ambience from the room, though. The group sounds good in it, but it makes the soloist sound a bit plain in quiet moments.

The rest of the program is pleasant and well played—not surprising, since the pieces were composed for middle school, high school, and community bands. ‘Metal’ is the energetic little program opener. *Shrine of the Fallen* memorializes protesters lost to a brutal police response in Kiev, Ukraine, in 2014. ‘Industrial Loops’ is rollicking. *Within the Castle Walls* was given its first performance by a junior high school honor band. ‘Spontaneous Beings’ was commissioned by music teachers at a summer workshop. ‘Rippling Watercolors’ and ‘Primal Dances’ were both written for middle school bands.

KILPATRICK

Monet Quintet

Dubugnon, Francaix, Holst, Taffanel
 Avi 8553008—70 minutes

Anissa Baniahmad is Principal Flute of the Mannheim National Theater, Johanna Stier is Principal Oboe of the NDR Philharmonic, Nemorino Scheliga just finished as Principal Clarinet of the Stuttgart Opera, Theo Plath is Principal Bassoon of the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, and Marc Gruber is Principal Horn of the Frankfurt Radio Symphony. A decade ago, they played together in the German National Youth Orchestra; and in 2014, while studying at different German universities, they formed the Monet Quintet.

This debut album balances the romantic character of the 19th Century with the modernist flavor of the 20th. The program begins with the lively and clever *Frenghish Suite* (1997) of contemporary Swiss composer Richard Dubugnon (b. 1968); and afterward, it retreats to the Paris salon of flutist-composer Paul Taffanel (1844-1908) and his Wind Quintet in G minor (1876). A youthful work by Gustav Holst (1874-1934) follows: the sonorous yet rarely played Wind Quintet in A-flat (1903). The recital concludes with Jean Francaix’s cheeky and virtuosic Wind Quintet 1 (1948).

The Monet Quintet treats the listener to marvelously clear timbres, perfectly balanced colors, outstanding technique, honed phrasing, and superb blend, rhythm, and intona-

tion. Serious fans of the medium may find the readings a little conservative—lyrical moments and heated passages need more contrasts—but overall, these are fine representations of this important repertoire.

HANUDEL

Greek Orthodox Chant

Music of Byzantium

Cappella Romana/ Alexander Lingas
 Cappella Romana 14—64:24

The Fall of Constantinople

Cappella Romana/ Alexander Lingas
 Cappella Romana 402—72:22

These two releases by Cappella Romana serve two different purposes. The first is actually a “greatest hits” sampler that was compiled in conjunction with a 2004 exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, “Byzantium: Faith and Power”. The selection includes examples of different genres and styles. The Greek Orthodox chants range from a 6th Century *kontakion* by Romanos the Melodist to a number of later chants by John Plousiadenos (c.1429-1500). Other selections are unusual, including a version of the Latin ‘Kyrie Cunctipotens genitor’ that was transcribed into Byzantine notation and the juxtaposition of two laments for the fall of Constantinople in 1453, an Orthodox chant by Manuel Chrysaphes (15th Century) followed by Guillaume Dufay’s ‘Lamentatio Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae’. The overall quality of the performances is consistent and up to the standards found in the ensemble’s other recordings; but the sound is perhaps more distant, and the extraneous sounds sometimes interrupt the beauty of the music. The booklet includes a short essay by Lingas and English translations. Rather than recordings from concerts, many of these same selections, taken from recording sessions, were included on a different compilation for London’s Royal Academy of Art’s 2008 exhibit, “Byzantium: 330-1453”.

Seven of these “greatest hits” on the MET release were later included on the second recording reviewed here (not a concert). Compared with some of the compilations that have been released in the past to evoke particular artists or events (think of Jordi Savall’s multicultural extravaganzas, such as “Joan of Arc”, Nov/Dec 2012: 255, or “Erasmus”, July/Aug 2013: 193), this recording is a very effective musical evocation of the events surrounding

the capture of Constantinople in 1453. Alexander Lingas has created an evocative musical dialog between the Latin west and Greek east at this period, beginning with the liturgical entrance rite as it would have been celebrated in Hagia Sophia in the reign of Emperor Constantine XI Paleologos (1449-53) and music from the Council of Florence which sought to bridge the "Great Schism" between the Orthodox and Catholic traditions (including two *canons* by Plousiadenos and Dufay's motet, 'Ecclesiae militantis'). Also included are examples of polyphonic Byzantine chant "according to the Latins", in the style of medieval parallel organum, and two other motets by Dufay ('Vasilissa ergo gaude' and 'Apostolo glorioso'). Lingas's booklet essay is a rich, concise resource about the political and musical aspects of this period; and there are complete texts (in Greek and Latin) and translations. The performances on this recording, both of the chant and the a cappella motets, match the musicality evident on the ensemble's other recordings (Nov/Dec 2008: 215, Jan/Feb 2013: 206, May/June 2015: 203, May/June 2016: 186). In sum, this recording is an evocative sonic mirror of this complex moment in history.

BREWER

Hispanic Sacred Music

The Queen's Six—Signum 626—66:23

Titled "Journeys to the New World", this is an anthology of Hispanic polyphonic motets from the mid-1600s until about 1700. Four of the composers never crossed the ocean: Cristobal de Morales, Francisco Guerrero, Tomas Luis de Victoria, and Alonso Lobo. Their music did, and it was used in churches, cathedrals, monasteries, and convents. The other four composers—Hernando Franco, Francisco Lopez Capillas, Juan Gutierrez de Padilla, and Miguel Mateo de Dallo y Lana—all worked in these new institutions in New Spain, especially Mexico City and Puebla de los Angeles.

The Queen's Six is formed from half of the Lay Clerks of St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. Their approach to singing late Renaissance polyphony emphasizes clarity and balance but with little change of texture or dynamics. I note the excellent diction from the countertenors, especially important to the comprehension of the texts.

Some of this same repertoire was recorded by the four voices of the Hilliard Ensemble (Nov/Dec 1992: 252), and compositions from

the New World can be found in other collections (Mar/Apr 1991: 164, Jan/Feb 2004: 228). This new release helps to demonstrate that music had an important role in the sonic colonization of the New World. Bruno Turner offers an informative note and descriptions of the pieces and also includes full texts and translations.

BREWER

English Ballads and Country Dances

Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien/ François Lazarevitch—Alpha 636—68:20

This collection of 17th Century English ballads and country dances, most derived from the many editions of John Playford's "English Dancing Master", is a delightful romp. Though the tune 'The Queen's Delight' is not included, some of selections will be familiar from other early music collections, such as the ballad 'When Daphne from Fair Phoebus did Fly'. The ensemble has also adapted other compositions that may have had folk origins, such as Henry Purcell's 'Sefauchi's Farewell' and a medley of variations on 'John come kiss me now' by Thomas Baltzar, Christopher Simpson, Davis Mell, and Solomon Eccles. The track titled 'An Italian Ayre' is not actually by Henry Lawes, but an anonymous tune, 'La Mantovana', that became known as the country dance, 'An Italian Rant'.

This new release compares favorably with earlier collections from the Musicians of Swanee Alley (Mar/Apr 1990: 144), the Baltimore Consort (May/June 1992: 171), and the Dufay Collective (Nov/Dec 1996: 262), and is also a useful recording to "Drive the Cold Winter Away" (also included on this recording). Texts with French translations are included in the booklet; this is only a problem for 'An Italian Ayre', which has an Italian text.

BREWER

La Bergere

Marie Magistry, s, Sylvain Bergeron, archlute
ATMA 2801—64:39

The title for this collection is taken from the most modern work, Michel Pignolet de Montclair's 1706 cantata *La Bergère* (The Shepherdess). The pastoral themes of this cantata were also the major conceit of the 17th Century French *airs de cour* (court airs) found on this release, including selections by Pierre Guedron (2), Gabriel Bataille (1), Joseph Chabanceau de la Barre (3), Marc-Antoine Charp-

entier (1), and Jean-Baptiste Lully's 'Recit de la beauté' from Molière's *comédie-ballet Le Mariage Forcé*.

The best represented composer is Michel Lambert (5 examples), a dancer, singer, and the most fertile composer of *airs de cour* in this period. Three of Lambert's airs on this recording could be considered "greatest hits" ('Le repos, l'ombre et le silence', 'Ma bergère est tendre et fidèle' and 'Vos mepris chaque jour'). They were also recorded by Les Arts Florissants (Sept/Oct 1992) and Musica Favola (May/June 2011), who also included 'Dans nos bois, Tircis aperçut', likewise found on this release.

Marie Magistry has an agile and exquisite voice, clear diction, elegant phrasing, and easily handles the intricate style of French ornamentation. She is adroitly accompanied by Sylvain Bergeron, archlute, and for Lambert's airs and others from the later 17th Century by a small group of flute, two violins, and viola da gamba. The booklet is informative but the texts are given only in French. This is a important addition to the earlier releases of *airs de cour* on Linn (Nov/Dec 1999: 271) and Glissando (Mar/Apr 2001: 223).

BREWER

Sacred Treasures from the Düben Coll

Uppsala Academy Chamber Choir; Cologne Radio Choir; Uppsala Consort/ Stefan Parkman
Footprint 113—64 minutes

This program of Latin church music emanates from St Mary's Church in Lübeck, as Kerala J. Snyder notes. It includes music by the most famous composers associated with the institution, namely Franz Tunder and Dietrich Buxtehude, whose works are preserved in the Düben Collection, compiled by the Swedish Hofkapellmeister Gustav Düben for the royal court of Sweden in the 1640s, 1650s, and 1710s. Since the 18th Century, the collection has been housed at the University of Uppsala.

The works by Heinrich Schütz, Orlando di Lasso, Paolo Quagliati, and Simone Vesi are found in part books in the library of St Mary's church. Music by Vesi and Quagliati are recorded here for the first time. Quagliati's motet 'Jesu ex Penetrati Cordis' strikes me as belonging to the *stile antico* of Palestrina. Vesi's 'Salve Regina' and 'Magnificat' reflect the taste for vocal virtuosity, dance-like rhythms, and harmonic expression associated with the *stile moderno* of Monteverdi, Buxtehude, and Schütz. The style is well represented

here in Schütz's sacred concerto 'Saul, Saul, Was Verfolgst du Mich?'. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

Lamento

Damien Guillon, ct; Cafe Zimmermann
Alpha 626—69 minutes

This is not the first time I have reviewed a recording titled *Lamento*. In 2015 I reviewed a delightful recording of Italian laments by Monteverdi, Luigi Rossi, and Barbara Strozzi sung by mezzo soprano Romina Basso (Naive 5390; Jan/Feb 2015). The Lament was an important category of vocal music in 17th-Century Italy, related to the aria and cantata. This program explores the genre among German masters of the same period.

Over roughly the past 20 years, 'Ach wie Sehnlich Wart Ich der Zeit' has become standard fare for counter-tenors. Michael Chance (Chandos 675; Nov/Dec 2001), Franz Vitzthum (Christophorus 77305, July/Aug 2009), Ryland Angel (Deux-Elles 1147; Sept/Oct 2013), and Reginald Mobley (VGO 1027; Sept/Oct 2018) have all recorded it. Gerard Lesne (Astrée 8873; Sept/Oct 2002) also recorded it along with Johann Michael Bach's 'Ach, Dass Ich Wassers Gnug Hätte'. Guillon's tempo is slower than the others; otherwise his performance is a wonderful contribution to the canon.

Laments by Biber and Christoph Bernhard are also gorgeous examples of the genre. Biber's 'O Dulcis' is a substantial virtuosic composition for solo voice and violin (Pablo Valetti). They sometimes perform together, but mainly alternate, as though they were each giving voice to the feelings and meaning of lament. Schmelzer's 'Lamento Sopra la Morte Ferdinandi III' is a multi-sectional sonata for string ensemble. In fact, its sonorous opening has a similar character to the short sonatas that open the arias by JM and JC Bach. Bernhard's 'Was Betrübst du Dich' is another lovely lament, very similar in style to the two Bach arias. The program concludes with the Pas-sacaglia from Biber's *Rosary Sonatas*. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

Leopold I

Sagrifizio D'Abramo; Miserere
Weser-Renaissance/ Manfred Cordes
CPO 555113—76 minutes

As always, Manfred Cordes and Weser-Renais-

sance turn in a polished performance, here of some rare works by an unexpected talent—the Hapsburg Emperor Leopold I (1640-1705). After Leopold’s step-mother Eleanor of Gonzaga introduced the Italian tradition of the *sepolcro* to the Viennese court in 1651, composers became accustomed to staging oratorios on the subject of Christ’s Passion on the Thursdays of Lent and on Good Friday. Leopold’s oratorio *Il Sacrificio D’Abramo* fits into this tradition. In fact, it is his first oratorio. Also remarkable is the fact that its librettist, Conte Caldana, uses the opportunity to present Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac in Part I (for the first time in Vienna) as a springboard for New Testament exegesis in Part II. The composition is well wrought, showing stylistic facility, and inspiring music for soloists, chorus, and orchestra.

Miserere per la Settimana Santa is a motet for four voices, strings, and continuo. Leopold gives clear direction that his setting of the penitential psalm (Ps. 51) is to be sung without organ accompaniment. The work is organized as a series of arias, recitatives, and choruses, giving it essentially the same quality as his oratorio. Both are delightful works and beautifully performed. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

Venice & Beyond

Wind Concertos & Sonatas
Lotti, Caldara, Vivaldi, others
Affinita/ Elisabeth Baumer
Arcana 119—67 minutes

The historical connection between Vienna and Northern Italy (especially Venice) is one of the reasons why oboist Elisabeth Baumer founded Affinita in 2012. The Austro-Italian ensemble specializes in chamber music for woodwinds, and this program illustrates numerous ways that 18th-Century composers used wind instruments in sonatas and concertos.

The 8 players in Affinita are adept at a wide range of expressive effects: from trumpet-like fanfares (oboe) and high decorative passages (recorder) in Antonio Caldara’s theatrical scene-setting sinfonia for his alto cantata ‘Clori, Mia Bell Clori’ to the oboe’s dulcet free-form adagio in Giovanni Battista Ferrandini’s Opus 2:2 Sonata and rippling figures like a gentle game of tag in Giuseppe Antonio Brescianello’s B-flat Concerto for oboe, bassoon, and basso continuo.

Singing style abounds, which is not easy to achieve in a wind ensemble. The sweet-toned

bassoon is the ideal bass partner for recorder and oboe in Vivaldi’s R 103 Concerto. And a rich continuo trio (violone, archlute, harpsichord) joins forces with transverse flute and oboe in Baldassare Galuppi’s Sonata a 3, where it’s like hearing a group of instruments—and their players—happily relishing each other’s company.

C MOORE

London circa 1720

La Reveuse/ Florence Bolton, Benjamin Perrot
Harmonia Mundi 905322—61 minutes

Subtitled “Corelli’s Legacy”, this is a pleasurable collection of compositions by composers in England who either had direct connections with Arcangelo Corelli or fell under his influence. In the first category is Sonata IV (Opus 1, 1716 edition) by his student, Francesco Geminiani, and two works by a colleague in Italy, George Frideric Handel (Sonata “per la viola da gamba” and a “Concerto a quattro”, also attributed to Telemann). The English love of the recorder is represented through Johann Christian Schickhardt’s arrangement of movements from Corelli’s Opus 6 concerti grossi as a trio sonata, his own Concerto II for four flutes and continuo (here performed by two recorders and two baroque flutes), and William Babel’s chirpy Concerto II from Opus 3 for “sixth flute” (a soprano recorder in D) with its nightingale imitations (though the ripieno violin parts are missing on this recording).

The musicianship of this ensemble can be heard in every selection, from the stylish ornaments added by Stephan Dudermel (violin) in the Geminiani, to the agility and blend of the two recorders (Sebastien Marq and Marine Sablonnière) in the Schickhardt Corelli arrangement. The leaders of the ensemble, Florence Bolton (viola da gamba, also a wonderful soloist in the Handel sonata) and Benjamin Perrot (theorbo) supply supportive and inventive accompaniments.

BREWER

Old & New Worlds

Ars Veritas/ Jakob Patriksson; Schola Cantorum/
Jeremy D Jones—Centaur 3790—59 minutes

A meeting between the directors of the two men’s choirs, Ars Veritas (Sweden) and Schola Cantorum (USA), led to a joint program of music from the Old World and New. The old-world music consists of movements from Ock-

eghem's *Missa Pro Defunctis*, and the anonymous *Messe de Tournai*. The *Mass, Orbis Factor* is arranged by Patriksson, and he offers another arrangement of the familiar Christmas song 'Gaudete'. Per Gunnar Petersson is the arranger of the goliard song 'Tempus Adest Floridum'. Other contemporary works are 'Creator Alme Siderum' by Richard Burchard, and 'Verbum Caro Factum Est' by Dominick DiOrio. The music is well performed and spirited, and much of the contemporary music is recorded here for the first time. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

For All the Saints

BYRD: *Justorum Animae*; **MOORE:** *He That Is Down*; **PHILLIPS:** *Peace Is My Last Gift; Breathe on Me, Breath of God; Psalm 103; Agnus Dei*; **TAVENER:** *Song for Athene*; **BULLOCK:** *Give Us the Wings of Faith*; **PART:** *The Beatitudes*; **FURNIVALL (arr.):** *Amazing Grace*; **O'REGAN:** *We Remember Them*; **SHEPHARD:** *The Secret of Christ*; **ELGAR:** *The Spirit of the Lord*; **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *For All the Saints*
Jason Klein-Mendoza, org; Choir of All Saints' Church, Beverly Hills/ Craig Phillips
Gothic 49325—69 minutes

This choir has produced six earlier recordings on the Gothic label, but this is the first on the theme of their feast of title, All Saints' Day. Some of the selections are more appropriate for All Souls' Day (November 2), and others are somewhat loosely associated with these occasions.

Craig Phillips is the director of the choir and has been honored and commissioned as a composer by the American Guild of Organists. Four of his pieces are recorded here for the first time. They are characterized by quiet declamation and lush harmony. Two of the composers here—Arvo Pärt and John Tavener—are reputed as minimalists, though that may be a too simplistic categorization. Tavener's 'Song for Athene' (1993) suddenly became part of the standard repertory after it was sung at the funeral of Princess Diana in Westminster Abbey in 1997. Pärt's 'Beatitudes' sets the text that is the traditional Gospel reading for All Saints' Day. I would describe the setting as more contemplative than expressive. The influence of these composers, as well as figures such as Morten Lauridsen and Eric Whitacre, is evident in the works by Tarik O'Regan (b 1978) and Phillips himself.

'Give Us the Wings of Faith' by Ernest Bul-

lock (1890-1979) is an example of what I call the Anglican tug-on-the-heartstrings idiom. This recording of it is disappointing largely because the choir and organ sound too distant and feeble, robbing the music of its emotional effect. 'The Spirit of the Lord' is the opening chorus of Elgar's oratorio *The Apostles* (1903), and as such was conceived for a large chorus and orchestra. I have yet to hear it sound effectively performed by a church choir with organ accompaniment.

The choir of All Saints' Church consists of 12 professional staff singers and 25 auditioned volunteers. As heard here, they have good but far from flawless ensemble and intonation. The organ was built by Casavant and since 1978 modified several times. I find that the organ pedals sound disproportionately prominent in this recording. Whether that is intrinsic to the instrument or just the way it was recorded here, I cannot say.

GATENS

Banquet for Voices

GUERERRO: *Duo Seraphim*; **ALLEGRI:** *Miserere*; **CALDARA:** *Crucifixus*; **SCHEIDT:** *Sur-rexit Pastor Bonus*; **TALLIS:** *Spem in Alium*; **PHILIPS:** *Ave Regina*; **BRAHMS:** *Fest und Gedenkspruche*; **MENDELSSOHN:** *Mitten wir im Leben Sind; Heilig*; **BACH:** *Singet dem Herrn*
Cambridge Singers/ John Rutter
Collegium 525—72 minutes

This anthology of polychoral fare was first released by Rutter & Co in 1994. It has been refurbished sonically and sounds just fine. I was most taken with the works by Francisco Guerrero (3 choirs), Antonio Caldara (16 parts), Samuel Scheidt (double choir) and Peter Philips (also double choir), which are not only wonderful but seldom performed. Also special is this account of Gregorio Allegri's Greatest Hit (5 parts, 4 solo voices) which, for once, sounds so beautiful in toto that you aren't just waiting around to sail off on the high-Cs. It's never been done better. Rutter's Bach adds rhythmic snap and some appealing weight to the elegance we would expect, and the 19th Century double-choir stuff is pretty good, too. John Rutter has become such a phenomenon as a composer and champion of his own works that it's easy to forget his gifts as a conductor of other people's music.

GREENFIELD

The gifts of God are there to be delighted in.
To fall short of joy would be ingratitude.

—ELLIS PETERS

Here I Stand

ESENVALDS: *Only in Sleep*; **GJEILO:** *Ave Gen-erosa*; **ELDER:** *In Your Light*; 365; **SCHOEN-BERG, ADAM:** *Never Shall I Forget*; **CHILCOTT:** *Like a Singing Bird*; **QUARTEL:** *Bird's Lullaby*; **DEBUSSY:** *Salut Printemps*; **LIN-FORD:** *Here I Stand*; **RAMSEY:** *Grow Little Tree*; **PINKZEBRA:** *Sing*

Anny Cheng, Anna Khaydarova, p; iSing Silicon Valley/ Jenna Delp Somers, Shane Troll

Innova 58—49 minutes

iSing Silicon Valley is billed as “the premiere girl’s choral education organization” in California’s Bay Area, and they’ll get no argument from me on that score. Hundreds participate in the programs they offer, and this ensemble culled from their ranks is obviously the varsity group. The voices are attractive, expressive, and quite nicely recorded. Note that this is not one of those “Folk Songs from Around the World” programs that are often the purview of children’s choirs. They’re singing what the “big kids” sing (Esenvalds, Gjeilo, Chilcott, Debussy) and bringing honor to all of it. The girls are also very good in the works they’ve commissioned, some of which call for strings and percussion. This is only the 7th year iSing has been around, which makes their various prizes, awards, and gigs all the more impressive. There is a handsome booklet with notes and texts.

GREENFIELD

The Singing Guitar

ESMAIL: *When the Guitar*; **MUHL:** *How Little You Are*; **SMITH:** *The Dawn’s Early Light*; **JOHNSON:** *The Song That I Came to Sing*
Esteli Gomez, s; Douglas Harvey, vc; Los Angeles, Texas, Austin Guitar Quartets; Conspirare/ Craig Hella Johnson—Delos 3595—72 minutes

41 minutes of Conspirare’s *Singing Guitar* program is devoted to Nico Muhly’s *How Little You Are*, a set of six songs crafted for choir and three guitar quartets. In an interview, conductor Craig Hella Johnson likens the composer’s use of choirs of guitars to the antiphonal effects achieved at St Mark’s in Venice half a millennium ago by Giovanni Gabrieli and his peers. But the maestro is quick to point out that Muhly’s extended meditation on the writings of pioneer women from 19th Century America is not a piece that “cries out for attention”. Instead, he continues, the image-laden texts testifying to the immanence of God, nature, and death are meant to be communi-

cated subtly and gently, and listened to “perhaps repeatedly in quiet, private spaces”. The guitars, then, are on hand to caress the peaceful flow of the music, not ping across the antiphonal soundstage in the dazzling manner of a Gabrieli Canzon.

Despite some lovely moments, I have to say that the set in its entirety doesn’t come across. I find it repetitious and just too soporific to grab me for extended periods of time. I love the burbling arpeggios of ‘Interlude: Springtime’, but that’s 3 minutes out of 41.

Better for me was Kile Smith’s *Dawn’s Early Light*, settings of six texts by Sarah Winnemucca, the first Native-American woman to publish an autobiographical narrative in English. There are serene musical moments there, too, but the songs exude some ethnic personality. ‘My Grandfather Jumped Up’ and ‘The Paiutes Are Not Fond of Going to War’ are propelled with authority by the cello and the rhythmic strumming of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet. I also like Reena Esmail’s 6-minute ‘When the Guitar’, which links East and West with exotic melodies redolent of the Indian subcontinent. In sum, this is a musical donut with fine singing, handsome guitar playing, and a hole in the middle.

GREENFIELD

Pembroke College, Cambridge

ANDREW: *All Things Are Quite Silent*; **POSTON:** *Water of Tyne*; *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree*; **LAPWOOD:** *O Nata Lux*; **BEAMISH:** *In the Stillness*; **DOVE:** *Into Thy Hands*; **BRIGGS:** *Media Vita*; **SHAW:** *And the Swallow*; **MARTIN:** *Justorum Animae*; **BEACH:** *Peace I Leave With You*; **DALEY:** *Grandmother Moon*; *Upon Your Heart*; **HOLST, I:** *Agnus Dei*; **TAVENER:** *Mother of God*; **RHEINBERGER:** *Abendlied*; **MVULA:** *Sing to the Moon*

Pembroke College Choir & Girl’s Choir/ Anna Lapwood—Signum 642—57 minutes

You’d expect a program strewn with titles like ‘All Things are Quite Silent’, ‘In the Stillness’, and ‘Peace I Leave You’ to be a mellow affair, and in this case you’d be right. The selections are hushed, lyrical and, often, spiritually charged. Most are by female composers, and most have contributions by the Pembroke Girl’s Choir, an ensemble of 18 singers aged 11-18. So, don’t expect propulsive rhythms, dramatic changes of volume, or much in the way of emotional intensity. But the singing is beautiful, and there are many songs to admire. Elizabeth Poston’s ‘Water of Tyne’, Imogen

Holst's 'Agnus Dei,' Amy Beach's 'Peace,' John Tavener's 'Mother of God,' and Joseph Rheinberger's exquisite 'Evening Song' are the ones that stand out. So, let Pembroke's co-ed choir take a place among Cambridge University's prime choral attractions, and let's be on the lookout for more releases by the young women and girls performing under the college's auspices.

GREENFIELD

Pilgrimage

HOWELLS: *Requiem*; **HANSON:** *Prayer of the Middle Ages*; **PALESTRINA:** *Sicut Cervus*; **PAULUS:** *Pilgrim's Hymn*; arr **LADZINSKY:** *Down to the River to Pray*; arr **CARACCILO:** *Wayfaring Stranger*

Tara Cowherd, Lauren Morrissey, s; Janeen Jensen, Kaitlin Pearson, Allison Matson, a; Joseph O'Connor, t; Tom Lesniak, bar; Resonance/ A Barron Breland—MSR 1657—36 minutes

Resonance is a choir of some 40 voices based in Nebraska. Since 2017 they have been performing outside their home territory, and they have dubbed this release *Pilgrimage* in acknowledgement of the musical journey they have undertaken. Their program is short in duration but long on lovely singing. The ensemble creates a rounded, intimate choral persona that fits this music nicely. They've also been blessed with warm and flattering sound by the MSR engineers. (Some of the other choirs I've reviewed lately would have given their eye teeth to have been recorded this well.) The repertoire is not sharply dissonant or all that complicated in design. Resonance went after music they could cuddle and, with MSR's technical help, that's exactly what they did.

GREENFIELD

Longing for Home: American Hymns

St Peter's Episcopal Church, St Louis/ David Sinden, org—Regent 509—62 minutes

17 hymns with either words or tune—often both—by Americans. The composers include Gerre Hancock, Alan Hovhaness, Calvin Hampton, and Robert Lowry. Many are arrangements, but many are also simple and direct. I am a lover of hymns, but I don't like them over-arranged. Robert Lowry's 'Shall We Gather at the River' is extremely beautiful here, slow and pure (6 minutes). 'Jesus Paid It All' is wonderful—and quite unexpected from a well-trained Episcopal choir who also sing

much more complex music even here. The organ parts are glorious. Naturally, the program includes 'Amazing Grace' and 'How Firm a Foundation.' The Negro spiritual, 'Steal Away to Jesus' is matched by the white spiritual, 'Wondrous Love.' The program ends with a hymn sung in every kind of church, 'Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.'

This is much less difficult music than what you hear from the English cathedral choirs—and much warmer. It is American piety at its best—and very appealing music. So many of the best English and American choirs seem to avoid the 19th Century—too emotional in our severe time—but this does not, though there is plenty from the 20th Century, too.

VROON

Truth & Fable

ELDER: *Absalom*; **RAVEL:** *3 Chansons*; **HOWELLS:** *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing*; **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *Valiant-for-Truth*; **CASALS:** *O Vos Omnes*; **TOMKINS:** *When David Heard*; **BEACH:** *Pax Nobiscum*; **PAULUS:** *The Road Home*

Raffi Kasparian, p; The 13/ Matthew Robertson
Acis 95579—64 minutes

The 29-minute *Absalom* of Daniel Elder (b 1986) is the cornerstone of this program, and a riveting work it is. Described as a "protest-inspired oratorio," it starts with King David mourning his son but forges ahead to explore the theme of violence and responsibility, with Pilate, Henry VIII, soldiers of the American Civil War, and modern day enablers of gun violence all taking turns under the musical microscope. The static harmonies of David's grief soon give way to neo-romantic writing for the piano, cathartic whacks from the bass drum, and the declamatory 'We the People' interlude with its haunting "365" mantra that has made it into the repertory on its own. (The iSing Girls of Silicon Valley perform that same hypnotic excerpt on their release reviewed above.) The complete *Absalom* may take a little while to grab hold, but when it does you feel it. It is sung brilliantly by The Thirteen. They shine in just about everything they touch, including this first-ever recording of Amy Beach's 'Pax Nobiscum,' written near the end of the composer's remarkable life. The ensemble may be three singers smaller than Harry Christopher's 16, but they loom plenty large in this repertoire.

GREENFIELD

Walking on Waves

MANTUA: *O Vos Omnes*; **KNAGGS:** *O Vos Omnes*; **JONES:** *5 Irish Folk Songs*; **WILBERG:** *The Dying Soldier*; **BOWMAN:** *Words by the Water; Now Touch the Air Softly*; **CAMPBELL:** *High from the Earth; 3 Scottish Folk Songs*; **PICCOLO:** *Jesus Walking on the Waves*; **BRACKETT:** *To be Free*; **BARBER:** *Sure on this Shining Night*; **FERKO:** *4 American Folk Songs*; **RUTTER:** *Skylark*

Calvin Bowman, p; Trinity College Melbourne/
Christopher Watson—Acis 10178—67 minutes

A program of sacred and secular pieces centered around a theme of remembrance, comfort, fear of the unknown, and dislocation of place. This excellent choir is composed of students and recent graduates of the University of Melbourne, Australia. They sing weekly services as well as numerous other events during the school year. Of particular interest are the arrangements of folk songs from Scotland, Ireland, America, and Australia, especially ones by Peter Campbell and Frank Ferko. Most of these are under 5 minutes save for the meandering and uninteresting title piece by Anthony Piccolo. The choir sings with beautiful blend, secure intonation, and expressive musicality. Notes on the music with texts.

DELCAMP

Aurora

LAVOY: *Song of a Dream; In the Forest; Transience; Last Letter; I Shall Not Live in Vain*; **SCHEIBE:** *O Magnum Mysterium*; **WHITBOURN:** *Beatus Vir; Sanctitude*; **RHEINBERGER:** *Kyrie*; **JORDAN & POWELL:** *Interpolations on Sicut Cervus*

Jeremy Powell, sax; Veronique Shafter, v; Greg Stout, p; Isabella Burns, Krystal Dib, s; Rene Miville, bar; Westminster Williamson Voices/
James Whitbourn, James Jordan

GIA 1056—64 minutes

I have admired Westminster Williamson before and am happy to do so again here. They are singers with ties to the Westminster Choir College who have become the resident ensemble of the Choral Institute at Oxford, which—in flat defiance of its name—is based at Rider University in New Jersey. They sound just splendid in this program, which was recorded at Philadelphia's Basilica of Sts Peter and Paul.

I confess, though, that not all the repertoire is to my taste. *Sanctitude* (which goes on for a full 13 minutes) and a bizarre 6-minute reincarnation of Palestrina's 'Sicut Cervus' both employ a soprano sax squealing away atop

static, gooey New Age harmonies. The Palestrina has just enough of the original in it to show how beautiful it would have been had they just left it alone.

But I do like the works by Thomas LaVoy, especially his setting of the heartbreaking letter penned by a Union soldier named Sullivan Ballou just before he was killed in the early days of the Civil War. You might recall that it was written to his wife Sarah, and recited to great effect in the stunning documentary on the conflict crafted by Ken Burns. LaVoy sets it for a solo baritone accompanied by a violin obbligato redolent of the 'Ashokan Farewell', the plaintive melody that haunted us repeatedly in the film and has become the musical voice of our greatest national tragedy. Sam Scheibe's 'O Magnum' and the Rheinberger Kyrie are my other two favorites on the program. While I didn't love all the music, you will find things to admire, and the singing is worthy of the Westminster name.

GREENFIELD

Always About Love

Amaryllis Dieltiens, s; Brisk Recorder Quartet
Amsterdam—Globe 5275—64 minutes

This is an interesting program of mostly 14th Century love songs played by the recorder quartet. Some are also sung by Amaryllis Dieltiens. There are also some pieces from the 20th Century that have been arranged for recorder quartet. The song texts are about longing, happiness, restless hearts, a bride's dream of her wedding night, sadness, heavenly love and earthly love, and saying farewell. The songs are similar in content to 19th Century Salon love songs but greatly simplified and played on very basic instruments. Some of the lyrics are sincere and others sexually suggestive. The music is a mix of bright and cheerful melodies, slow introspective themes, and some unusual vocal arrangements that are only emphasized by the recorder accompaniment.

The vocals are performed in their original language, and the texts supplied only occasionally include line-for-line English translations. Often the English translations are summarized in a paragraph. Although the recording is very clear, Ms Dieltiens is placed in the center of the recorders and the lyrics are difficult to understand. Other songs are only performed by the recorder quartet in sometimes complex arrangements. I did not care for any of the 20th Century songs, which seem to have no melodic line and are rather abstract.

Do you like recorders? Fortunately, there is some variety in the music. Although I liked many of the songs and the playing is very good, a little of this goes a long way.

FISCH

Anima Rara

from *Madama Butterfly*, *Iris*, *La Wally*, *Lodoletta*, *La Traviata*, *Sapho*, others
Ermonela Jaho, s; Valencia Orchestra/ Andrea Battistoni—Opera Rara 253—70 minutes

Rosina Storchio is probably best known as the soprano who created the title role in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, but she also created a number of other roles in operas by Leoncavallo (*La Bohème*, *Zaza*), Giordano (*Siberia*), and Mascagni (*Lodoletta*). She had an eclectic repertoire, appearing in operas as different as *La Traviata*, *La Sonnambula*, *Euryanthe*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Andrea Chenier* even as she made the heroines of verismo operas her own. She left behind fewer recordings than most of us would like, valuable souvenirs that only partly support her reputation. I would love to have seen her onstage.

Ermonela Jaho, the Albanian soprano, gives us a worthy tribute to Storchio in her first solo disc. I have praised Jaho before for her exquisite *Butterfly* video (M/J 2019); and, more recently, Opus Arte has given us her excellent Violetta from the Covent Garden production (Opus Arte 7260). This is another feather in her cap. Many of the selections will be familiar, but there are some rarer pieces. One doesn't hear Massenet's *Sapho* or Giordano's *Siberia* very often (both have had a few recordings, but they are deleted or hard to find). It is fitting that Jaho opens and closes the program with arias from *Madama Butterfly*, a thrice-familiar opera that had a disastrous premiere at La Scala in 1904. It was a terrible night for everyone, but especially the composer and the soprano, who was openly mocked because of her relationship with Toscanini (she was pregnant with his child at the time). Jaho sings these scenes very beautifully, with all the passion one could wish for. She sings the revised version of the death scene rather than the version Storchio sang the fateful night of the premiere. Jaho also sings contrasting arias of Musetta and Mimi from Leoncavallo's *Bohème*, Iris's 'Un di (ero piccina)', the final scene from *Lodoletta*, and a chunk of the finale to Massenet's *Sapho*. Her accounts of these scenes are very persuasive. More famil-

iar fare includes Manon's 'Notre petite table', Violetta's 'Addio del passato' Margarita's 'Altra notte in fondo al mare', and Wally's 'Ebben? Ne andro lontana'. Jaho differentiates all these passionate women with precision and skill, just as Storchio did.

Andrea Battistoni is a most sympathetic collaborator and he leads his orchestra with a passion that matches Jaho's. I wish they had included *Butterfly*'s entrance music: Puccini wrote the higher option with Storchio's voice in mind, and Jaho has a beautiful high D-flat. Maybe that will be on another disc (it also would have required a female chorus).

The sound is more than adequate, capturing the glow on Jaho's tone. Ditlev Rindom supplies informative notes on Storchio as well as helpful assessments of the different arias and scenes. Texts and translations.

REYNOLDS

Amy Johnson

MAV Symphony/ Steven Mercurio
MSR 1711—70 minutes

Amy Johnson is a soprano of Wagnerian proportion whose career has included international opera, musical theater, and academia. For this program she has selected music of Richard Wagner, Stephen Schwartz, Leos Janacek, Richard Strauss, Thea Musgrave, Jules Massenet, Anton Coppola, and Robert Livingston Aldrich. As the liner notes mention, "this album shows the many facets of soprano Amy Johnson, an artist not easily defined and who has chosen a less-traveled path". The program offers a good survey of the kind of roles she has sung so well.

John Fiore, former chief conductor of Deutsche Oper am Rhein and Artistic Director of the Norwegian Opera, suggested putting together this album as a way of showing Johnson's versatility and range. Together they selected a program from 9 operas of the more than 30 in her repertoire: *Die Walküre*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, *Sacco and Vanzetti*, *Arabella*, *Simon Bolivar*, *Thais*, *Salome*, and *Elmer Gantry*. She sounds at home singing in six languages.

The vocal gifts and dramatic versatility heard here are impressive, from the lyrical lines of Myra in *Seance* or Sharon in *Elmer Gantry* to heavy demands of Wagner and Strauss. Johnson sings with great power and authority; she can really belt it out. Her laser-like high D at the end of the 'Dis-moi que Je Suis Belle' from *Thais* is stunning. As a cham-

pion of new music, she created the role of Manuela in Musgrave's *Simon Bolivar*, which she sings with fiery determination.

If you want volume, she'll give it to you, but her voice is also lustrous and she can rein it in tenderly, as she does in the scene from *Elmer Gantry*. Judging from this reading of the final scene of *Salome* she would be electric on stage in her ability to cut through a massive orchestra while still conveying the lurid seductiveness of a sexually depraved teenager. Altogether this is a gripping album.

Steven Mercurio leads the MAV Symphony of Budapest securely but with enough flexibility to accompany a powerful singer in a wide-ranging program. Three other singers take smaller parts in the program: Vernon Handley, Emily Langford Johnson, and Melissa Primavera. An unnamed chorus is heard in the Coppola and Aldridge scenes.

The program was recorded in 2009 in Budapest and evidently not released until now. She is currently an Associate Professor at the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati.

Notes about the singer and texts in English with English translation only of texts in German, Czech, Spanish, Italian, and French.

R MOORE

Buried Alive

Honegger, Schoeck, Mitropoulos

Michael Nagy, bar; Bard Festival Chorale;
Orchestra Now/ Leon Botstein

Bridge 9540—79 minutes

The three orchestral compositions of this program were written in the years 1926 to 1928: Arthur Honegger's wildly colorful *Rugby*; Othmar Schoeck's *Lebendig Begraben* (Buried Alive), a gripping song cycle for baritone and wordless chorus; and Dimitri Mitropoulos's rarely heard *Concerto Grosso*.

Honegger's *Rugby* is the most familiar of these works, having been recorded more than a dozen times, probably most famously by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. The composer reported that his intent was to express "the rhythm and color of a [Rugby] match at the Colombes Stadium" with the two teams represented by conflicting time signatures intensifying to the point where the rhythm changes almost every measure. It's a rousing piece, even if here it doesn't capture the rambunctiousness of the game as dramatically as Bernstein did.

The most surprising and innovative pro-

gramming touch is *Concerto Grosso* composed in 1928 by Dimitri Mitropoulos, who is remembered as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony and the New York Philharmonic. It is less known that he was an accomplished composer in his younger years, having studied composition with Ferruccio Busoni until he gave that up in the 1930s to concentrate on conducting. This composition, one of the last he completed, incorporates Baroque elements (e.g. French overture, fugal writing, canon, chorale). Each of the four movements uses a different instrumentation. The performance is vivid and snappy.

The major work of the program is Schoeck's song cycle *Lebendig Begraben* (Buried Alive), which the liner notes describe as "a bold expressionistic depiction of a horrible nightmare". The cycle of 14 settings of poems by Gottfried Keller is through-composed and designed for performance without any break between the texts. Critic Paul Griffiths described it as less a song cycle than a monodrama by a man who discovers that he has been buried alive. From his grave the man hears sounds of the outside world as memories of his life come to mind until at the end he comes to accept the inevitability of his death. As the work nears its end and the man has passed through the stages of death and dying, a wordless chorus sings, perhaps as voices from beyond this world. The cycle ends with the man's ecstatic vision of eternity, and he proclaims his spiritual triumph over death.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's 1962 recording of *Lebendig Begraben* has been the benchmark for later recordings. In this one German baritone Michael Nagy gives a powerful account of the work; the brawny grit of his voice serves the music well.

The program was recorded in November 2019 at the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts of Bard College. The Orchestra Now (TON) is composed of young musicians from around the world selected from leading conservatories. Leon Botstein is president of Bard College and music director of TON. In his renowned career as a conductor and educator he has been music director of the American Symphony and Jerusalem Symphony and artistic co-director of the Bard Music Festival and Bard SummerScape.

The ingenious programming of this album alone makes it well worth hearing. The vibrant and compelling performances make hearing it rewarding.

Informative notes by Peter Laki. Texts in German and English.

R MOORE

Nikola Nikolov: Arias

Boheme, Butterfly, Otello, Aida, Pagliacci, others
various orchestras & conductors
Gega 414—65 minutes

I had heard of Nikola Nikolov, yet reviews of his two Met performances in 1960 were not encouraging, suggesting that debut nerves got the better of him and that the voice itself was not impressive.

So much for critics. The voice heard here is splendid. The tone is warm and steady, the top ringing with a squillo that makes the musical climaxes that much more exciting. He doesn't have the musical imagination of some of his better known colleagues, but his singing is consistently enjoyable. It may be that he was indisposed at his Met debut or had entered a cultural climate in New York circa 1960 that wasn't amenable to his gifts. At any rate, his reputation in Europe is fully justified by the singing on these tracks.

15 of the 17 arias are standard Italian opera tenor fare; a few French items are thrown in for good measure. The last two items are from less familiar works by Lyubomir Pipov (his opera *Momchil*) and Dobri Hristov (song 'Lukovit Maidens'). They are so attractive they make me want to hear more from these composers. Nikolov is joined by his wife, the fine soprano Lilyana Vassileva in several selections. As with previous Gega compilations, selections aren't always identified clearly. Track 11 is listed as "La Boheme: Scene and duet of Mimi and Rodolfo". Most of us would think this refers to 'O soave fanciulla' from Act I, but it is actually 'Sono andati' from the last act.

The sound is very good. Good, if syco-phantic, background notes on the singer. No texts.

REYNOLDS

American Composers at Play

Bolcom, Gordon, Laitman, Musto
Stephen Powell, bar; Charles Neidich, cl; Jason Vieaux, g; Attacca Quartet—Acis 689—75 minutes

For his first solo album, Stephen Powell has produced a magnificent program of songs with texts by American writers set by four of America's best composers. Trenchant and poignant songs are side-by-side with whimsical ones. All of them in some way show the composers

"at play"—having fun with texts. It would be hard to find a better album of contemporary American songs than this.

The program gets off to a poignant start with an aria from Lori Laitman's opera *Ludlow*, which tells the story of the Ludlow Massacre in the 1913-14 coal-mining wars of southern Colorado when more than a dozen innocent people, mostly women and children, were killed when the Colorado National Guard burned down the tent colony of strikers protesting brutal conditions. Later we hear her set of four off-beat songs, *Men with Small Heads*; a lovely setting of Emily Dickinson's touching 'If I' with piano and clarinet accompaniment; and the humorous song, 'Money', about its ubiquitous power. I've reviewed her songs before (M/A 2007, S/O 2009, S/O 2011) and find them exceptionally fine.

Five stand-alone songs of Ricky Ian Gordon and six of William Bolcom are woven into the tapestry of this album. Gordon has a strong gift for memorable melodies in his setting of vivid texts, each a poignant look at life: Edna St Vincent Millay's 'Souvenir'; "lives of quiet desperation" in 'Bus Stop'; a heart-breaking confessional 'Father's Song'; 'The Good Death', a lament over ignominious Civil War deaths from typhoid; and 'A Horse with Wings', his "anthem for connectedness, for gratitude, for celebrating my newly found humanity".

Four of Bolcom's songs are from his Cabaret Songs: 'Waitin', 'Can't Sleep', 'Satisfaction', and 'Song of Black Max'—perhaps the show-stopper of the whole program. The other two are of an entirely different nature; 'Billy in the Darbies' from Melville's *Billy Budd* with string quartet accompaniment and 'Lady Death' by A.D. Winans, both of which address the affront of death.

Two sets of songs by John Musto complete the program. *Enough Rope* is a set of three short songs on pithy texts of Dorothy Parker. *The Brief Light* with guitar accompaniment is settings of six texts by James Laughlin on love and lust.

This is one of the best collections of American songs by current composers you'll find anywhere. The performances are everything you could hope for. Stephen Powell had the advantage of rehearsing and recording the songs with the composers to ask about interpretive details—though Bolcom only told him circumspectly, "Just do what I wrote."

Powell's performance is splendid. He commands a wide range of expressive detail from tender singing to shouting to make these com-

elling songs irresistible. Texts are included, but they are hardly necessary with Powell's lucid diction. Notes are included by Powell about producing this album and the composers about their songs, but I wish more information had been supplied about the fine compositions.

R MOORE

Opera of the Sun King

Katherine Watson, s; Les Ambassadeurs/ Alexis Kossenko—Aparte 209—73 minutes

This is a collection of 24 17th and 18th Century opera arias written during the reign of the French "Sun Kings". The arias were selected to demonstrate the "art d'attendre", the art of inspiring tender emotion. They were written by a variety of composers for "tender and pathetic" heroines that were a fixture of period French operas. These were primarily leading parts for women in love where they could display fidelity, courage, sincerity, and fragility that pre-disposed them to be tear-filled victims. The French audiences enjoyed a good cry, and these characters ensured that tears flowed on-stage and off. This was furthered by 18th Century composers who used the key of E major to imply hope rather than regret for these doomed characters.

Familiar roles (and plots) include Dido, Armida, Eurydice, and Galatea; all of them are represented in various operas over the two centuries. The 24 selections were written between 1670 and 1716. The composers include Jean-Baptiste Lully, Louis de Lully (Lully's son), Andre Campra, Marin Marais, Michel Monteclair, Henri Demarest, and Jean-Baptist Stuck. The music is at a minimum pleasant and sometimes quite beautiful. Much of it is from the same time period and style, so many of the selections sound fairly similar.

This is soprano Katherine Watson's debut album. She embodies the vocal talents of these heroines and then some. She has a pleasant and youthful voice along with a sensitive and smooth delivery. Her singing has the requisite involvement and pathos to make the characters convincing.

The orchestra plays with proper attention to the style, and the sound is excellent. The English and French booklet includes librettos informative discussions of the period, composers and their operas, and the background of the "art d'attendre" aria. The recording is sponsored by the Versailles Center for Music.

FISCH

The Newest Music I

FARO

HAAS: *Hertevig Studies*; **THORESEN:** *Land of Your Love*; **RATKJE:** *A Dismantled Ode to the Moral Value of Art*

Nordic Voices

Aurora 5106—65 minutes

This album from six-part vocal ensemble Nordic Voices is titled "Everything Is Gonna Be Alright" and is adorned with gilded flowers and a butterfly on the cover. This does nothing to prepare the listener for its stark, boundary-pushing contents. Though each work has its own particular identity, all three can be considered fully avant-garde. They all have numerous extended vocal effects, as well as a fluid approach to pitch and harmony. Furthermore, the text is often minimally important compared to the music (no texts are included, which doesn't bother me). At 24 minutes and in a single movement, Georg Friedrich Haas's *Hertevig Studies* is easily the most formidable of the three works. He explores the mystical, sinister, and otherworldly works of the Norwegian painter Lars Hertervig. Dissonant Ligetian clusters of sound and texture abound, pushing the musicians to their limits as vocalists and as an ensemble. It is a fascinating, eerie piece—but one that requires incredible patience. Lasse Thoresen contributes *Land of Your Love*—settings of 19th Century poetry by Norwegian Henrik Wergeland and Iranian Tahirih, who was stoned for her outspoken beliefs on gender. The text, though, takes a backseat to Thoresen's explorations of non-tempered Iranian and Norwegian modes and his attempts to create polyphony in their styles. I'm not entirely convinced it works: the concepts of Western harmony don't naturally translate to the Iranian maqam system. But his non-tempered harmonies are fascinating and leave an impression. Maja SK Ratkje's *Dismantled Ode to the Moral Value of Art* is a post-modern meditation on the famous 'Ode to Joy' and its place in our world, considering the various uses of it across history in the name of human rights and fascist might alike. A solo baritone closes the piece with a heartfelt, yet lonely rendition of Neil Young's 'Everything Is Gonna Be Alright'—hence the album title. It is a timely and provocative statement for our world's uncertain future and recognizes the unassailable hope in Beethoven's famous tune. This album is not for everyone; if you are

put off by avant-garde music, stay far away. But patient and open-minded listeners who enjoy a challenge will be rewarded with thought-provoking music.

KORVITS: *You Are Light and Morning*
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir; Tallinn
Chamber Orchestra/ Risto Joost
Ondine 1363—62 minutes

This choral music is far more accessible. It is a marvelous, large-scale song cycle for choir and strings by Estonian composer Tonu Korvits, setting poetry by 20th Century Italian author Cesare Pavese. Mahler is one of Korvits's favorite composers; like Mahler, he is drawn to the mysterious, liminal connection between the transience of nature and the human psyche. In the poetry of *You Are Light and Morning*, Pavese's yearnings for past love, distant memories, and forsaken dreams are expressed in imagery of flowing wind, water, and time. He illustrates these with evocative, fluid figures in the choir and strings. Small chromatic turns in melody against a rich harmonic backdrop imbue his lyricism with darkness and mystery. Combined, these elements form an expressive world of emotion that feels intimate yet just out of reach. A framing mechanism by way of a B-flat minor 'Fade in' and 'Fade out' enhances this transient, otherworldly feeling; it reminds me of the similar method Richard Strauss uses in the *Alpine Symphony*, which opens with the same mysterious chord. I will definitely return to this enchanting music.

LEFANU: *The Hidden Landscape; Columbia Falls; Threnody; The Crimson Bird*
Rachel Nicholls, s; BBC Symphony/ Norman Del Mar, Ilan Volkov; RTE Symphony/ Colman Pearce, Gavin Maloney
NMC 255—76 minutes

This is an album of orchestral music spanning the career of Nicola Lefanu. Her mother was neoclassicist composer Elizabeth Maconchy—but Lefanu's music is different from the Bartokian, small-cell approach of her mother. She writes with a keen sense of space and perspective, often creating an expansive soundscape where musical ideas take root, develop, and interact with each other. The early works, *The Hidden Landscape* from 1973 and *Columbia Falls* from 1975, are largely atonal and stark in texture—timbres are often juxtaposed like a collage rather than blended together. Her musical language reminds me of late Messiaen; *The Hidden Landscape* reminded me

quite a bit of his *Canyons of Stars*. In fact, Lefanu's work premiered a year before Messiaen's! The later works are the short 'Threnody' from 2014 and the song cycle *The Crimson Bird* from 2017; both are inspired by Euripides's *Trojan Woman*. In these works, her music is lush and more linear, with a greater attention to harmony; though still predominantly atonal, it is easier to follow. She fully captures the dramatic emotion and horror of the narrative—a woman's tragic murder of her son lest he grow to participate in the senseless violence of the world. This is a great album if you are interested in contemporary British composers.

FINBURY: *Lay Me Down; Final Days of July; Black Tea; Winter Waltz; Fantasma; Halfway There; Waltz for Patty; Storybook Ending; I'll Pray For You; My Hometown*
Tim Ray, John Finbury, p; Eugene Friesen, vc;
Roberto Cassan, Vitor Goncalves, acc; Roni Eytan, harmonica; Peter Eldridge, vocals
Green Flash 0—43 minutes

John Finbury is a Grammy and Latin Grammy-nominated composer, working primarily in the genre of Latin jazz. This album, titled "American Nocturnes", is a departure for him. Percussion is nowhere to be found; instead, a chamber duo of piano and cello anchors the music, with harmonica, guitar, and accordion joining in various combinations, all played by consummate professionals. The sweet, straightforward lyricism is refreshing—it often calls to mind American folk music. He elevates this with jazz harmonies and a subtly flexible approach to rhythm. This is a warm and inviting album that will put a smile on your face.

RAN: *Grand Rounds; CHEUNG:* *Double Allegories; DZUBAY:* *PHO; KO:* *Simple Fuel; METTENS:* *Stain, Bloom, Moon, Rain*
Grossman Ensemble/ Ben Bolter, Michael Lewanski, Jerry Hou, David Dzubay
CCCC 20182020—70 minutes

This is the first album from the Chicago-based Grossman Ensemble. Created by Augusta Read Thomas, the new music supergroup has a fixed lineup of 13 musicians, with rotating composers and conductors offering a variety of music. Of the composers on this album, for example, Shulamit Ran and David Dzubay brought works that were mostly complete for rehearsal; comparatively, Tonia Ko and David Mettens took an improvisatory, sandbox

approach, building up their works during rehearsals. Perhaps this is what gives their works a freer, more spontaneous sound. Ko's *Simple Fuel*, Mettens's *Stain, Bloom, Moon, Rain*, and ensemble co-director Anthony Cheung's *Double Allegories* are all driven by sensory explorations of timbre and texture. The moment of sensation is at the center of *Double Allegories*; for example, in I, 'touch/heat', the visceral, tactile response of the movement title is heard in melting bent pitches and sparks of sound. *Stain, Bloom, Moon, Rain* is infused with the idea of transformation, whether thru the distortion of an instrument's timbre from a familiar to a strange sound, or thru the transformative potential of the image at play (like I, 'stain' or II, 'bloom'). I enjoyed the color in Tonia Ko's choral work 'From Ivory Depths' (S/O 2019, new) and am pleased to hear her instrumental music. Her *Simple Fuel* draws inspiration from the manipulation of movement, as in the image of a fast-moving freight train appearing slow from a distance. Stutters, hesitations, and bursts of frenetic energy abound in this vibrant work. Compared to these timbral soundscapes, Shulamit Ran and David Dzubay's works are much more melodic, giving the album a welcoming balance between concepts of new music. Ran's *Grand Rounds* was written for the ensemble's inaugural concert and thus has a festive, upbeat energy. Ideas circulate continuously, evolving by each later appearance. Dzubay demonstrates his skill of writing for large chamber ensembles with the devilish *PHO*, which stands for Potentially Hazardous Objects. It is an intense and energetic piece that gleefully threatens to run off the rails, with a performance instruction that reads "dangerously fast; transient and strange". The musicians respond to the demands of this and the other pieces with sensitivity and technical mastery. This album is an excellent debut for the Grossman Ensemble; I look forward to hearing more from them.

ALDERETE: *Dancing With Bows*; **JORDAN:** *Alzheimer*; **GARCIA AGUILERA:** *Deep—Sea*; **RODRIGUEZ:** *Spiral*; **CARDENAS:** *Influence*; **DELGADO:** *No Questions*
Auxi Belmonte, s; Camerata Gala/ Alejandro Munoz—IBS 112020—53 minutes

This collection of Spanish and Latin American music for string orchestra also seeks to show various aspects of new music; it covers a range of styles with mixed results. Igmar Alderete's 'Dancing with Bows' and Monica Cardena's

'Influence' both evoke Spanish and Latin dance. 'Dancing with Bows' is a fantastic piece, by far my favorite on the album. It captures the excitement of its dances with flashes of crunchy dissonance and energetic rhythms. 'Influence' felt more like a transcription of folk material. It is episodic and lacks the originality that makes 'Dancing with Bows' so compelling. Two of the pieces have inspirational programs: Ruben Jordan's 'Alzheimer' for strings and soprano evokes the plight of people living with Alzheimer's disease, and Jose Javier Delgado's 'No Questions' is inspired by the communicative "gap between electronic screens and the world". Both pieces are influenced by today's popular film music. 'Alzheimer' lacks depth and switches between sentimentality and nightmarish music along the lines of Danny Elfman. At least the music itself holds interest; 'No Questions' is rife with predictable sentimentality and boring ostinatos. Juan de Dios Garcia Aguilera's 'Deep—Sea' is an excellent atmospheric work that simultaneously captures the fullness and emptiness of the deep ocean, stressing "the primacy of the whole over the part". It uses drones, pitch bending, and timbral effects, giving it a modern sound that feels out of place on this album. Raquel Rodriguez's 'Spiral' sounds Brucknerian, from its particular chromatic harmony (especially at arrival points), its slow-building majesty, and the gentle contrasting sections of pastoral diatonicism. Even if it feels too much like an imitation, it is enjoyable and done well. This would be a better album if the performances were stronger. At best, they are adequate; there are many moments where the ensemble is not quite together or where the players have wobbly intonation.

NODARI: *Romantic Double Concerto*; **BAREILLES:** *Secrets of Buenos Aires*; **PIAZZOLLA:** *Homage to Liege*
Duo Mateux; Pugliese Philharmonic/ Giovanni Minafra—Stradivarius 37158—53 minutes

These are double concertos performed by Duo Mateux—Giovanna Buccarella on cello and Francesco Diodovich on guitar. The first, by Marco Nodari, has two subtitles: 'Romantic' and 'Possible Balance', the latter referring to its supposed balance between tradition and modernity. It is far more on the side of traditional; any alleged modernity here would be considered dated in the 1920s. It is an enjoyable piece, though—its best quality is its rhythmic interplay between soloists and orchestra.

The remaining two works—one established and one new—are influenced by the tango. *Homage to Liege* is one of Piazzolla's most popular works; the bandoneon part is often transcribed for cello, as it is here by Buccarella. His work endures in the way Gershwin's does: he lets the classical elements of his style elevate, rather than smother the tango. Miguel Bareilles risks that in *Secrets of Buenos Aires*; it is the most modern-sounding of the three concertos, which doesn't always work. However interesting the sound may be sometimes, the tango element is overwhelmed by brash music, capped with a violent, dissonant smash of chords to end the piece like a nail in the coffin. Perhaps this is the intentional effect, but it's not convincing when presented alongside the Piazzolla. With the exception of Diodovich, the performances here are rough. Often the orchestra does not play together or in tune. Buccarella also has intonation problems and is sometimes out of step with her partner. Everyone fared better in the Piazzolla, but still could not deliver an admirable or competitive performance.

BOLLON: *Your Voice Out of the Lamb; 4 Lessons of Darkness; Dogmatic Pleasures*
Johannes Moser, Michaela Fukacova, vc; Michala Petri, rec; Per Salo, keyboard; Odense Symphony/Christoph Poppen; German Radio Philharmonic/Nicholas Milton; Freiburg Philharmonic/Jader Bignamini

Naxos 574015—64 minutes

Fabrice Bollon has been praised in our pages as a conductor of both operas and symphonic music. Ralph Locke enjoyed his recording of Korngold's *Wunder der Heliane* (Naxos 660410, M/A 2019) and Roger Hecht found his accounts of Magnard's first two symphonies among the best available (Naxos 574083, M/J 2020). Here he shows a different—utterly different—side of himself with his own compositions. His approach is decidedly postmodern. All three works have elements from non-classical styles, including pop, rock, bebop, and electronica. *Your Voice Out of the Lamb* is a wildly virtuosic recorder concerto that incorporates various effects and looping pedals. He eschews the sweet, lyrical persona often associated with the recorder in favor of feats of athleticism and mysterious ambience. *Four Lessons of Darkness* is a concerto for electric cello, using the instrument's sonic versatility to create alien, yet viscerally emotional music. It is not a concerto for electrified cello; rather, he

approaches the electric cello and its expansive capabilities as a completely different instrument. It is a highly sensory work, combining psychedelic and symbolist elements in its dark, almost apocalyptic imagery. *Dogmatic Pleasures* is a set of three short, virtuosic orchestral pieces. Though they differ from the other works in their ironic humor, they still retain some dark, dissonant color. In the liner notes, Bollon writes that he does not see his work as a fusion of genres. Neither is it pastiche—apart from a few referential moments, there are no sections of music that actually denote a particular genre. Rather, he sees these non-classical elements without the preconceptions of genre, as tools for creating something original rather than merely novel. This is high-octane eclecticism with excellent, committed performances all around.

TARKIAINEN: *The Earth, Spring's Daughter; Saivo*
Virpi Raisanen, mz; Jukka Perko, sax; Lapland Chamber Orchestra/John Storgards
Ondine 1353—71 minutes

Outi Tarkiainen is a composer who hails from the Finnish Laplands, the northernmost part of the country and the home of the indigenous Sami people. She finds continuous inspiration in that region's natural landscape and atmosphere, as well as the lives and culture of its people. Like Magnus Lindberg and Kaija Saariaho, she embraces modernism and can trace her artistic lineage to Paavo Heininen. But it is modernism that is often in a readily intelligible and accessible framework. She has also worked extensively as a jazz composer, including a song cycle with jazz orchestra. These are two of her largest classical works to date: the orchestral song cycle *The Earth, Spring's Daughter* and the concerto for soprano saxophone *Saivo*. The excellent song cycle concerns the relationship between humanity and nature. It shows the threat of climate change on the natural environment, as well as on the indigenous Sami who rely on it. The speaker varies between an omniscient storyteller, various generations of the Sami people, and even the Earth itself. Tarkiainen's music here is appropriately expressionist and dramatic—I'm reminded of Berg, his operas more than his song cycles. Mezzo-soprano Virpi Raisanen is stunning, and the orchestra is vibrant and colorful. *Saivo* is spectacular. It is a formidable and substantial concerto of the highest quality. To the Sami, 'Saivo' refers to a sacred place,

usually a lake, where the spirit world connects to our reality. The solo soprano saxophone expresses this duality between worlds—it acts as our guide to this otherworldly plane of reality. While certainly displaying the soloist's virtuosity—bravo Jukka Perko!—the work often disconnects the saxophone from its identity, allowing it to sound utterly new and unfamiliar to the ear. This piece—and this album—left me in awe. I can't recommend it highly enough.

HAMBURGER: *Piano Concerto*
Assaff Weisman; Montreal Metropolitan Orchestra/ Vincent de Kort—Leaf 238—22 minutes

This is the first release from Canadian-Dutch composer Jaap Nico Hamburger. The piano concerto is short and flashy, composed in a three-movement arch form of slow-fast-slow. He seems to run the gamut of styles at play in the 1920s. The slow outer movements are darkly lyrical and romantic with patches of atonality. The kinetic energy of the fast central movement evokes some of the hard-edged neoclassicism of the era—Prokofieff came to mind. In the climactic center of the movement, Hamburger brushes with Varese with wailing sirens and forceful bass drums. His music is exciting, imbued with the drama and mystery of early modernism. But the concerto feels too short for his ideas, and the soloist doesn't have nearly enough material. His ideas are promising, but he doesn't do much with them once presented. They could easily be expanded to form a longer, more effective concerto, with a far more satisfying solo part. Nevertheless, I still enjoy it and am glad to have it. I look forward to a further release of his chamber symphonies in a few months.

CROSSMAN: *Icarus; Quartet 2; Frequent Flyer; Coastal Ghost; Earth March; Arriving at Loch Lomond*
Charles Meinen, va; Laurie Altman, p; Trio Foss; Morency Quartet; San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra/ Mark Alburger, John Kendall Bailey—Centaur 3794—54 minutes

This is a survey of instrumental works by Allan Crossman, with forces ranging from duo to chamber orchestra. A former student of George Rochberg, he writes in a similar neoromantic vein—it is tonal, but flexibly so. The rigors of serialism are still close at hand in his second quartet from 1978. It is a more serious work than his later pieces; they feel more relaxed, with relations to flight, the environ-

ment, and the sea. I liked *Frequent Flyer*, a light but substantial trio of characteristic pieces for viola and piano. I also liked 'Coastal Ghost,' an imaginative chamber orchestra piece with wonderfully demented sea shanties. *Icarus*, scored for piano trio, is a narrative work following the same myth. The writing is illustrative, but too episodic. It felt too much like a straightforward retelling of the myth and didn't hold my interest. Neither did the brash 'Earth March' or the charming but slight 'Arrival at Loch Lomond.' In all, this is a mediocre album, with some pieces I would listen to again.

SHAHOV: *Makedonissimo*
Simon Trpceski, p; Hidan Mamudov, cl, sax; Aleksandar Krapovski, v; Alexander Somov, vc; Vlatko Nushev, perc—Linn 636—83 minutes

Makedonissimo—meaning "very Macedonian"—is an ambitious folk music project led by pianist Simon Trpceski. The folk music of his native Macedonia is brimming with rhythmic vitality and modal beauty. For Trpceski and many other Macedonians, it is part of everyday life and has been so since childhood. For *Makedonissimo*, he grouped songs and dances together by meter into six plaits, or folk medleys. Some of these meters even get into rare 13, 18, and 22-beat patterns. Fellow Macedonian Pande Shahov then transcribed them for Trpceski and the rest of the Makedonissimo Quintet, made up of professional classical and folk musicians. They toured internationally with the project starting in 2017, leading to this album. And what an album! It isn't your average take on folk music; Shahov is not aiming for ethnomusicological authenticity, but rather for a truly original and personal transcription that retains the essential spirit of the music. His background in jazz can be sensed in the way he approaches writing for the quintet, making space for improvisations and embellishments. The music is challenging, written to match the high level of skill of the musicians. The group often trades between ensemble sections and solos in a way that feels jazzy, but also completely in line with folk tradition. *Makedonissimo* strikes a balance between tradition and originality. Whether given a haunting and poignant melody, a nostalgic, lyrical ballad, or a whirlwind of vigorous, celebratory dancing, the musicians bring strong feeling and unfettered joy to the music. I highly recommend this album to any music lover.

The Newest Music II

BOYD

SHAPIRO: *Arcana*

Adam Marks, p—Innova 41—80 minutes

This program starts with *Spark*, an effortlessly flowing, vibrant work for piano. Composer Alex Shapiro mentions in the program notes that *Spark* “was inspired by the life, energy, and heart of Dale Mara Bershad, a gifted musician who often used her talents to share the joy of expression and wonder with young children”. Childlike wonder is certainly here in spades in this work that is sometimes jubilant, sometimes morose, and is always shockingly beautiful. Shapiro shows her naturalist activism profoundly in *Arcana*, the album’s namesake. Pianist Adam Marks gives this piece a thoughtful, powerful performance. *Arcana* is eight movements and speaks to the relationship that humans have with the earth. Shapiro writes that this piece is mostly told from the perspective of plant life, with “healing herbs as protagonists of a story that begins with a dire warning, and ends with the faith that wisdom and grace shall finally triumph”. Indeed, the dark and archaic sounds of the first movement, ‘Cradle these Roots,’ gives way to II. ‘Unfurl’ which begins in light, continuous eighth notes that unrelentingly cascade towards a fervent climax. VI, ‘Touch It,’ is just a minute and a half of catchy, spunky, absolutely delightful syncopation—the type of music you can’t help but move along to. The final movement, ‘From Earth to Sky,’ mirrors the first movement in its use of range and large chordal movement, yet in this case its music whispers of optimism and hope and trust. The Piano Sonata is another favorite here. A pensive I whose harmonies are scrumptiously thick is balanced by a II whose soliloquizing melodies shine in colors both dark and bright. The final movement clocks in at less than two minutes and is a riotous romp. Marks’s musicianship is in glorious display here: not only is this moto perpetuo executed with utmost crispness, but each layer of voicing can be clearly heard.

PINE: *Times of Day*

Keren Schweitzer, fl; Jonathan Szin, cl; Jason Lippman, vc; Jeffrey LaDeur, p; Dorian Wind Quintet

MSR 1741—56 minutes

One of my favorite things about this album is

the listing of the instruments and their makers in the booklet. What a lovely way to give credit and a bit of a spotlight to the instrument makers when their handiwork is such an integral part of the album’s music-making. I can’t find much about composer Luis Pine beyond a short biography accompanying this disc, but he was born in Lisbon in 1957 and attended the Lisbon Conservatory of Music. The five-movement *Times of Day* for wind quintet, while performed graciously and with poise by the Dorian Wind Quintet, is saccharine and suffers from a lack of imagination. Clever harmonics in the cello make lovely imitations of birds in *Dawn* for flute and piccolo and cello, performed with tenderness by Keren Schweitzer and Jason Lippman, but the flute’s melodies never seem to fully flesh out in personality—never quite say what they appear to be attempting to convey. *Solar Midnight*, for clarinet and piano, is moving and dark and compelling; bravo to Jonathan Szin and Jeffrey LaDeur for this performance!

From the Great Lakes

Morgan, Mutter, Wilding

Stacie Mickens, hn; Francois Fowler, g; David Morgan, db; Rex Benincasa, perc; Diane Yazvac, James Wilding, Carolin Olthmanns, D. Jack Ciarniello, p

MSR 1747—56 minutes

Horn player Stacie Mickens has achieved something tremendous here in this program of works by composers with whom she collaborated while living in northeast Ohio. Three of the four pieces were written for her, and it shows: there’s an intimacy here between the music and the music makers, and I encourage horn players to seek out these works for themselves. *Ages*, written by horn player and composer Susan Mutter, tracks in musical form the relationship between a boy and the world around him as he grows up and encounters several pivotal life moments: from childhood summer doldrums to teenage angst to spending time with his young daughter to his experience as a grandfather and eventually, the moments surrounding his passing. This is a moving portrait painted in golden horn tones and lush piano sonorities. *Distill*, by South African composer James Wilding, blends a shimmering, gossamer fluidity in the piano with strong and soaring melodies in the horn. *When Penguins Fly*, by David Morgan, is something entirely different—jazzy and lyrical, it was written as a rhapsody for horn and wind

ensemble (though arranged for a much smaller ensemble here) and depicts the horn in all its robust, gleaming glory. Morgan tell us that the work evokes the “stark beauty of Antarctica” and a penguin protagonist. It’s haunting and enjoyable. Bravo to the artists here!

The Big Picture

McDowall, Chilcott, Weir
Bristol Choral Society, Music Makers of London/
Hilary Campbell
Delphian 34242—54 minutes

There are three pieces: *A Time for All Seasons* by Cecilia McDowall, *Songs and Cries of London Town* by Bob Chilcott, and *The Big Picture* by Judith Weir. McDowall’s work was written in 2016, setting a poem by Kevin Crossley-Holland, whose lines cajole heartstrings: “Before shoulders sag and stick legs buckle/Before teeth rattle and eyes grow misty/Before heights become fearsome and journeys troublesome and Before words fail/Before desire slackens/Before the alphabet scrambles.” It’s strong and persuasive and moving. *Songs and Cries of London Town* uses five texts, most from anonymous 17th and 18th Century sources. Lines I loved include the first movement’s collection of street-seller cries, such as “Come buy my mint/my fine green mint/Here’s fine lavender for your cloaths/Here’s parsley and winter-savory”. The text in III gives space to bells and rhymes: “Two sticks and an apple/Ring the bells at Whitechapel/Old Father Bald Pate/Ring the bells at Aldgate”. Chilcott’s work is sometimes frenetic and kinetic, sometimes melancholy. It puts the audience on the London streets as we hear texts that recreate the calls of London’s street merchants selling their wares. Weir’s *The Big Picture* separates its movements by color: a love poem attributed to King Henry VIII fills I with luscious images of greenery, Robert Frost’s “Nothing Gold Can Stay” makes up III. Each movement presents us with a new sound world, holding our attention in a strong grasp. This album is a gripping combination of music and musicians and music-making. A special bravo goes to the pianists Ian Tindale and Annabel Thwaite.

Gramercy Trio: World Premieres

Schuller, Underhill, Aucoin
Albany 1832—67 minutes

Matthew Aucoin’s Piano Trio is clever and daunting; as the composer says, it’s “practical-

ly a symphony for piano trio”. You’ll find a galaxy of textures in its five movements, fondly played here by the original commissioners. III is my favorite—insistent and emotional. There’s a lovely anecdote in the booklet about Gunther Schuller’s output, which includes Trio 3. how Schuller enjoyed working with a tone row so very much while composing his first violin concerto in 1976 that he decided to keep using that tone row. Every piece he wrote for the next several decades used that row, including the juicy music in this piano trio. I is fickle; vacillating between frenetic spurts of staticky dyads in the violin and cello and mischievous, pointillistic spurts in the piano. III is devilishly ferocious, with gorgeous moments for the strings where drama is on grand display. II is impossibly high, impossibly soft, until it’s not: a grand climax grows and evaporates into thin air in the middle of the movement, reappearing with chromatic bitterness and sonic roughness back down to those softer *sotto voce*, *sul tasto* colors. Nicholas Underhill’s Trio is in two movements: the first is unsettling in its moods, all three instruments maintaining textural independence except for brief periods of intersection. II—theme and variations—is a delightful 14 minutes of compositional showcase: Underhill’s variations nod to forms and composers and memories, which include walks along Lake Erie. It’s very endearing and very enjoyable.

Tribute to Sir John Manduell

Stevens, Pehkonen, Bussey, Poole, Beamish, Ball, Horne, Matthews, Malone, Carpenter, Dickenson, Berkeley, Walker, Pike, Marshall, Hakim Lesley-Jane Rogers, s; John Turner, Laura Robinson, rec; Richard Simpson, ob; Benedict Holland, v; Susie Meszaros, va; Nicholas Trygstad, vc; Keith Swallow, p; Richard Baker,
Divine Art 25210—73 minutes

Sir John Manduell was the founding principal of the Royal Northern College of Music. From 1964 to 1968 he was in charge of the BBC Music Programme, which went on to become BBC 3. Nearly everyone involved in this album had a personal connection with Manduell, who passed away in 2017. Most of the pieces were composed for memorial concerts, and you’ll find William Butler Yeats’s poetry all through this disc; he was Manduell’s favorite poet. You’ll also hear an instrument you might not have heard since your last Baroque listening binge: the recorder. This album is way up high on my list: its story is impossible not to

feel; its musical offerings are delicious and different and intelligent. I especially enjoyed David Matthews's 'Lullaby' from Two Yeats Songs, Lennox Berkeley's Three Duets for two recorders, and *This Great Purple Butterfly* by Gary Carpenter, which is oh-so-haunting and luscious and verdant. John Turner's recorder playing is wistful and captivating. Robin Walker's *Four Nursery Rhymes* is whimsical and poignant: art that captivates all ages. I really like Richard Baker's narration in these four movements (The Shipwrecked Sailor, Lilly Pickle, Staring Moon, Cat and Mouse). Congratulations to this lovely cast of artists on a fine and beautiful job.

Palouse Songbook

Doolittle, Frank, Stölzel, Dyskant-Miller, Rudman, Ahn

Sophia Tegart, fl; Michael Seregow, p
Centaur 3827—76 minutes

Composer Emily Doolittle brings to aural life the American Goldfinch, the Long-Eared Owl, and the Snow Bunting in three movements, one dedicated to each bird. These movements feel light and graceful, from the goldfinch's to the owl's morose sighing, to the hesitant chirruping of the snow bunting. And each movement feels like an abstraction of a moment in the lives of these birds: a frame or two playing out over the duration of the work, moving in and out of focus. Doolittle has made marvelous use of these two instruments: she's merged the textures of piano and flute so well that sometimes it is quite difficult to remember that we're hearing a piano and a flute and not in fact simply watching with wonder a single, small bird. Gabriela Lena Frank's *Sueños de Chambi: Snapshots for an Andean Album* takes its impetus from the work of Amerindian photographer Martin Chambi. She chose seven photos to recreate in her own sonic language for this work, and the result is vibrant and exquisite, with turns of texture and tempo appearing quick and fluid and inevitable. This kaleidoscopic work is no small feat: Tegart and Seregow are at the top of their game in this performance. Ingrid Stölzel's *Leonardo Saw the Spring* is melodic and crystalline, with lines in the flute that soar and grow and breathe. This four-movement work is downright beautiful. Jessica Rudman's *Age M-r* for solo flute begins with a breathy *niente* and grows into a somber, sighing soliloquy that floats high in a moody and devastating, lilting song. Nadine Dyskant-Miller's *They Move*

With No One Watching is dramatic and vivid, each movement its own short story, colored with its own palette of colors and emotions. Jean Ahn's *Toys* begins and ends with a crank of a Fisher-Price toy (do you remember what those looked like?) playing 'Farmer in the Dell'. Over its nearly 12 minutes, this ridiculously charming work is a game of "guess the tune" as fragments from the earliest melodies of our childhood are, well, toyed with. Flutists: this work will be a crowd-pleaser on your next recital. This album is a treasure trove of contemporary music for flute and piano, and a stunning set of performances by Tegart and Seregow. I give this album all the stars.

LI: World Map

Four Corners Ensemble
Navona 6312—59 minutes

These are five "mini concertos," each a little more than ten minutes long, each displaying the talents of one of the Four Corners Ensemble members and the incredible span of Shuying Li's compositional tool box. Each piece is built on a narrative seed, and they spin off into parallel universes of atmosphere and resonance, one after the other. Joshua Anderson's clarinet playing in *American Variations* hits all the right spots in all the right ways. Jeremy Crosmer's cello playing in *Matilda's Dream* is exhilarating and powerful and fiery. Annie Jeng is a full-on force in *Canton Snowstorm*; she sculpts these virtuosic piano lines with grace and brilliance. *The Peace House*, which includes Christina Adams on violin, has thinner textures than the other four works, giving the violin tremendous space for lines that are about texture rather than melody: there's a demanding set of techniques that Adams has compellingly executed here! And Erika Boysen delivers beautifully on *The Dryad's* ebullient, siren-like lines.

Threaded Sky

Thomas, Sheng, Mirzaee, Penderecki
Miller-Porfiris Duo—MilPo 4818—41 minutes

From the first measures of Augusta Read Thomas's dazzling *Rumi Settings* the virtuosity of this duo is radically apparent. Usually I speak mostly about the works themselves (I'm often reviewing premiere recordings) but let me get truly poetic about the Miller-Porfiris Duo—they deserve it. Violinist Anton Miller's double stops at the beginning of IV are faultless and thick. And violist Rita Porfiris's soulful

lines in Thomas's *Silent Moon* are wholly perfect: they're weighty and are wrapped in a vibrato that generates a warmth of resonance yet never overpowers. Their performance of Penderecki's *Ciaconna in Memoria Giovanni Paolo II* is so perfectly in tune that the overtones flesh out the sound in a way that feels like we're listening to much more than just two instruments. The duo makes the tricky harmonics in Bright Sheng's *Angel Fire I* stand out like the jewels I'm sure he wrote them to be, and the exciting, jagged rhythms in *Angel Fire II* are executed without a hitch. Mani Mirzaee's *Wight of Shadows* is one of the most charming and satisfying uses and performances of col legno battuto I've heard, and the hairpin dynamic at the end of this tiny movement is such an admirable moment of consummate musicianship for this to end on. This disc is in the top ten of all albums I've reviewed.

MAZZOLI: *Proving Up*

Opera Omaha, International Contemporary Ensemble/ Christopher Rountree
Pentatone 5186754—80 minutes

Proving Up is the grown-up version of Laura Ingalls Wilder's book series *Little House on the Prairie*. With a shrewd, poetic, and pithy libretto by Royce Vavrek based on the short story by Karen Russell, it's terrifying and sumptuously beautiful. This is a thriller of an opera about a fictional family of 1860s homesteaders, attempting with every ounce of gumption they have to fulfill the requirements of the Homestead Act. In the second scene, this family sings the list of these necessary tasks for us: "The Homestead Act of 1862/A house of sod, with dimensions quite particular/Acres of grain/five years of harvests/a window of glass/The Homestead Act/all that's required/to prove up/at the inspector's visit." The 80-minute work traces an unsteady sine wave of optimism and fear (cue the eight harmonicas) as these characters realize that the likelihood of their ever catching up to the American Dream, of homesteading and proving up, is contingent on unnerving sacrifices that surely cannot be worth the prize. Fantastic performances by the cast—Michael Slattery, John Moore, Talise Trevigne, Abigail Nims, Cree Carrico, and Andrew Harris—excellent direction by Christopher Rountree, and impeccable playing by the International Contemporary Ensemble make this work a must-listen on all levels.

American Gifts

Thomas, Sessions, Fine, Brackett
Jack Van Geem, Nancy Zeltzman, marimba
Bridge 9534—66 minutes

This is marvelous: Nancy Zeltzman and Jack Van Geem have taken works we know, like Irving Fine's *Music for Piano*, Joseph Brackett's *Simple Gifts*, and Piano Sonata 1 by Roger Sessions and given us these wildly entertaining, sonically stimulating, truly artful renditions courtesy of two marimbas, four hands, and goodness knows how many mallets! There's a distinct thread of "Americanness" that weaves its way through this, tying Irving Fine's neo-classical-infused work all the way to Michael Tilson Thomas's *Island Music*, which was inspired by a trip to Bali. If you've never heard a marimba duo, begin here: it's a delight.

**The Newest Music III
VROON**

PACEK: *Piano Pieces*

Antonija Pacek—Navona 6316—53 minutes

This woman lives in Vienna and writes music about her life and children. It is all pleasant but shallow. This is the increasingly popular "sentimental piano" genre. You can't hate it, but you can't really feed on it either. It is soothing but not nourishing. One of the things I have noted about this genre is the "notiness" of the music. The hands are always busy. If it had the simplicity of, say, Chopin, it might be more listenable.

McENCROE: *Piano Pieces*

Van-Anh Nguyen—Navona 6307—72 minutes

Here's another one. It's slightly more masculine, less sentimental, less "notey", more subdued, but no more nourishing. It is again easy to listen to. But there are dozens of these! And you will forget it right away.

Persian Autumn

Pieces by Hormoz Farhat & Amir Mahyar Tafreshipour

Mary Dullea, p—Metier 28610—73 minutes

This is even less sentimental, more masculine, rougher to listen to sometimes (not all the time). There are two sonatas and a toccata by Farhat—an attempt to give form to what might otherwise sound improvised. The piano com-

posers do, I swear, sit at the piano and noodle around, then write it down. But in this case he gives it some form—though that doesn't help much. Tafreshipour is almost 50 years younger than Farhat, and you can hear it in the emptiness of his music.

CARBON: *Piano Pieces*

Steven Graff—Convivium 57—65 minutes

The big work here is *Astro Dogs* (2019), 12 pieces based on the 12 signs of the zodiac. Each sign is also a variety of dog: Aquarius is a beagle, Libra a poodle, Cancer a Pekingese, etc. It's an amusing juxtaposition of inspirations, and it keeps the music interesting. The composer has owned most of the dogs pictured. This composer is better than the others we have just reviewed.

The two other sets of short pieces—*Madeleines* (2016) and *Impromptus* (2014)—sound like Poulenc sometimes. In the first set I was quite taken with the 'Promenade' (at the zoo in Versailles—maybe this composer is often inspired by animals). But the impromptus bored me—doodling, as so often happens today in piano music. Composer John Carbon (born 1951) and the pianist (younger) are both from Chicago.

FREEMAN: *Piano Pieces*

Elaine Freeman—Big Round 8962

The notes to this album tell us that "she doesn't categorize her music by any particular style or genre...she just sits down and plays." That's what it sounds like. It is utterly unprepossessing, slightly minimalistic and repetitive doodling of no depth whatever but never ugly and always tolerable (if shallow). It seems that dozens of people are making records like this. This is the fifth in one month. Buy them as background music that doesn't demand (or repay) attention.

WISHART: *Piano Pieces*

Jeri-Mae G Astolfi
Ravello 8045

Here's No. 6—another busy pianistic orgy—this time with appealing pieces like her 'Shenandoah' Variations and variations on 'Oh Suzannah' and some dreadful moments of fist-banging in 'Phantasmagoria.' There are 8 preludes that are named after famous figures, from Amelia Earhart and Winston Churchill to Jane Austen and Lewis and Clark. I can hear no real characterization to match the titles. It's

rather boring, generic music. So are the 6 *Illusions*. I did like the rather jazzy 'Blue' (part of another group of pieces), but it only lasts a minute or so.

GAN-RU: *Piano Pieces*

Yiming Zhang
Grand Piano 835—73 minutes

The 12 Preludes that take up half of the program are utterly boring—nothing but pianistic clichés. *Ancient Music* is for prepared piano, so it sounds different. The piano is supposed to be imitating Chinese folk instruments, though there are oddities like what sounds like a tubular chime. Only the first two pieces are tolerable; the rest is garbage. The last two pieces on the program are for toy piano and sound like a child playing with one under the Christmas tree. There is moaning and groaning, too—the pianist's voice, I assume. A friend remarked that he sounds like a chimpanzee thrown onto a hot frying pan. There is even a bird. I like birds, but this is too much. The recording engineers must have been laughing hysterically.

Yoko Hirota, piano

13 composers—Navona 6294

This music is "new" in that it never sounds like real music—but it is not all recent. The program opens with Schoenberg's 6 Pieces (not interesting at this late date), followed by 8 boring pieces by Ernst Krenek. There are miniatures by Berio, Ligeti, and Elliott Carter too. The rest of the composers are relatively unknown, and some of the pieces are as recent as 2007; but they all sound pretty much like the 1911 Schoenberg. I don't think anybody could rouse enough interest to listen to this whole program.

E Pluribus Unum

Liza Stepanova, p
Navona 6300

This one alternates tinkling and banging, so it's "modern music" with a vengeance. The composers include Lera Auerbach (a horrible one-minute miniature), Kamran Ince (a dreadful 13 minutes), and Anna Clyne, whose piece is particularly obnoxious. As she puts it in her notes, "The piano part is supported by a tape part, which comprises a range of recordings from instrumental harp to voice." The voice is Queen Elizabeth from one of her speeches. It is all "spliced, manipulated, and

layered." Yuck! The most tolerable music is a 2017 suite by Badie Khaleghian called *Tahirih the Pure*, but even that has annoying parts. Tahirih was a 19th-Century Persian woman who fought for women's rights and was executed. Maybe he depicts the execution?

Rückblick: inspired by Brahms

Ann DuHamel, p

Furious Artisans 6821—80 minutes

All of this music was written from 2016 to 2019. Edie Hill's *Rückblick* is mostly rather bland and subdued, but with artificial jerks of loudness now and then. A friend described it as "introspective noodling". There's a lot of that around. It's starting to make me wonder how I can listen to so much piano.

The next 8 pieces are by Joseph Dangerfield (5) and Luke Dahn (3). One would write a piece, then the other responded with his own piece. Both are "interested in color and texture"—meaning that most other elements of what we usually think of as music are missing. These 8 pieces are a total waste.

Joseph Hagen's Brahms Variations are based on the theme in the Scherzo of Symphony 3. It can hardly fail to capture the attention at first, since Brahms wrote the melody. But it eventually gets split in two and inverted. The composer thinks it's all about anger, grief, and depression. Listen to the symphony to see if you agree.

Brahms had heard ragtime, and that's the excuse for *Dr Brahms's Book of Rags* (16 of them) composed by Marc Chan. It's "What if Brahms had written rags?" But he didn't. One of these is supposedly based on the famous Brahms Waltz in A-flat (I don't hear it). Marc Chan was from Singapore but lives in Connecticut. I never tire of ragtime—there isn't that much of it around—and it strikes me as the only reason to own this record.

Jovica Ivanovic, accordion

PIAZZOLLA: *Aconsagua*; **GALLIANO:** *Opale Concerto*

with Ukrainian Chamber Orchestra/ Vitaliv Protasov—Navona 6317

The Piazzolla is (like most of his music) incredibly dull, despite a lively surface. The concerto by Richard Galliano is much better, with more varied moods and nicer melodies. But you have to like the accordion to bother with this.

Videos

BEETHOVEN: *Missa Solemnis*

Johanna Winkel, Sophie Harmsen, Sebastian Kohlhepp, Arttu Kataja; Stuttgart/ Frieder Bernius—Naxos 2.110669—68 minutes
(with 60-minute documentary)

Frieder Bernius founded the Stuttgart Chamber Choir in 1968; this 2018 performance, filmed at Alpirsbach Abbey in Baden-Württemberg, helped celebrate their 50th anniversary. In its early years the chorus concentrated on a cappella repertory, but they grew, and around 1985 Bernius became an advocate of period performance and established the Stuttgart Baroque Orchestra.

About half of this is a documentary about Bernius. We see him in rehearsal with the orchestra, then with the chorus, and even with individual singers, where he is a stickler about unifying vowel sounds. We also see snippets that show how he prepares by working at his piano and marking scores. All of this is well and fine, but we also see some interviews with singers who bubble over with so much praise that the whole documentary begins to feel like a puff piece. In any case, fans of Bernius will be appreciative.

The performance itself is a little odd. It's done in a church setting—Alpirsbach Abbey—but the performers are all in street clothes. I assumed then that this was a filming of a recording session. The whole back of the church is dark, and you can't see any audience. But then at the very end we hear scattered applause. In any case it does appear to be one continuous take, not a recording session with numerous starts and stops.

The performance is certainly a good one; but, as I've said before, for this most monumental work I want heavyweights, not bantamweights, in the ring. The Stuttgart singers number about 50 and the orchestral strings are 8-7-6-5-3. The faster sections (Gloria and several other sections) are full of excitement, but meditative sections need more space and warmth, and bombastic sections need more weight. For me, then, the Kyrie and the end of the Credo (which faithful readers will remember to be one of my absolute favorite spots in all music) are both too fast.

The soloists are all very good, though I was most taken by bass Arttu Kataja in the Agnus Dei. I would also mention that mezzo Sophie

Harmsen bobs around in time to the music and often conducts herself; that is very distracting, but I couldn't keep my eyes off her! Bernius gets the job done, but watching him, I'm not sure how. His technique is very unclear—he doesn't seem to help the performers at all. I was amazed that the tenors came in at "Et resurrexit" because he doesn't breathe with his singers. And in moments of high expression he basically looks angry and terrifying when you want him to look ecstatic. But somehow he gets the job done.

There are interesting things in the documentary, and the filmed performance brings different dividends than audio CDs. I suspect there are "video people" out there for whom this would be a great enjoyment, but I guess too that "audio people" will find a lot of this unnecessary and annoying. I prefer Klemperer. The end of the Credo (from "Et vitam venturi" on) will make you a believer.

ALTHOUSE

DONIZETTI: *Don Pasquale*

Oskar Czerwenka (Pasquale), Edita Gruberova (Norina), Luigi Alva (Ernesto), Hans Helm (Malatesta); Vienna Opera/ Hector Urbon
Naxos 2.110659—120 minutes

I reviewed a terrific performance of this opera sung by Kurt Bohme, Fritz Wunderlich, and Erika Koth (Profil 19075, J/A 2020). Hard on the heels of that release comes this DVD of the same opera again sung in German with an equally delectable cast. The production was filmed on tour at a small theater in Austria, yet the simple set design and elaborate costumes supply a charming frame for a delightful performance. These singers all know their roles well and are enjoying themselves tremendously. Some of director Helge Thoma's ideas are a little curious (would Norina really strip to her bloomers in front of Dr Malatesta?), but his handling of the chorus in their big number in Act III is inspired. The chorus is a small group (probably 20 or fewer—it's a small stage). Edita Gruberova (who has only just retired) is seen at the beginning of her long and varied career. At just 31, she is supple of voice and figure and is a delight. One can understand why she was such a favorite with the public. She ornaments tastefully, never venturing as high as F (which she certainly had); but she crowns the Act II finale with a great high D. Luigi Alva had just turned 50, but except for a few moments of less than steady sound, you'd never guess it. He looks half his age and is handsome to boot.

Hans Helm's career was centered in Europe, primarily the German-speaking countries. He is heard in comprimario roles on a number of studio recordings. In this performance he shows what he can do when given the chance. His Malatesta is funny, charming, debonair, and extremely well sung. He has no difficulty with the coloratura, tossing it off as easily as his prima donna. Oscar Czerwenka only had a brief Met career appearing as Ochs and Rocco in the 1959-60 season. He is a lovable Pasquale. One really feels bad for him when he gets slapped by Norina in Act III. He too is nimble in the patter music; the big duet with Malatesta is one of the high points of the performance.

I was pleasantly surprised that the picture and sound quality are more than adequate. There are subtitles in five languages. Be aware that the English subtitles are translations of the original Italian, not the German that is sung here.

Lovers of this opera or fans of these singers should acquire this as soon as possible!

REYNOLDS

DVORAK: *Rusalka*

Sally Matthews (Rusalka), Evan Leroy Johnson (Prince), Alexander Roslavets (Vodnik), Patricia Bardon (Jezibaba), Zoya Tsererina (Foreign Princess); Glyndebourne/ Robin Ticciati
Opus Arte 1302 [Blu-ray] 153 minutes; also DVD

This Opus Arte video preserves a 2019 performance of Melly Still's celebrated staging of Dvorak's *Rusalka* for Glyndebourne. Despite taking some liberties, Still's aim was "not to interpret but to open doors to possible meanings and invite every individual to make the story her or his own." In the process, she created a visually stunning production (Rae Smith, designer) that cuts to the opera's emotional core. The eerily beautiful depiction of Rusalka and her sister mermaids even warrants a short bonus feature, *Rusalka—Flying Through Water*, that explains the mechanics behind this crowd-pleasing special effect.

The cast is strong, led by Sally Matthews in the title role. She lacks the tonal voluptuousness of sopranos like Benackova or Fleming, and there is a bit of a matronly quality to the tone that doesn't quite fit the character's youth and innocence. But her technique is solid, her singing flexible and free, occasionally calling to mind Rysanek in its expressive abandon. What's more, she's an inspired actress, as mesmerizing in her mute scenes as in the big vocal

moments. Evan Leroy Johnson, a tall and strapping American, sings with a youthful, stentorian tenor and communicates the complexity of the Prince's predicament. As Rusalka's father, bass Alexander Roslavets fills out Vodnik's phrases with rich sound; his mellifluous reading of the beautiful Act 2 aria ('Cely svet neda ti, neda') is a high point of the performance. Patricia Bardon is an appropriately wild Jezibaba (the witch who aids Rusalka in her quest to live above the sea), and Russian soprano Zoya Tsererina makes a strong impression as Rusalka's rival, the Foreign Princess. Robin Ticciati, leading the London Philharmonic, lets Dvorak's melodies flower while keeping the pace taut.

ALTMAN

GRIEG: *Peer Gynt*

Jacob Feyerlik (Peer Gynt), Alice Firenze (Solveig), Eno Pecì (Death), Franziska-Wallner-Hollinek (Ase); Vienna Opera Ballet/ Simon Hewlett—C Major 755808—112 minutes

It's hard to describe this ballet version of *Peer Gynt*, because it's not really *Peer Gynt* by Edvard Grieg or *Peer Gynt* by Henrik Ibsen. According to the blurb on the back of the DVD cover choreographer Edward Clug's merged Grieg and Ibsen "in a new ballet experience".

Grieg wrote his *Peer Gynt* music to accompany scenes in Ibsen's play and even when used for that purpose it's been difficult to produce. Ibsen's basic narrative is Peer Gynt's passage through life to find meaning, encountering people and problems that he often creates, and eventually finding solace after his death. If you don't read the included synopsis you won't know what's going on in this ballet or who the characters are. Clug can't seem to make up his mind whether to stage modern ballet sequences or more traditional ballet moves. These inconsistencies only add to the confusion.

Clug has re-ordered scenes, used some of Grieg's music not written for *Peer Gynt*, and generally made an incomprehensible hash out of everything. He only skims the narrative and gives a "modern" spin to the plot. New characters are added, including a rather strange deer figure that roams about and an evil Death person who shows up occasionally to make Peer Gynt's life miserable. The Death figure apparently rules the Mountain People and later is the head of an insane asylum where he torments Peer.

The dancing is only occasionally interest-

ing. There are two beautiful pas de deux; one using Grieg's Adagio from the Piano Concerto and the other using the Andante from the *Holberg Suite*. 'Anitra's Dance,' which seems so perfect for a ballet, is turned into a "kooch" dance for Middle-Eastern maidens. Peer Gynt's mother Ase is introduced on her deathbed, dances her death dance, dies, and is buried—all in one Martha Graham-influenced scene disconnected from the narrative. Much of Act 2 occurs in that insane asylum; it's a nightmare with some truly odd dancing, more strange characters, drug injections, and shock treatments. After a protracted death scene, Peer Gynt meets Solveig again, apparently in the afterlife.

This was a very long 112 minutes—not an "experience" I want to see again. The standard DVD picture is fine and the 5.1 Dolby sound is effective. The dancing despite the awful choreography is very good. Conductor Hewlett leads a nicely paced performance. I was tempted to turn off the picture and just listen to the music, but there are long passages where there is no music.

FISCH

HENZE: *Der Prinz von Homburg*

Robin Adams (Prince), Stefan Margita (Elector), Vera-Lotte Boecker (Natalie), Helene Schneiderman (Electress); Stuttgart Opera/ Cornelius Meister—Naxos 115 [Blu-ray] 114 minutes; also DVD

In his well-considered assessment of the audio release of this performance (Capriccio 5405; N/D 2020), Mr Locke pronounces this opera "hard on the ear" and laments the set's absence of texts and translations. The video edition remedies at least one of those grievances—it has subtitles in four languages. And the work's celebration of individualism over the submission inherent in militarism is projected boldly in the visuals.

For director Stephan Kimmig, the opera is not exclusively about the army or the way individuals are forced to adapt to a system; "it is about the way systems work *per se*". Or don't, as represented by a bare dance studio, with fluorescent lighting that sometimes flickers unsettlingly. But while military maneuvers become ballet positions rehearsed at the barre, Kimmig doesn't get bogged down in gimmicks. He uses the tableaux to support the finely delineated personalities of the principal actors in the drama. Foremost among them is the title character, whom the librettist Ingeborg Bachmann calls "the first modern protagon-

onist, alone with himself in a fragile world", and whom Kimmig describes as "an outsider because he is a dreamer". The director explains that in the post-World War II era of the opera's genesis, "Bachmann and Henze dream of a freer form of existence—without humiliations, without destructive hierarchies."

English baritone Robin Adams, singing with clarity and tonal variety, is a sympathetic and ruggedly sexy Prince. As his love interest, Princess Natalie, Vera-Lotte Boecker is an expressive actress with a free and bright soprano. The Elector and his wife (Stefan Margita and Helene Schneiderman) are the epitome of tenuous power, and the supporting roles are all filled to perfection. Locke was unmoved by Henze's "disjointed vocal lines", but the sterling cast renders them with a graceful ease that extracts whatever essential beauty lies beneath the thorny surface.

The video has another advantage. During the exciting instrumental interludes, the camera cuts to conductor Cornelius Meister, whose apparent joy at leading the Stuttgart Opera Orchestra through this presumably arduous score is infectious.

ALTMAN

MAHLER: *Romance, Death, and Triumph*
Symphony 1 & Wayfarer Songs
Thomas Hampson, bar; Estonian Symphony/
Neeme Jarvi—VAI 4605—100 minutes

As I've gotten older I've become more aware that Time is finite and one only has so much time to explore what one loves. As I am an Opera Nut I tend to spend my free time listening to the umpteenth pirated *Tosca* or Ring cycle rather than exploring new fields of music. That doesn't mean I don't like other music. On the contrary, I enjoy musical theater, operetta, lieder, ballet, chamber music, jazz, and symphonic music very much (I even enjoy rock and country music!) Because of my love of the human voice I've enjoyed Mahler's song cycles or symphonies with choral music the most. I know his other music is magnificent, but one only has so many hours in a day.

I've written the above to explain why I enjoyed this video so much. Jason Starr's documentary about the evolution and composition of Mahler's first symphony is what all explications should be: revealing, moving, and interesting. Using musicologists and actors as well as an actual performance, Starr explores why Mahler began his symphonic career, how the melodic ideas germinated in him and how

those ideas evolved, what each of the movements is, and how the music mirrors the composer's own life. The musicologists, led by Peter Franklin, explain the ins and outs of Mahler's creativity without seeming stuffy or condescending. We are shown how Symphony 1 influenced and inspired the *Wayfarer Songs* and how the musical ideas of one work are carried over and developed in the other.

Along the way, we're told of various performance traditions. Never having heard Mahler's first symphony in the hall I didn't know, for example, that at one point the brass stand to deliver a passage in one of the later movements. I learned many things from this disc while being thoroughly entertained. I know Starr has created a similar film about *Das Lied von der Erde*, also available on VAI (Nov/Dec 2013). I have every intention of exploring that too. In fact, as I watched this, I kept wishing that Starr would make films about all of Mahler's symphonies. That's probably not financially possible, but one can dream.

In my next lifetime I will get to know Mahler more intimately.

REYNOLDS

MASSENET: *Cendrillon*
Danielle de Niese (Cendrillon), Kate Lindsey (Prince Charming), Lionel Lhote (Pandolfe), Nina Minasyan (Fairy Godmother), Agnes Zwierko (Madame de la Haltiere); Glyndebourne/ John Wilson
Opus Arte 1303 [Blu-ray] 148 minutes; also DVD

The esteemed Irish actress and opera director Fiona Shaw devised a magical *Cendrillon* for Glyndebourne aimed at telling the story to a modern audience. To her credit, her rethinking is generally rooted in Massenet's music and the text by Henri Cain, after Perrault. As seen in this 2019 performance the staging is richly detailed in characterizations, imagery, and stage effects (including a canny use of holograms), yet never feels overstuffed. Cinderella's adventure is a dream, populated with key figures from her life whom we meet in pantomimes. Her dead mother becomes the Fairy Godmother, and the kind maid who is her only safeguard against the malignant women of the household (her father is caring but ineffectual) becomes her Prince Charming. As that role is written for a woman, the association is pregnant with psychological possibilities. When he first approaches Cinderella, the Prince has the demeanor of an

androgynous boy band singer, a stereotypical teenage girl's fantasy. But by the opera's finale, when Cinderella awakens from her dream, there are suggestions that she and the maid might share a more mature mutual attraction. Whatever the interpretation, Shaw was determined to show that "finding love is not a woman's entire destiny—she has more options."

Cinderella and Prince Charming are cast to perfection, Danielle de Niese with a sympathetic tear in her voice and the infallible Kate Lindsey with an artless purity well suited to the male roles she often assumes. The two are also captivating to watch. With De Niese's large, entrancing eyes and Lindsey's expressive body language, one can imagine them triumphing just as well in a silent film adaptation. Nina Minasyan is outstanding as the Fairy Godmother. Her coloratura soprano has bell-like brilliance and effortless solidity, and she is also a delight to behold.

Cinderella's father Pandolfe is sung by Lionel Lhote, a Belgian baritone with a sweet and robust timbre who plays the character not as an old fool, but a middle-aged man with regrets. The duet where he and his daughter reminisce about better days and imagine running off together ('Viens, nous quitterons cette ville') is especially moving since, in Shaw's concept, this is perhaps only the overtly affectionate father of Cinderella's dreams. Agnes Zwiwerko also breaks the mold as the stepmother Madame La Haltiere, finding plenty of humor in the role without excessive caricature. She appears in the first scene in a jogging suit and baseball cap (the world outside of Cinderella's dream is contemporary), a tough but attractive older woman who can still rely on her feminine wiles for social advancement.

Conductor John Wilson keeps Massenet's enchanting score bubbling along, and he shows a strong affinity for shaping the ineffably charming lyrical moments so that the singers are supported lovingly. This is the kind of production that reveals subtleties on each viewing. After the second time through, I was looking forward to the third.

ALTMAN

MASSENET: *Don Quichotte*

Gabor Bretz (Don Quichotte), Anna Goryachova (Dulcinée), David Stout (Sancho); Vienna Symphony/ Daniel Cohen

C Major 754104 [Blu-ray] 125 minutes; also DVD

Massenet's *Don Quichotte* may not be the *American Record Guide*

composer's finest achievement, but director Mariame Clement was attracted to what she calls the "incredibly honest music which does not shy away from expressing feelings". Her inventive production for the 2019 Bregenz Festival brings the legendary knight into the 21st Century, and her vision is supported by an excellent cast, conductor, and set and costume designer Julia Hansen.

Before the curtain rises, the audience is shown the message-heavy ad the razor company Gillette produced for the 2019 Super Bowl. Titled 'We Believe,' it is a hokey response to the #metoo movement that provoked some controversy for its critical depiction of (primarily white) "toxic masculinity". The audience is unsure of how to react, but a man (the animated actor Felix Defer) rises from the audience to voice their concerns: "Commercials in an opera house? Now I've seen everything!" After a few uncomfortable moments, it is clear this is part of the show, and the Man, ranting about how Don Quixote's lance is probably too violent a prop for our modern sensibilities, invites Quixote (who seems to materialize out of nowhere) to join him in the first row to observe the opera.

Once we are properly disoriented by this clever framing device, Clement goes on to exploit the libretto's episodic nature to present models of male behavior in various situations, relating back to the commercial. The opening, where Quixote meets Dulcinée, is in period costume. But the second scene is set in a locker room, Sancho busy writing an email on his laptop while his master showers after shaving (presumably with a Gillette razor). The famous windmill is here a small window fan. But as he prepares for battle against the perceived "giants", the back wall of the set opens up and we see a striking image of the fan as Quixote sees it, huge and threatening. When the Knight sets out on his mission to recover Dulcinée's stolen necklace, he is dressed as Spiderman. Confronting gang members in a graffiti-covered alley, he converts them with words of peace and inspiration, demonstrating what it really means to be a (super)hero.

The next scene is a contemporary office. Don Quixote, now an awkward work colleague with a secret crush on his superior, offers Dulcinée the recovered necklace. On bended knee, he proposes marriage as the other employees gather around to mock him and record the embarrassing event on their phone cameras. Though she rejects his offer, she defends his honor to her colleagues. Yes, he's a

fool, but he's a noble fool ("un fou sublime"). The curtain falls and Sancho steps forward, discarding the wig and glasses he wore in the office scene. Scolding the audience for not appreciating Quixote's exemplary heroism, he adjures his master to carry on his mission. After he leaves, Dulcinée comes before the curtain and, shedding the remnants of theatrical pretention, seats herself in the front row to watch Don Quixote's death scene. The denouement is handled with great sensitivity as Clement celebrates the knight whom she sees as "not manly in the classical sense," but a "combination of the hero and poet that is quite unusual".

On paper, this concept might seem contrived. But the charismatic individuality of the principal performers is consistently engaging, capped by a compelling finale, with Don Quixote left all alone on stage. In the title role, Hungarian bass Gabor Bretz displays a voice of size, beauty, and tonal variety. The British baritone David Stout is a loveable Sancho, and the Russian mezzo-soprano Anna Goryachova has a strong, mellow tone and a haunting physical presence. Daniel Cohen makes the most of the score, and the Vienna Symphony plays beautifully.

ALTMAN

MOZART: *Arias & Overtures*

Juan Diego Florez, t; Orchestra La Scintilla/ Riccardo Minasi—C Major 754904 [Blu-ray] 75 min

Allan Altman wrote a mostly favorable review of Florez in these same Mozart arias (Sony 43086, Jan/Feb 2018). Here we have almost the same program (the CD had Tito's other aria from *Clemenza di Tito* as well). Florez sings these arias with beauty and charm and a dazzling command of Mozart's florid demands. Other tenors have supplied more warmth and color, but the Peruvian tenor gives his audience their money's worth. He uses appropriate appoggiaturas and ornaments tastefully, adding a cadenza at the end of Idomeneo's 'Fuor del mar' that takes him to a high D.

Riccardo Minasi and his orchestra supply exciting accompaniments, augmenting the arias with performances of Mozart overtures. The double dotting and tempo of the *Don Giovanni* overture may raise some eyebrows; I enjoyed it, but more traditionally inclined listeners may not. Florez is still as handsome as ever and enthusiastically conveys his enjoyment of the music. The audience adores him.

Sound is excellent, picture very clear—

though the lighting is a little glaring sometimes. The theater itself is one of those small atmospheric houses that take one right back to the 18th Century.

REYNOLDS

Puccini: *Suor Angelica*

Maria Jose Siri (Angelica), Anna Maria Chiuri (Principessa); Florence May Festival/ Valerio Galli—Dynamic 57873 [Blu-Ray] 60 minutes

Gianni Schicchi

Bruno De Simone (Schicchi), Anna Maria Chiuri (Zita), Francesca Longari (Lauretta), Dave Monaco (Rinuccio); Florence/ Galli Dynamic 37874—54 minutes

In the last issue (N/D 2020) I wrote a positive review of the *Tabarro* from this Trittico, lamenting that Dynamic chose to split the operas up into three separate releases instead of including all of them on one video disc. (They did this with a recent *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* too.). Our editor kindly sent me the other two operas so I've now been able to observe the rest of director Denis Krief's work. In all of them, he tells Puccini's stories succinctly without deviating from their plots or adding extraneous, self-indulgent details. The settings have been brought forward to contemporary times or at least into the last century. This works for *Tabarro*, but is less effective for the other two operas, particularly *Gianni Schicchi*. (The threat of having one's hand cut off for altering a will is no longer a possibility, as far as I know!) Yet these stagings work.

Some of the blocking in *Suor Angelica* is awkward; Krief doesn't seem to know what to do with the large group of women. He does preserve the intent of the composer at the end of the opera without observing the stage directions to the letter. I won't reveal what he does, but it is very moving (unlike other productions of this opera that rewrite the ending altogether to avoid any "saccharine religiosity").

Gianni Schicchi is hilarious from beginning to end: the trashing of Buoso Donati's apartment to find the will, the deception of the witnesses—it all made me laugh out loud. And Krief doesn't ruin the end of the opera by bringing Zita back in to murder Schicchi (as in Woody Allen's staging for LA Opera).

Maria Jose Siri is as lovely an Angelica as one could wish for. She is not as specific in her acting as Renata Scotto or Ermonela Jaho (whose work is spoiled by director Kasper Holton in Covent Garden's production); but her strong, clear soprano is very refreshing and

she has no difficulty with Angelica's three high Cs in the opera's final 15 minutes. Anna Maria Chiuri plays her unyielding Aunt with more humanity than we usually see in this role. The interaction between the two women is more interesting in this production than elsewhere.

Chiuri also plays Zita, the cranky aunt in *Gianni Schicchi*; she is the only singer to appear in all three operas. Francesca Longari is a beautiful Lauretta, both visually and vocally, but it would've been more fun to have Siri perform all three heroines (as Scotto, Teresa Stratas, and, more recently, Patricia Racette have done). Bruno De Simone is a terrific Schicchi, singing and acting with piquant wit; and Dave Monaco contributes a well-sung, handsome Rinuccio (sporting a ponytail). All of the relatives contribute greatly to the ensemble and yet all are individual and funny on their own. Several of them appear in the other two operas as well.

Valerio Galli is an excellent conductor for these works. He knows how to follow, but also lead, a must when conducting opera. Sound and picture are excellent on both, the Blu-ray a little sharper than the DVD. Subtitles are available in six languages.

REYNOLDS

The Mother (ballet)

Natalia Osipova (Mother), Jonathan Goddard (Death); Arthur Pita, Choreographer
Opus Arte 7280 [Blu-ray] 78 minutes; also DVD

Inspired by a dark fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, Portuguese-born choreographer Arthur Pita created the ballet *The Mother* as a vehicle for the prodigious talents of the dancer Natalia Osipova. It is a true tour-de-force, a mix of many styles that exploits Osipova's love of dramatic theater. The music is composed and played by Frank Moon and Dave Price; it's an eclectic score, mainly for synthesizer and percussion.

The scenario follows a mother on her journey to find Death and rescue her child from his clutches. In each trial along the way, she encounters different guides (the stunningly versatile Jonathan Goddard) who demand grueling sacrifices.

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In Andersen's telling, Death explains that he is only God's servant. In his garden of souls, he shows the mother two flowers that represent young lives. One is destined to be "a blessing to the world," the other "full of care, anxiety, misery." He will not divulge which of the two is her child, only that both fates are God's will. Andersen explored a similar concept in his poem known in German as 'Muttertraum' (set with chilling understatement by Schumann). There, the mother delights in her child as he slumbers in his cradle. Forgetting her own struggles, she envisions a rosy future for her "angel." A raven, however, "shrieks a tune" outside the window: *this child will grow up to be a brigand and will one day serve as supper for the raven and his clan.*

Pita's adaptation streamlines Andersen's ending and puts the emphasis on the necessity of grieving and the acceptance of death. In an Epilogue, we see the mother all aglow, bringing home baby clothes and patting her enlarged belly. Is this the expectant joy of a second child who will compensate in some way for the loss of the first? Or a flashback to the blissful ignorance of the future, as in 'Muttertraum'? The staging leaves the question open in this harrowing tribute to the emotional highs and lows of motherhood.

ALTMAN

Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli

film by Syrthos J Dreher & Dag Freyer
C Major 755206—79 minutes

Making a film about this legendary and reclusive pianist cannot have been an easy task, and much time is spent on relating the difficulties involved. Michelangeli was a perfectionist, not only with his playing, but with such things as the temperature of the room, not wishing unauthorized people to observe him, and canceling his appearance if things were not just right. Unsatisfied with a recording of Ravel's Piano Concerto in G, he orders it destroyed.

Surreptitiously caught is the moment of his heart attack in 1988. Luckily there were two doctors in the audience who helped him survive. The film is chock full of moments where we eavesdrop on the artist— none of which probably met with his approval. Whether this is right I leave for others to determine.

Wisps, and moments from the Ravel, but never the complete work, nor the complete anything is offered to us, and given the circumstances why should they? Michelangeli would most certainly not have approved. The crumbs from his earlier years are delicious, but crumbs nevertheless.

Lots of praise and occasional thoughts

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from his friends, colleagues, and admirers add to the interest of the film; but finally we are left with scabs in the life and times of this unique pianist. He valued his privacy so much, and this brave attempt to penetrate that only scratches the surface. But this was an impossible task from the start.

Would I recommend this? Unquestionably, for piano mavens.

BECKER

Books

The Heart of a Woman: Florence B Price

by Rae Linda Brown
U of Illinois Press, 296 pp, \$29.95

No one today can imagine the inner faith and strength of will it must have taken for a Black woman nearly a century ago to write symphonic music. Florence Beatrice Price (1887-1953) had such faith and will—and talent. Her Symphony 1 was popular in the 1930s and 40s and the first by an African-American woman to be played by a major orchestra (in Chicago under Frederick Stock in 1933). Her music is making something of a comeback. In addition to her songs and keyboard works, there are now recordings of three symphonies and her Piano Concerto. I live in rural Pennsylvania, but thanks to enterprising conductors at local universities have had the fortune to hear two of her symphonies in good concert performances.

Dr Brown's biography thus comes at a good time. It is an expansion of her 1987 dissertation, and its title comes from one of Price's songs. It makes fascinating reading. She's especially good describing the milieu where the composer (nee Smith) grew up. The specifics of her family history are well fleshed out—the result of good, solid shoe-leather research. Her concentration on what's important is a refreshing contrast to the dreary doorstoppers in vogue these days, where the author simply shovels his info between covers and expects the reader to sort it out. In short, this is a real biography, not a data dump of a writer's note cards.

Price's parents were relatively middle-class in the Black community in Little Rock, Arkansas. She was born a blue baby. To have lived to be 66 was itself unusual; with that condition back then, Irving Thalberg's 37 was a more common span.

In her childhood years, there was some flexibility in their chances to better themselves. All that changed in the 1890s when Jim Crow laws increasingly starved any notion of developing a higher Black culture. Price had gotten a good musical education, studying under George Whitefield Chadwick and Frederick Converse at the New England Conservatory. Always an outstanding student, she graduated a year early with two degrees. She married Thomas J. Price, an attorney. But in addition to the burden of the Jim Crow laws, the specter of lynching also grew more menacing, and in the Prices' case potentially personal, so in 1927 the family moved to Chicago. Unfortunately, Mr Price became mentally and physically abusive, forcing her to divorce him. The book describes her struggles as a single mother during the Great Depression as well as the constant demeaning Black artists—and Blacks in general—had to endure. Brown notes this in compelling detail without editorializing. She wisely lets the facts speak for themselves.

Her analyses of Price's major works are technically well done with useful musical examples that don't bog down in theoretical chloroform. She zeroes in on its harmonic bases and the specific melodic traits that make up Price's personal style. Like any good musical writer, she makes you want to hear the music itself. Price had ill luck similar to Havergal Brian when it came to scores getting lost, including her Symphony 2 and an early tone poem *Ethiopia's Shadow in America*. As a tone poem aficionado, I'd especially like to hear that one.

Dr Brown died in 2017, thus never lived to see the results of her work. The book was seen to completion by Guthrie P Ramsey Jr, who also contributes a worthwhile introduction. There are excellent and informative footnotes, a bibliography and a discography.

O'CONNOR

Julian Anderson

Dialogues with Christopher Dingle on Listening, Composing, and Culture
Boydell Press, 458 pages, hard cover

As you can tell from the subtitle, these are wide-ranging dialogues. I enjoyed most of it, but especially the subject of tempo markings, the matter of period performance practice, and the comments on "browsing" and how valuable that was when it was possible. (I can't resist a couple of his comments on PPP: The

dogmatism has got absurd, and it was very heavily marketed.)

A great many contemporary pieces start loud. Julian Anderson is a composer, and he has a laugh about that. He also thinks musicians should shut up and play—he hates (as I do) the way some of them think they must *talk* about it.

These interesting and erudite conversations began in 2014 and went on for several years. They cover all the major figures our readers cut their teeth on, from Mengelberg and Furtwangler thru Bernstein and Karajan. There's a lot about Boulez. They give us an inkling of English thought about music since the turn of the century. They help us to understand what it means to be a composer in our time.

VROON

Aaron Copland and the American Legacy of Mahler

by Matthew Mugmon

Casemate—228 pages—\$49 hardcover

Aaron Copland was an early American advocate of Mahler's music, and he remained so all his life. He encouraged conductors he knew well, like Koussevitzky and Bernstein, to program Mahler and eagerly attended those concerts. Intelligent critics hear Mahler's influence in Copland's Third Symphony—and even in most of his very “American”-sounding music. Despite his French training, Copland was heavily influenced by Austro-German romanticism. In 1935 he said, “Mahler speaks to the romanticist in all of us.” He also seemed to connect Mahler's kind of romanticism with Jewishness. He loved Mahler's orchestration and textures, which were a lot lighter and less dense than, say, Strauss's.

I had never realized Copland's influence in this area. He really “pushed” Mahler, and his influence on Bernstein was considerable. The book really has only the one thesis and can be read rather quickly, though there are fascinating details as well.

VROON

Conducting Opera—Where Theater Meets Music

by Joseph Rescigno

University of North Texas Press, 336 pp. \$29.95

American conductor Joseph Rescigno (1945-) has been Artistic Advisor and Principal Conductor of the Florentine Opera Company of

Milwaukee since 1981 and for four seasons was Artistic Director of l'Orchestre Metropolitain in Montreal. Since 2005 he has served as Music Director of La Musica Lirica, a summer program for singers in Northern Italy. In 2014 he joined the Solti Foundation's residency project as an advisor to the Olga Forrai Foundation's work with singers and conductors.

All that experience was surely excellent preparation for writing *Conducting Opera*, which is not a manual on conducting technique so much as it is a hands-on practical volume about the conducting *process*. It examines from a conductor's viewpoint well-known operas by Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, Puccini, Richard Strauss, the French Romantics, and *bel canto*. Among the author's many general recommendations: learn the opera first from a vocal score before working with an orchestral one; analyze the structure; identify its “emotional high points”, etc. He goes on to discuss cuts, casting, the characteristics of roles and their ranges, whether voices should balance or contrast, choosing tempos, balance problems, transitions, possible traps, where singers might need help from the conductor, appropriate beat patterns and how different ones affect the interpretation, and much more. Since a principal function of the conductor is to pace the performance, he or she must determine the right rhythmic pulse to create flow. To do that, Rescigno suggests relating tempos to each other mathematically, a method that is probably controversial.

He discusses traditions, interesting tidbits, opera lore, and more. Each composer (and *bel canto*) gets a chapter. The operas are often treated in detail. It helps to have an orchestral score to follow all this, but most of what the author says can be followed if you know the opera. Scores for these operas are available on the International Music Score Library Project site (IMSLP) and/or the Dover series of scores.

In Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, Rescigno notes the distinction between the original and revised versions, and discusses performing the opera in one, two, or three acts. He characterizes his ideal singer for the Dutchman and calls the Spinning Chorus a gentle piece that should not be taken too fast. In *Die Walkure* there is a fascinating bit about how to handle two timpani in limited space and another on how to balance the final scene. For 'Wotan's farewell' he notes how the best interpretation may stress the baritone. For *Tristan and Isolde* he points out harmonic progressions and pays

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PC = Piano Concerto, VSon = Violin Sonata, F = Flute, C = Cello, Qn = Quintet, J/A = July/August, etc. arc is the Archive section; new is the Newest Music columns.

- ABEL:** Cave of Wondrous Voice (Shifrin, Sherry, Rosenberg-er) Delos 3570, S/O: Gimbel
- ABERT:** Ekkehard (Falk) Capr 5392, J/A: Locke
- AFANASIEV:** Double Qt (Rocet) Chall 72822, J/A: French
- AGNESI:** Arias (De Simone, mz) Tact 720101, M/J: Moore, C
- AGNEW:** Piano Pieces (McCallum) Tocc 496, M/A: Kang
- AHO:** Chamber Pieces (Petronen) BIS 2186, N/D: new, Boyd
- ALAIN:** Organ Pieces (Mantoux) Raven 163, S/O: Delcamp
- ALBENIZ:** P Son 3,4,5; Suites Anciennes (Stanley) Piano 10194, S/O: Kang
- Piano Pieces [4CD] (Jones) Nimb 1711, N/D: Repp
- ALBINI:** Quartets (Indago Qt) Brill 95717, M/A: new, Faro
- ALBINONI:** Cantatas (Frigato) Brill 95600, J/F: Loewen
- ALECIAN:** Armenian Quartet (Akhtamar Qt) Cypr 1681, J/A: see KOMITAS
- ALKAN:** 4 Ages Sonata; Souvenir (Viner) Piano 10209, S/O: Harrington
- P Pieces (Nosrati) Avi 8553104, M/J: Becker
- Preludes (Viner) Piano 10189, M/A: Kang
- ALWYN:** Miss Julie (Oramo SACD) Chan 5253, N/D: Locke
- Qt 6,7,8,9 (Villiers Qt) Lyrit 386, N/D: Thomson
- AMRAM:** Flute Pieces (Large) BlueG 537, J/A: Gorman
- ANET:** Violin Sonatas (Illes) Hung 32754, S/O: Brewer
- ANHALT:** Portraits; Timbre of these Times (Csaba) Centr 26419, J/F: new, Faro
- ARENSKY:** Chamber Symphony (Amsterdam Sinfonietta) Chant 37119, M/J: O'Connor
- Trios (Munich Trio) Prof 19072, J/F: Vroon
- ARNOLD, C:** PC; P Sextet (Torgersen) Simax 1344, S/O: French
- ARONIS:** William Blake Cycle; V Son (Various) Enhar 36, N/D: new, Faro
- ARTYOMOV:** Hymns; Clar Son; Duets (Various) DivA 25198, S/O: Althouse
- ASPLMAYR:** Quartets (Eybler Qt) GPN 20001, S/O: Alth
- AUBER:** Cheval de Bronze (Richter) Orfeo 986192, M/J: Locke
- Le Macon (Tenner) Orfeo 985191, M/A: Locke
- Overtures (Salvi) Naxos 574005, J/A: Fisch
- Overtures 2 (Salvi) Naxos 574006, N/D: Hecht
- AUERBACH:** 72 Angels (Rascher Sax Qt) Alpha 593, J/A: Gimbel
- AYLWARD:** Angelus (Ecco Ensemble) NewF 261, J/A: Sull
- BABAJANIAN:** Trio (Gluzman, Moser, Sudbin SACD) BIS 2372, M/A: see TCHAIKOVSKY
- BACEWICZ:** Violin Sonatas, all (Berthome-Reynolds) Muso 32, M/A: Gimbel
- BACH:** 2-Hpsi Concertos (Fortin & Frankenberg) Alpha 572, M/J: Lehman
- 2-Piano Transcriptions by Reger (Takahashi & Lehmann) Audit 23445, M/A: Harrington
- Arrangements (Chelsea Festival) Chel 0, J/F: Vroon
- Art of Fugue (Belder, hpsi) Brill 96035, J/F: Lehman
- Art of Fugue (Nikolaeva) FHR 95, S/O: Lehman
- Art of Fugue, 3 completions (Salzburg Chamber Soloists) Adil 9, S/O: French
- Brandenburgs (I Musici) Uran 121386, S/O: Althouse
- Busoni transcriptions (Michiels) FugaL 760, J/A: Becker
- Cantatas 56, 82, 158 (Greco, Luthers Bach Ens) Brill 95942, M/A: Loewen
- Cantatas 56,82,158 (Zefiro) Arcan 466, J/F: Loewen
- Cello Suites (Bertrand) HM 902293, J/F: Moore
- Cello Suites (Clement) Decca 4828523, M/A: Moore
- Cello Suites 1+2 (Deserno) Kalei 6344, M/A: see DINESCU
- Cello Suites (Malov) SoloM 343, N/D: Moore
- Cello Suites for Guitar (McFadden) Naxos 573625, N/D: Moore
- Cello Suites 4-6 (Tetzlaff) Avi 8553078, M/A: Moore
- Cello Suites (Unterman) BST 132, M/J: see BLOCK
- Cello Suites (Vectomov) Sup 4275, S/O: Moore
- Cello Suites (Weber) Prosp 1, N/D: Moore
- Cello Suites (Ylonen) Alba 444, J/F: Moore
- Chorale Preludes+ (Sherman, St Mark Seattle) Loft 1157+8, S/O: Gatens
- Christmas Oratorio (St Thomas, Leipzig) Acce 30469, N/D: Gatens
- Dances for Piano (Rubinsky) Naxos 574027, M/J: Lehman
- English Suites (Rangell) Stein 30136, M/J: Lehman
- English Suites (Zanzu) MusF 8032, S/O: Lehman
- Flute Sonatas (Labrie) Anal 8921, S/O: Gorman
- French Suites (Alard) HM 902457, S/O: Lehman
- Gamba Sonatas (Tamestit) HM 902259, J/F: Moore
- Goldberg Var (Boyadjieva) Cent 3712, J/F: Harrington
- Goldbergs (Madge, p) Zefir 9670, N/D: Lehman
- Goldberg Var (Malcolm, hpsi) Decca 4828439, M/A: Lehman
- Goldbergs (Moersch, hpsi) Cent 3721, J/A: Lehman
- Hpsi Concertos (Corti) Penta 5186837, J/A: Lehman
- Hpsi Concertos 2,4,5,8 (Suzuki SACD) BIS 2401, N/D: Lehman
- Italian Concerto; partitas (Eickhorst, p) Genui 20682, S/O: Haskins
- Italian Concerto; transcriptions (Osetinskaya) Melya 2602, M/A: Lehman
- Lute Suites (Halasz, g) BIS 2285, N/D: McCutcheon
- Magnificat (Boult) Decca 4840411, M/A: see HANDEL
- Magnificat; Cantata 63 (Chapelle Harmonique) Vers 9, M/A: Gatens
- Organ Pieces (Boucher) ATMA 2777, M/A: Gatens
- Organ Pieces (Doeseelaar, Wiersinga SACD) MDG 9062137, J/F: Gatens
- Organ Pieces at Notre Dame (Latry) LDV 69, J/F: Delc
- Organ Pieces (Suzuki) BIS 2421, M/A: Delcamp
- Organ Pieces: harmonic seasons (Tomadin) Brill 95786, J/A: Gatens
- Orgelbuchlein (Farr) Reson 10259, J/A: Delcamp
- Partitas (Hewitt) Hyp 68271, M/A: Lehman
- Partitas (Levin) Palai 17, M/J: Lehman
- Piano Pieces (Ilic) MSR 1724, J/A: Haskins
- Piano Pieces (Rangell) Stein 30111, M/J: Haskins
- Piano Dances (Rubinsky) Naxos 574026, J/F: Kang
- Sinfonias, Inventions, more (Rangell) Stein 30126, J/A: Haskins
- Solo V Son & Part (Cotik) Cent 3755, M/J: Kell+Magil
- St John Passion (Herreweghe) Phi 31, J/A: Gatens
- St Matthew Passion (Petite Band) Chall 72821, M/A: Gatens
- St Matthew Passion (Koopman) Chall 71232, M/A: Gatens
- St Matthew Passion (King's College Choir) Kings 37, J/A: Gatens

St Matthew Passion (Suzuki SACD) BIS 2500, J/A: Gatens
Toccatas (Fouccroulle, org) Ricer 140, J/A: Gatens
Toccatas (Suzuki, hpsi) BIS 2221, J/A: Lehman
Trio Sonatas, S 1030-35 (Petri+) OUR 6220673, M/J: Gorman
Trio Sonatas (Ponsford & Hill, hpsi) Nimb 6403, J/A: Lehman
Trumpet Concertos (Hofs) Berl 1305, M/J: Kilpatrick
VCs (Les Accents) Apart 206, J/F: Loewen
VCs (Debretzini) SDG 732, M/J: Kell
V Sons (Szeryng) Uran 121380, M/J: Kellenberger
WTC (Merlet) Palai 8+15, M/J: Lehman
WTC 2 (Booth) Sound 219, M/J: Lehman
Well-Tempered Consort 1 (Phantasm) Linn 618, M/J: Loewen
BACH FAMILY: Cantatas (Appl/Goebel) Hans 19081, N/D: Moore,R
Cantatas+ (Naessens) EvilP 31, M/A: Gatens
Cantatas (Vox Luminus) Ricer 401, J/F: Gatens
Hpsi Pieces (Moersch) Cent 3724, S/O: Lehman
BACH,CPE: Ob Cons (Loffler) HM 902601, J/A: Gorman
PCs (Rische) Hans 19041, J/A: Becker
P Son 4 (Jovanovic) K&K 135, J/F: see BACH,Wf
Variations (Demeyere, hpsi) Chall 72845, N/D: Lehman
BACH,JB: Orch Suites (Thuringa Bach Collegium) Audit 97770, M/A: Loewen
BACH,Wf: Polonaises (Jovanovic) K&K 135, J/F: Loew
BACHRICH: Songs, Piano Pieces, Violin (Rubio+) EDA 44, J/F: Estep
BAIRSTOW: Anthems (Tewkesbury Abbey) Regen 543, J/A: Delcamp
BALASSA: Piano Pieces 3 (Kassai) Grand 805, J/A: Gimbel
BALLARD: Lute Book 1 (Kolb) Cent 3747, M/A: Loewen
BALTAS: Christmas Pieces (Armenian Chamber Choir) Phasm 10, N/D: Greenfield
Panoria (Baltas) Phasm 16, S/O: Hecht
BANKS: Five (Ingman) Naxos 574141, M/J: Fisch
BARBER: Cello Sonata (Kim) Delos 3574, N/D: Moore
Piano Pieces (Moon) MDG 9042177, N/D: Kang
VC (Dalene/Blendulf) BIS 2440, M/J: French
BARBIERI: Barberillo de Lavapies (BBC) Cameo 9115, M/A: Fisch
Organ Pieces (Molaschi) Tact 800201, N/D: Delcamp
BARMOTIN: Piano Preludes; Variations (Williams) Grand 799, N/D: Estep
BARNSON: Vanitas (Various) Innov 20, J/F: new, Faro
BARRY: PC; Beethoven (Ades) Sign 616, S/O: see BEETHOVEN
BARTOK: Bluebeard's Castle (Gardner SACD) Chan 5237, J/F: Reynolds
Con for Orch; Suite 1 (Dausgaard) Onyx 4210, M/A: French
P Qn (Lane, Goldner Qt) Hyp 68290, M/J: Estep
P Qn (Lockenhaus) Alpha 458, J/F: Estep
BATES: Children of Adam (Smith) Ref 732, J/F: Gimbel
BEACH: P Qn (Iruzun, Coull Qt) Somm 609, S/O: Dutter
P Qn (Ohlsson, Takacs Qt) Hyp 68295, S/O: see ELGAR
BECKER: Soundpieces (Flux Qt+) NewW 80816, S/O: Sullivan
BEETHOVEN: An die Ferne Geliebte (Williams) Chan 20126, S/O: see SCHUBERT
Arias (Reiss) Onyx 4218, J/A: Reynolds
Bagatelles (Lewis) HM 902416, N/D: Becker
Bagatelles; Diabelli; Eroica Var (Maltempo) Piano 10181, S/O: Becker
Bagatelles (Willencourt) Mirar 492, J/A: Becker
Canons & Jokes (Cantus Novus Vienna) Naxos 574176, N/D: Fisch
Cantatas for Emperors (Segerstam) Naxos 574077, S/O: Moore,R
Cello Sonatas & Var (Berger) SoloM 338, N/D: Moore
Cello Sonatas & Var (Epsteins) Linn 627, M/A: Moore
Cello Sonatas & Var (Michael) Reson 10254, J/A: Moore
Choral Songs (German Youth Chamber Choir) Carus 83502, M/A: Greenfield
Clar Trio (Bedenko) Orch 102, J/F: Hanudel
Clarinet Trio; arr Septet (Herold+) Avi 8553479, N/D: Hanudel
Creatures of Prometheus (Segerstam) Naxos 573853, J/F: Althouse
Diabelli Var (Leuschner) PN 1902, M/J: Kang
Egmont (Albrecht) Orfeo 1903, J/A: French
Egmont; Minuets (Segerstam) Naxos 573956, J/F: Vroon
Flute Pieces (FlautoPiano Duo) MDG 9032135, M/J: French
Folk Songs (Various) Naxos 574174, S/O: Vroon
King Stephen (Segerstam) Naxos 574042, M/J: Althouse
Leonore (Jacobs) HM 902414, M/A: Locke
Mandolin Pieces (La Ragione) Arcan 117, J/A: Vroon
Mandolin Pieces (Martineau) Naive 7083, M/J: Vroon
Mass in C (Segerstam) Naxos 574017, J/A: Althouse
Masses; Mt of Olives (Rilling) Hans 20027, J/A: Althouse
Missa Solemnis (Masur) Berl 301459, J/A: Althouse
PC 1+2 (Giltburg/Petrenko) Naxos 574151, J/F: Vroon
PC 1+2 (Sombart) Sign 614, S/O: Becker
PC 1,3,4; VCPC (Barnaton/Gilbert) Penta 5186817, M/A: Althouse
PC 2,5,VC as PC, Choral Fantasy (Barnatan) Penta 5186824, S/O: Becker
PC 3+4 (Sombart) Sign 620, N/D: Althouse
PCs, all (Brautigam SACD) BIS 2274, M/A: Althouse
PCs, all (Goodyear) Orch 127, J/A: French
PCs (Lisiecki) DG 4837637, M/J: French
PCs, all (Mustonen) Ond 1359, S/O: Becker
PCs, all (Wallisch, fp) CPO 555329, N/D: Althouse
Piano 4-Hands (Hill & Frith) Delph 34221, S/O: Harr
Piano Pieces, all (Tirimo) Hans 19032, M/A: Kang
Piano fragments & sketches (Gallo) Naxos 574131, J/A: Becker
Piano Quartets (Hanover Trio) Genui 19673, M/A: Dutt
P Qts (Miucci,p) Dyn 7854, M/J: Dutterer
P Son 1,10,21,22 (Hewitt) Hyp 68220, M/A: Kang
P Son 1,11,12 (Brawn) MSR 1470, J/F: Repp
P Son 1,14,17 (Erdi) Hung 32828, M/A: Kang
P Son 7,18,32 (Biss) Orch 109, M/A: Becker
P Son 8,13,14 (Tung, fp) MSR 1733, S/O: Becker
P Son 8,16,17 (Schuch) Avi 8553016, N/D: Kang
P Son 12+27; Bagatelles, op 126 (Rosenbaum) Bridg 9517, J/F: Becker
P Son 14+23 with ragas (Diluka) Warnr 531883, M/J: Vroon
P Son 23+30; Bagatelles (Mahan) Stein 30161, S/O: Becker
P Son 23,30,32 (Oh-Havenith) Audit 20047, N/D: Repp
P Son 29+32 (Gorini) Alpha 591, M/J: Becker
P Sons, all (Say) Warnr 538024, J/A: Repp
Qt 1 (Eliot Qt) Genui 19661, M/A: see SZYMANOWSKI
Qt 7+8 (Ebene Qt) Erato 539602, M/J: Kell
Qt 11-16 (Brodsky Qt) Chan 20114, M/J: Thomson
Qts, all (Miro Qt) Penta 5186827, M/A: French
Ruins of Athens (Segerstam) Naxos 574076, J/A: Alth
Secular Vocal Pieces (Tamanial Ens) Naxos 574175, N/D: Althouse
Septet; Clar Trio (Berkeley Ens) Reson 10255, J/A: Han
Short Piano Pieces (Kirschner) Berl 301409, S/O: Becker
Songs 1 (Breuer, Trost+) Naxos 574071, M/A: Moore,R
Songs with orchestra (Haavisto/Segerstam) Naxos 573882, M/A: Moore,R
Songs (Schreier) Berl 301495, J/A: Moore,R

String Quintets (Cologne Chamber Players) Alpha 585, M/J: Dutterer
 String Trios (Boccherini Trio) Genui 20699, S/O: Thoms
 String Trios & Serenades (French String Trio) Dorem 8106, N/D: Thomson
 String Trios, opp 3+8 (Italian String Trio) Brill 95819, J/F: Dutterer
 Sym 1,2,3 (Ades) Sign 616, S/O: Vroon
 Sym 1+2 (Berlin Academy) HM 902420, N/D: French
 Sym 1+5 (Fischer SACD) Chanl 39719, M/A: Hecht
 Sym 3; Egmont Overture (Ballot) Gram 99210, M/J: Vroon
 Sym 3 (Herbig) Berl 301492, J/A: Vroon
 Sym 3 (Salonen) Alpha 544, J/F: Althouse
 Sym 5+6 (Haselbock) Alpha 479, S/O: Hecht
 Sym 5+6 (Janowski) Penta 5186809, M/A: Hecht
 Sym 5+7 (Manze) Penta 5186814, M/J: Hecht
 Sym 6 (Berlin Academy) HM 902425, J/A: French
 Sym 9 (Abendroth) Berl 301496, S/O: Althouse
 Sym 9 (Freiburg Baroque) HM 902431, N/D: Althouse
 Sym 9 (Haitink) BR 900180, M/A: Althouse
 Sym 9 (Suzuki SACD) BIS 2451, M/A: Althouse
 Syms, all (Vienna/ Nelsons) DG 4837071, M/J: Hecht
 Transcribed (Kodama) Penta 5186841, S/O: Kang
 Trios 1+3 (George Malcolm Trio) FHR 96, M/J: Dutterer
 Trios 3+5 (Sitkovetsky Trio SACD) BIS 2239, J/A: Vroon
 Trios 3+6 (Vienna Trio) MDG 9422155, J/A: Vroon
 Trio 4; VCPC (Beethoven Trio Bonn) Avi 8553108, J/A: Becker
 Trio 5; Sym 2 as trio (Beethoven Trio) Avi 8553111, N/D: French
 Trio 6; VCPC (Shaham-Erez-Wallfisch) Nimb 5978, J/F: Althouse
 Trio 6; Early Trios; Kakadu (Van Baerle Trio) Chall 72782, M/A: Vroon
 Trio, op 11; Sym 6 as trio (Beethoven Trio) Avi 8553114, N/D: French
 Variations (Feitmaier, p) Hans 19070, M/J: Becker
 32 Variations (Miyamoto) BlueG 503, J/A: see SCHUBERT
 VC (Gaede) Tacet 246, J/A: Althouse
 VC; Septet; Variations (Kavakos) Sony 92988, M/A: Alth
 VC; Romances (Neudauer) CPO 777559, J/A: Althouse
 VC (Smeulders) Genui 20702, N/D: Althouse
 VC; Romances (Suske) Berl 301498, J/A: Althouse
 VC (Tetzlaff/Ticciati) Ond 1334, J/F: French
 VCPC; Trio fr Septet (Van Baerle Trio) Chall 72801, J/A: Becker
 V Son 1,5,8 (Waley-Cohen) Sign 618, N/D: Magil
 V Son 4,5,8 (Ehnes) Onyx 4208, N/D: Magil
 V Son 9 (St John) Anca 144, J/A: Magil
 V Sons, 3 (Suske) Berl 301501, S/O: Magil
 V Sons, all (Francescatti, Casadesus) Prof 19029, J/F: 178, Magil
 V Sons, all (Watson, Ogata) Coro 16177, J/A: Magil
 Wellington's Victory+ (Petersson, p) Naxos 573928, J/F: Estep
 Wind Octet; Sextet (Shifrin+) Naxos 573942, M/A: Hanu
 Wind Quintet; Early PC (Becker, Maalot Qn) Avi 8553110, N/D: Hanudel
BEKEN: Turk in America (ISSA Sonus Ens) N/S 1067, M/A: Sullivan
BELLINI: Adelson & Salvini (St Cecilia) Uran 14053, M/J: Locke
BEMBO: Produzioni Armoniche (Armonia delle Sfere) Tact 640280, M/A: Moore, C
BENDA: Pygmalion (Bernolet) Ramee 1809, J/F: see RAMEAU
BEN-HAIM: Cello Concerto (Wallfisch) CPO 555273, M/J: Moore
BENNETT, R: PC; Country Dances; Aubade; Anniversarie (Wilson SACD) Chan 5244, S/O: Sullivan

BENOIT: Sym Poem (Shelley) Hyp 68264, M/J: O'Connor
BENTZON: Piano Pieces (Bentzon) DACO 859, J/A: Estep
 Tempered Piano (Salo) DaCap 8226077, M/J: Haskins
BENZECRY: VC; Clar C; Song Cycle (Boggiano) Naxos 574128, N/D: Hanudel
BERG: Lyric Suite (Veses) Apart 207, J/A: O'Connor
 Songs, all (Var) Brill 95549, M/J: Reynolds
 VC (Smeulders) Genui 20702, N/D: see BEETHOVEN
BERIO: Coro; Cries of London (Pedersen SACD) BIS 2391, S/O: Haskins
BERLIOZ: Damnation of Faust (Nelson) Erato 541735, M/A: Hecht
 Mass (Niquet) Alpha 564, M/A: Vroon
 Requiem (Nelson) Erato 543064, J/F: Reynolds
 Song arrangements w guitar (Jacques, g) ATMA 2800, M/J: Altman
 Sym Fantastique; Reverie; Death of Ophelia (Fischer) Hyp 68324, M/J: French
 Sym Fantastique; Francs-Juges Overture (Roth) HM 902644, M/A: Hecht
BERNARDI: Requiem Mass; Sinfonias (Voces Suaves) Arcan 470, M/A: Loewen
 V Sons (Solisti Ambrosiani) Uran 14056, S/O: Magil
BERNSTEIN: Mass (Davies) Capr 5370, S/O: Greenfield
 Piano Pieces, all (Tozzetti) Piano 10174, J/F: Sull
 Sym 1+2 (Lindberg SACD) BIS 2298, J/A: Estep
BERSA: Piano Pieces (Filipec) Grand 832, S/O: Repp
BIZET: Doctor Miracle (Robinson) Cameo 9113, M/A: Reynolds
BJORNSTAD: Lofoten Oratorio (Lofoten Voices) LAWO 1202, N/D: Vroon
BLACKFORD: Pieta; Winter Canticle (Carr) Nimb 6396, M/J: Greenfield
BLAND: Piano Pieces (Olson) Camb 1256, S/O: new, Faro
BLOCH: Cello Symphony (Wallfisch) CPO 555273, M/J: see BEN-HAIM
BLOCK: Step into the Void (Unterman) BST 132, M/J: Moore
BLYTON: Shoal of Fishes (Chamelion Arts) Sleev 1012, M/A: new, Boyd
BOCCHERINI: Stabat Mater (Oliveras) Enchi 2050, M/A: Gatens
BOISMORTIER: 2-Viol Sonatas (Les Deux Viols) Antes 319305, J/A: Moore
 Chamber Pieces (Cappella Enrico Stuart) Brill 96036, M/A: Brewer
 Recorder Pieces (Podluzny) RecA 26, M/J: Gorman
 V Sons (Braut) Anal 8769, M/A: Magil
BOMTEMPO: Piano Sonatas, all (Tender) Grand 801, J/F: Kang
BONDS: Ballad of the Brown King (Mitchell+) Avie 2413, M/J: Reynolds
BONELLI: Keyboard Pieces (Del Sordo) Brill 95816, J/F: Lehman
BONONCINI: John the Baptist Oratorio (Wroclaw Baroque) Acco 256, J/F: Gatens
BONPORTI: Trio Sonatas, op 1 (Labirinti Armonici) Brill 95966, S/O: Loewen
BORTOLAZZI: Mandolin Sonata (La Ragione) Arcan 117, J/A: see BEETHOVEN
BOULANGER: Songs (Phan) Avie 2414, M/J: Moore, R
BOULEZ: Marteau sans Maitre (Kawka) ColL 20447, S/O: Gimbel
BRADEN: Songs of Invisible Summer Stars (Centr 27119, J/F: new, Boyd
BRAGA SANTOS: Trio; P Qt; suites (Various) Tocc 428, N/D: Kilp
BRAHMS: Cello Sonatas (Hohti) Alba 452, S/O: Moore
 Cello Son 3 (Poltera) BIS 2167, M/J: see SCHUMANN
 Clarinet Sonatas & Trio (Ross) Cent 3760, M/A: Hanudel

Clar Trio (Bedenko) Orch 102, J/F: see BEETHOVEN
German Requiem w pianos (Bella Voce) Naxos 573952,
J/F: Greenfield
German Requiem (Harding) HM 902635, J/F: Greenfield
Handel Var (Park) Capr 5412, S/O: see SCHUBERT
Intermezzos, all (Koroliov) Tacet 256, M/A: Repp
PC 1; Ballades (Vogt) Ond 1330, M/A: Althouse
PC 2 (Falletta) Beauf 524, J/F: Althouse
PC 2 (Vogt) Ond 1346, J/A: Althouse
P Pieces, opp 76,79,116-119 (Berman) Palai 18, M/J:
Repp
Piano Pieces, opp 116-119 (Hough) Hyp 68116, M/J:
Repp
Piano Pieces (Masi) Navon 6260, M/J: Sullivan
P Qt 1, arr Schoenberg (Vandelli SACD) Chall 72831,
M/J: Althouse
P Qn; Qt 3 (Gerstein, Hagen Qt) Myrio 21, M/A: Thoms
Qts; P Qn (Strada Qt) B 26, J/A: Althouse
Sextets (Cologne Chamber Players) Penta 5186807,
J/A: Althouse
Serious Songs (Finley) Hyp 68288, J/F: see SCHUBERT
Songs (Belle Saison) B 23, M/J: Magil
Songs 8 (Burns) Hyp 33128, N/D: Althouse
Songs 9 (Tritschler) Hyp 33129, J/A: Moore,R
Songs (Wallfisch) Reson 10258, J/A: Moore,R
Sym 1+3 (Gardner SACD) Chan 5236, M/A: Althouse
Syms, PCs, Serenades (Masur) Decca 4840144, M/A:
Vroon
Viola Sonatas (Belonogov) Melya 2553, J/F: Magil
Viola Sonatas (Zhang) Cent 3686, M/A: Magil
Viola Sonatas & Trio (Willwohl) Avi 8553473, J/A: Thoms
Viola Sonatas arr Cello (Wallfisch) Nimb 5974, J/A:
Moore
VC (Liebeck) Orch 129, J/A: Althouse
VCC (Weithaus/Manze) CPO 555172, M/J: see SCHUM
V Sons (Schickedanz) Cent 3498, S/O: Magil
V Son 2+3; in E-flat (Wallin) BIS 2419, M/J: Magil
BRANDL: Sym; Sym Concertant (Griffiths) CPO 555227,
N/D: French
BRANDON: Songs, Pieces, Trio (Binkley, ob) BlueG 545,
N/D: Gorman
BRAUNFELS: Day & Night Music (Trinks) Hyp 68258,
J/F: see PFITZNER
Piano 4 Hands (Blome & Groschopp) Capr 5361, S/O:
Harrington
BRETON: Quartets (Breton Qt) Naxos 573037, J/A:
O'Connor
BRIAN: Cleopatras; Nursery Rhyme (Brabbins) Dutt 7348,
N/D: O'Connor
BRIDGE: Sextet (Cologne String Sextet) Avi 8553079,
J/F: O'Connor
BRIGHT: PC; Var (Peebles) Somm 273, J/F: Becker
BRINCKEN: Sym 4; PC (Brincken/Held) Tocc 550, M/J:
O'Connor
BRITTEN: Rejoice in the Lamb; Cantata Acad (Britten;
Malcolm) Decca 4840658, M/A: Greenfield
V Son (Huang) Cent 3681, J/F: see WALTON
BROSTROM: Crimson Seas; Theatrical (Bergby)
SwedS 1165, J/F: new, Boyd
BRUCH: 8 Pieces (Philon Trio) Anal 8923, J/A: Estep
Syms; Overtures; Entractes (Trevino) CPO 555252, N/D:
O'Connor
BRUCKNER: Mass E minor (Berlin Radio) Penta
5186774, N/D: Greenfield
Piano Pieces (Pasqualotto) Brill 95619, M/J: Haskins
Requiem (Borowicz) Acce 30474, M/A: Althouse
Sym 1 (Schaller) Prof 19084, M/J: Vroon
Sym 2 (Ballot SACD) Gram 99211, J/A: Vroon
Sym 6 (Dausgaard SACD) BIS 2404, M/J: Vroon
Sym 6 (Rattle SACD) LSO 842, J/F: Vroon
Sym 9 (Gatti) RCO 18008, M/A: Vroon

Syms (9) (Bohm, Solti, Mehta, Stein) Decca 4840204,
M/A: Vroon
BRUK: Sym 19-21 (Kupcs) Tocc 543, S/O: Gimbel
BRUMEL: Lamentations (Musica Secreta) Obsid 719,
M/A: Brewer
BRUNETTI: Lamentations; Cello Concerto (La Tempes-
tad) IBS 202019, S/O: Brewer
BULL: Violin Pieces (Folleso SACD) 2L 159, S/O: Vroon
BURGE: 24 Preludes (Chiu) Centr 27319, M/A: new, Boy
BURGER: Songs (Ross & Cameron) Spati 1, M/A:
Moore,R
BURGMULLER: Etudes (Petersson) Grand 816, J/F:
Repp
BUSONI: Bach-based Piano Pieces (Harden) Naxos
573982, J/F: Kang
Violin Sonatas (Falasca) Brill 95854, M/J: French
BUXTEHUDE: Cantatas (Bolton & Perrot) Mirar 442, J/A:
Loewen
Cantatas (Ricercar Consort) Ricer 145, S/O: Loewen
Hpsi Pieces (Kappel) DACO 852, M/J: Lehman
Membra Jesu Nostri; Anthems (Baker Festival Singers)
Amber 129, N/D: Loewen
Membra Jesu Nostri (Vatio Bissolati) Crem 19048, M/J:
Loewen
Organ pieces (Boucher) ATMA 2777, M/A: see BACH
Stradal Transcriptions (Ai, p) Tocc 534, M/J: Repp
BYRD: Anthems (Magdalena Consort) Sign 609, N/D:
150, Gatens
CACIOPPO: Metamorphoses (Various) Alb 1822, N/D:
new, Faro
CAMPAGNOLI: Flute & Violin Duets (Parrinos) Brill
95974, M/A: Gorman
CAPOREALE: Cello Sonatas (Romabarocca) Brill 95622,
J/F: Brewer
CAPOTORTI: Mass; Sacred Pieces (Petrizzella) Dig 98,
N/D: Moore,C
CARISSIMI: Iudicium Extremum Jephthe (San Felice Ens)
Bong 5211, S/O: Gatens
CARLEVARO: Guitar Pieces (Cappelli) Brill 95684, N/D:
McCutcheon
CAROLLO: Sym 3 (Vaupotic) Navon 6250, M/A: new,
Faro
CASTELBERG: Songs & Motets (Larynx Ensemble)
SoloM 334, S/O: Moore,R
CASTELNUOVO-TED: Cello Sonata (Cicchese) Brill
95812, J/A: see PIZZETTI
Importance of Being Earnest (Rose) Odys 1003, S/O:
Locke
Piano Pieces (Arciglione) Dig 100, M/A: Kang
CASTEREDE: Flute Pieces (Du Toit) Naxos 573949,
M/A: Gorman
F Pieces 2 (Du Toit) Naxos 573950, M/J: Gimbel
Flute Pieces 3 (Du Toit) Naxos 574155, N/D: Gorman
CATOIRE: Stg Qn; Trio; Andante (Catoire Ens) Chall
72792, S/O: Dutterer
CAVALLI: Ipermestra (La Sfera Armoniosa) Chall 72774,
M/A: Locke
CHABRIER: Piano Pieces (Meyer) Uran 121384, M/J:
see DEBUSSY
CHADWICK: Tam O'Shanter (Constantine) Orch 103,
J/F: see ELGAR
CHAILLOU: Legendes (Mikkola, p) FugaL 761, J/A: new,
Faro
CHARPENTIER: Orpheus (2) (Vox Luminis) Alpha 566,
M/J: Gatens
Pleasures of Versailles (Les Arts Florissants+) CPO
555283, J/F: Brewer
Te Deum; Mass w Instruments (Namur Chamber Choir)
Ricer 143, J/A: Gatens
CHAUSSON: Concert; Chanson Perpetuelle (Gollo+)
IBS 62020, N/D: Dutterer

- Poem of Love & the Sea (Lemieux) Erato 542433, M/A: see ELGAR
- Trio (Vienna Trio SACD) MDG 9422130, J/F: see RAVEL
- VC (Ambartsumian) Cent 3707, J/F: see MENDELSSOHN
- CHOPIN:** Ballades & Impromptus (Farkas) Hung 32829, J/F: Kang
- Ballades; Fantasy; Barcarolle (Luszczewski) Dux 1627, J/A: Vroon
- Ballades; Scherzos; Polonaise-Fantasy (Richter) Uran 121385, S/O: Repp
- Cello Sonata (Capucon) Erato 539226, M/J: see FRANCK
- Etudes (Batsashvili) Warnr 542786, J/F: see LISZT
- Nocturnes & Polonaises (McLean) Stone 80970, J/A: Repp
- Nocturnes (Shen) Genui 19555, J/F: Kang
- PC 1 (Sung) Berl 1096, M/A: see PADEREWSKI
- PC 2 (Senyshyn) Alb 1777, N/D: French
- PCs (Yundi) Warnr 532018, M/J: Vroon
- P Son 3; Ballade (Mikulska) Genui 20718, N/D: Repp
- P Son 3; late pieces (Russo) Stein 30125, M/A: Repp
- Piano Pieces (Costello) BlueG 513, S/O: Vroon
- Piano Pieces (Kolesnikov) Hyp 68273, J/F: Vroon
- Piano Pieces (Koroliov) Tacet 257, S/O: Vroon
- Piano Pieces (Pisarev) Acous 13619, M/J: Vroon
- Polish Fantasy; Krakowiak; Trio (Parnassus Academy) MDG 3032110, J/F: Vroon
- Preludes (Chuang) Palai 16, M/J: 156, Repp
- CIMAROSA:** Organ Sonatas (Chezzi) Brill 95781, J/A: Delcamp
- Overtures, vol 6 (Gallois) Naxos 574046, M/J: French
- CLARKE, N:** Mysteries of the Horizon (Grimethorpe Colliery Band) Naxos 574097, J/A: Kilp
- CLARKE:** Trio (Neave Trio) Chan 20139, M/A: see FARENCE
- CLEMENTI:** Sonatas (McCabe) DivA 21231, M/A: see SCARLATTI
- P Sons, opp 2,7,9,12 (Park) Naxos 573940, J/F: Kang
- Piano Sonatas (Scinaro 2CD) Sony 97348, S/O: Repp
- CLEVE:** Mass, King of Babylon (Cinquecento) Hyp 68241, S/O: Gatens
- CLYNE:** Dance (Segev) Avie 2419, N/D: Moore
- COATES:** London; Jester at Wedding; Rhapsodies (Wilson) Chan 20036, M/A: Fisch
- COKE:** Cello Sonatas (Wallfisch) Lyrit 384, M/J: Moore
- COLERIDGE:** Requiem (RSVP Voices) Coler 0, J/A: Del
- COLONNA:** Motets (Scherzi Musicali) Ricer 406, M/A: Moore, C
- COOKE:** Trio; PQ; PQn (Pleyel Ens) MPR 105, J/F: Dutt
- COOMAN:** Christmas Organ Pieces (Simmons) DivA 25196, N/D: Gatens
- Organ Pieces 13 (Cooman) DivA 25200, J/A: Delcamp
- COOPER:** Stabat Mater (Hughes & Maroney) FurAr 6823, M/J: Sullivan
- COPLAND:** Billy the Kid Suite (Nosedá SACD) NSO 1, J/A: see DVORAK
- COSSONI:** Vespers (Kesselberg Ens) SoloM 326, J/A: Moore, C
- COUPERIN:** Hpsi Pieces, all (Cuiller 3CD) HM 902377, N/D: Lehman
- Hpsi Pieces (Cybulska-Amsler) Dux 1547, J/A: Lehman
- Hpsi Pieces 6 (Kroll) Cent 3719, J/A: Lehman
- Hpsi Pieces (Vinikour) Ced 194, J/A: Lehman
- 2-Hpsi Pieces (Rovelli & Gaggini) Brill 95752, J/A: Lehm
- Nations; Viol Pieces (Dupre, Dart) Decca 4828544, M/A: Lehman
- Organ Masses (Heurtematte) Raven 153, M/A: Gatens
- CRUMB:** Metamorphoses 2 (Barone, p) Bridg 9535, N/D: Gimbel
- CUTTING:** Lute Pieces (Cerasani) Brill 96099, N/D: Loewen
- CZERNY:** Etudes, op 849 (Horvath) Grand 815, J/F: Repp
- PC; Concertino; Rondo (Tuck) Naxos 573998, M/A: Becker
- Piano Pieces 1 (Zhan) Tocc 20, J/F: Becker
- DALBERG:** Qts (Nordic Qt SACD) DaCap 6220655, N/D: Thomson
- DALL'ABACO:** Cello Sonatas (Frey) Passa 1069, J/A: Moore
- DALLAPICCOLA:** Priioniero (Nosedá SACD) Chan 5276, N/D: Reynolds
- DANDRIEU:** Magnificats (Robin) Vers 23, M/A: Gatens
- DANIELPOUR:** Passion of Yeshua (Falletta) Naxos 559885, J/A: Greenfield
- DAUGHERTY:** This Land Sings (Miller) Naxos 559889, S/O: Gimbel
- DAVIDSON:** Universal Masses (NY Virtuoso Singers) Sound 1034, M/A: Greenfield
- DAVIS:** Intolerance (Davis) CarID 30, J/F: Fisch
- DAVIS, O:** Arcadia (Bateman) Sign 590, M/A: new, Faro
- DAWSON:** Negro Folk Symphony (Fagen) Naxos 559870, N/D: Hecht
- DAYTON:** Aspects of Landscape (Various orchestras) Daytn 0, S/O: new, Faro
- DEBUSSY:** Enfant Prodigue (Fracassi) Bong 2498, J/F: see MONTEMEZZI
- Etudes; Children's Corner (Karis) Bridg 9529, M/J: Kang
- Images; Afternoon of a Faun (Elder) Halle 7554, N/D: Hecht
- Nocturnes (Ticciati) Linn 623, J/F: see DURUFLE
- Piano Pieces (Biret) IBA 571401, J/A: Harrington
- Piano Pieces, rare (Horvath) Grand 822, S/O: Kang
- Piano Pieces (Meyer) Uran 121384, M/J: Kang
- Preludes+ (Berman) Palai 14, M/J: Kang
- Preludes (Schvartz) Mode 322, N/D: Harrington
- Qt (Noga Qt) Avi 8553106, M/J: see HAHN
- DECKER:** Prelude; 7 Last Words & Triumph (Decker, Cleveland) Loft 1167, J/A: Delcamp
- Psalm Paraphrases; Freese Collection (Decker) Loft 1151, J/F: Delcamp
- DENISOV:** Symphony; Flute Concerto (Rozhdestvensky) Melya 2604, M/A: Estep
- DERLANGER:** P Qn (Lane, Goldner Qt) Hyp 68296, N/D: see DUNHILL
- DESCARRIES:** Piano Sonata & Pieces (Fung, J) Centr 27519, M/J: Kang
- Songs & Chamber Pieces (Rancourt+) ATMA 2799, S/O: Estep
- DESENCLOS:** Requiem (Flemish Radio) EvilP 32, M/J: see POULENC
- DESSAU:** Chamber Pieces (Ens Avantgarde) MDG 6132158, S/O: Haskins
- DESTOUCHES:** Isse (CMBV Singers) Ambro 53, M/J: Brewer
- DIAZ-JEREZ:** Canary Islands Sym Poems (Portal) Sign 612, S/O: new, Faro
- DINESCU:** Cello Pieces (Deserno) Kalei 6344, M/A: Moore
- DISTLER:** Sacred Choral (Berlin Vocal Ens) Cant 57007, N/D: Greenfield
- Sacred Choral (N German Chamber Choir) MDG 9022156, S/O: Greenfield
- DODGSON:** Wind Quintets (Magnard Ens) Tocc 499, J/A: Hanudel
- DOEMMING:** Cantatas (Wessel) Music 56979, N/D: Loewen
- DOHNANYI:** PCs (Gulbadamova) Capr 5387, J/A: O'Connor
- Qt 2; P Qns (Hamelin; Takacs Qt) Hyp 68238, J/F: O'Connor
- Serenade (Anima Music) Hung 32764, J/F: O'Connor
- Sym 1; Sym Minutes (Paternostro) Capr 5386, M/A: O'Connor

- Veil of Pierrette (Vienna Radio) Capr 5388, J/A: Locke
DONIZETTI: Don Pasquale (Wunderlich, Bavarian Opera) Prof 19075, J/A: Reynolds
 Qt 4,5,6 (Pleyel Qt) CPO 555240, N/D: Dutt
DOWLAND: Lachrimae (Opera Prima) Brill 95699, M/J: Brewer
 Lute Songs (Flores) Naive 8941, M/A: Brewer
DRAESEKE: Qt 1+2 (Constanze Qt) CPO 555281, S/O: Dutterer
DRAPER: Portraits (Draper, g) MSR 1719, J/F: Smith
DREYFOOS: Holocaust Songs (Baker) Amber 119, N/D: see RUTTER
DUFAY: Mass, Se la Face ay Pale (Diabolus in Musica) Alpha 495, J/F: Brewer
DUFOURT: Inspired by Goethe (Collot) W&W 910262, S/O: Repp
DUKAS: Poleucte Overture (Rophe) BIS 2432, M/J: see ROUSSEL
DUNHILL: P Qn (Lane, Goldner Qt) Hyp 68296, N/D: Dutt
DUNI: Trio Sonatas (DuniEnsemble) Brill 96023, J/F: Brewer
DUPONT: PC 3 (Shelley) Hyp 68264, M/J: see BENOIT
DUPUIS: V Son (Prouvost) EP 7, S/O: see INDY
DURANTE: Requiem (Centemeri) Brill 96027, J/A: Alth
DURON: War of the Giants (Granada Baroque) IBS 132019, J/F: Loewen
DURUFLE: Requiem (Ticciati) Linn 623, J/F: Delcamp
 Requiem: Mass (U of Northern Iowa) Cent 3715, J/F: Delcamp
DUSAPIN: Penthesilea (La Monnaie) Cypr 4654, J/A: Altman
DUSSEK: P Sons (Dadelsen) Tudor 7509, J/F: Becker
DVORAK: Biblical Songs (Pribyl) Sup 4269, J/F: see JANACEK
 PC (Kahanek) Sup 4236, M/J: Estep
 Qt 8+10 (Albion Qt) Sign 597, S/O: Dutterer
 Requiem (Kesling) Cent 3725, J/A: Reynolds
 Serenade (Anima Musicae) Hung 32824, S/O: O'Connor
 Serenade (Balkan Chamber Orch) Audit 20045, N/D: Vroon
 Stabat Mater (Soloists, piano) BR 900526, M/A: Alth
 Sym 6; 3 Overtures (Inkinen) SWR 19093, S/O: Vroon
 Sym 9 (Noseda SACD) NSO 1, J/A: French
 Sym Variations; Serenade (Davis) Decca 4829380, M/J: Vroon
 Trios, all, with Suk & Smetana (Imberger+) Gram 99206, S/O: Dutterer
 VC (Pine) Avie 2411, M/A: Vroon
DZUBAY: Quartet; All Water (Orion Qt) Innov 11, M/A: new, Faro
EBERL: Piano Sonatas (Quintavalle) Brill 95929, S/O: Kang
EISLER: Leipzig Sym; Night & Fog (Bruns) Capr 5368, J/F: Hecht
 Lieder, vol 4 (Falk) MDG 6132126, M/J: Moore,R
ELCOCK: Haven; Sym 5 (Vasiliev) Tocc 445, S/O: Gimbl
ELGAR: Cello C (Segev) Avie 2419, N/D: see CLYNE
 Falstaff (Constantine) Orch 103, J/F: O'Connor
 P Qn (Ohlsson, Takacs Qt) Hyp 68295, S/O: Dutterer
 Sea Pictures (Lemieux) Erato 542433, M/A: 206, Altman
 Sea Pictures; Music Makers (Rudge) Onyx 4206, N/D: Reynolds
 VC (Ruubel) Sorel 16, N/D: O'Connor
ELLER: White Night; Night Calls; Dawn (Elts) Ond 1335, M/A: O'Connor
ELLING: Piano Pieces (Alver) LAW0 1185, M/A: Kang
ELSNER: Chamber Pieces (Various 2CD) Dux 1555, S/O: Dutterer
ENESCO: Octet (Gringolts Qt & Meta4 SACD) BIS 2447, S/O: see MENDELSSOHN
 Piano Sonata 3; Suite (Giorgini) Piano 10184, M/A: Becker
 Trio 1 (Amatis Trio) Avi 8553477, J/A: Thomson
EOTVOS: Trisestry (Davies) Oehms 986, J/A: Altman
ERDMANN: Solo V Son (Ingolfsson) Genui 20711, S/O: see SCHNABEL
ERNST: Violin Etudes+ (Lupu) Tocc 311, J/F: Kell
ESENVALDS: Choral Pieces (Portland State Chamber Choir) Naxos 574124, S/O: Greenfield
 Sacred Choral (Pacific Lutheran University) Sign 603, M/J: Greenfield
ESPADERO: Piano Pieces (Lopez) Tocc 544, M/A: Repp
FAHRMANN: Motets (Bernius) Carus 83499, M/A: O'Con
FALLA: 3-Cornered Hat; Amor Brujo (Heras-Casado) HM 902271, J/F: French
 P Pieces (Jones) Nimb 7731, S/O: Repp
FARINA: Instrumental Pieces (Capriccio Stravagante) Ricer 139, S/O: Moore,C
FARRENC: Piano Variations & Etudes (Polk) Stein 30133, J/A: Harrington
 Sym 1; Overtures; Variations (Konig) Naxos 574094, J/A: Vroon
 Trio 1 (Neave Trio) Chan 20139, M/A: 169, Thomson
FAURE: Cello Sonatas (Magariello) Brill 95681, S/O: Moore
 Cello Sonatas (Meunier) Palai 19, M/J: Moore
 Nocturnes (Dumont) Piano 10186, S/O: Kang
 P Qns (Mozart P Qt SACD) MDG 9432162, N/D: Sull
 P Qn 1 (Wihan Qt) Nimb 6397, N/D: see FRANCK
 Piano Pieces (Lortie) Chan 20149, S/O: Kang
FEINBERG: Piano Sonatas (Hamelin) Hyp 68233, M/J: Repp
FELDER: 4 Seasons (Rose) BMOP 1069, J/A: Gimbel
 Jeu de Tarot; Netivot (Arditti Qt) Cov 91913, M/J: Haskins
FELDMAN: Patterns in a Chromatic Field (Mayr) Wergo 7382, M/J: new, Boyd
FELICE: Chamber Music for Strings & Voice (Indianapolis Qt+) Enhar 35, J/A: new, Faro
FERRABOSCO: Lyra Viol Works (Biordi) Dyn 7852, M/J: Moore
FERRER: Guitar Duets (Skogmo & Franke) Naxos 574011, J/F: Smith
FIBICH: Sym 3; Sarka; bride of Messina (Stilec) Naxos 574120, N/D: O'Connor
FINGER: V Sons (Duo Dorado) Chan 824, J/F: Magil
FINZI: Bagatelles (Fiterstein) Orch 106, M/A: see MOZART
 Clarinet Concerto (Collins SACD) BIS 2367, N/D: see VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
FLOYD: Prince of Players (Florentine Opera) Ref 736, S/O: Reynolds
FLURY: Magic Mirror (Mann) Tocc 552, M/J: O'Connor
FORREST,D: Requiem for the Living (Borowski) Dux 1573, M/J: Greenf
FRANCAIX: Clar Con (Beltrami) Brill 95994, M/A: Hanudel
FRANCK: Cello Sonata (Capucon) Erato 539226, M/J: Moore
 Chorales; G Piece Symphonique (Patrick) Guild 7816, M/A: Delcamp
 Organ Pieces (Challenger) Salis 0, M/J: Delcamp
 P Qn (Wihan Qt) Nimb 6397, N/D: Dutterer
 Piano Pieces (Lugansky) HM 902642, S/O: Harrington
 Psyche; Chasseur Maudit; Eolides (Tingaud) Naxos 573955, S/O: Vroon
 Redemption, complete (Fournet) Brill 96002, N/D: Vroon
 Sym Var; Preludes; Djinns (Biret) IBA 8571403, M/J: Becker
 Sym; Sym Var (Gimeno SACD) Penta 5186771, N/D: Alt-house
 V Son (Carmina Qt) MDG 6502167, S/O: see SZYMAN
 V Son (St John) Anca 144, J/A: see BEETHOVEN
FRANZ: Songs (Burns, Searle) MPR 106, M/J: Althouse
FREDDI: Vespers (Savan) Reson 10245, J/F: Moore,C

FRESCOBALDI: Arias & Canzoni (Clematis) Ricer 149, S/O: Moore, C
FRID: Sym 3; Inventions; Va+PC (Gazarian) Capr 5353, J/F: O'Connor
FROBERGER: Fantasias & Canzonas (Charlston, clav) DivA 25204, S/O: Lehman
FUCHS, H: New Beginning (NeueM 301274, J/F: new, Faro
FURSTENTHAL: Chamber Pieces 2 (Rossetti Ens) Tocc 542, J/A: O'Connor
GAL: Viola Pieces (Pakkala) Tocc 535, J/F: Magil
Vocal Pieces (Borealis) Tocc 509, N/D: Althouse
GALUPPI: Amante di Tutte (Piacenza) Bong 2318, J/F: Locke
GARSON: Pathetique Var (Schuch) Avi 8553016, N/D: see BEETHOVEN
GATTO: Making of Americans (Jack Qt+) NewF 265, N/D: new, Boyd
GAUBERT: F Pieces (Pagnini) Verm 40023, M/J: Gorm
GELANIAN: Cello Sonata; P Son (Frasse-Sombet) Mague 358432, M/A: Moore
GEMINIANI: Concerti Grossi (Concerto Koln) Berl 1285, M/J: Brewer
GERNSHEIM: Songs (Gann) Genui 19662, J/A: Moore, R
GERSHWIN: American in Paris (Langree) FanF 16, M/A: Hecht
Piano Pieces (Lent) Espr 0, J/A: Harrington
Piano Pieces (Mahana) Stein 30132, J/A: Becker
Rhaps; PC: Rhaps 2; I Got Rhythm (Licad) DACO 869, S/O: Estep
Rhapsody 2; Overtures (Marshall) Avi 8553007, N/D: French
GERVASIO: Mandolin Sonatas (Giatintucci) Tact 720702, M/A: Lehman
GESUALDO: Madrigals I+II (Arts Florissants) HM 8905307, M/A: Moore, C
Madrigals for 5 (Exaudi Ens) W&W 259, J/F: Moore, C
GILARDINO: Guitar Quartets (Santorsola Qt) Brill 95911, J/F: Smith
GINASTERA: Harp C; Var Concertantes (Harth-Bedoya) LAWO 1182, M/A: Sull
GIPPS: PC (Peebles) Somm 273, J/F: see BRIGHT
GIULIANI: Guitar Pieces (El Khouri) Dyn 7855, S/O: McCutcheon
Violin & Guitar (Sacco & Dieci) Brill 95735, J/F: Smith
GLANERT: Oceane (German Opera Berlin) Oehms 985, J/A: Altman
GLASS: American Four Seasons (Bern/ Bach) Naxos 559865, M/J: Faro
King Lear (Composer) OM 141, J/A: Haskins
P Pieces (Deutekom) OM 6052, M/J: new, Boyd
PC 2; Pieces (Horvath) Grand 817, M/J: Faro
GLINKA: Clarinet Trio (Punzi) Brill 95871, J/A: see SCHUMANN
GLUCK: Orfeo & Euridice (Davies, Bevan, Nuova Musica) Penta 5186805, M/A: Altman
GODOWSKY: Chopin Etudes (Delucchi) Piano 10182, J/F: Becker
Chopin Etudes (Scherbakov) MPolo 8225372, S/O: Kng
Piano left hand (Ross) Cent 3754, S/O: Becker
GOETZ: Trio (Trio Fontane) SoloM 336, S/O: see HUBE
GOLDNER: Modern Suites 2,4,6 (Beckman & True, p) Tocc 527, J/A: Harrington
GOLESTAN: V Son (Golcea) Genui 19668, J/F: see STRAUSS
GOMES, C: Lo Schiavo (Cagliari/Neschling) Dyn 7845, M/A: Locke
GOMES, P: Chamber Works (Var) Naxos 579029, M/J: Hanudel
GOOSSENS: Sym 2; VC (Davis, A SACD) Chan 5193, M/J: O'Connor

GORDON, G: Cello Concerto; Fathoms; Nightingale (Mol-drup) BIS 2330, S/O: Moore
GORDON, R: Ellen West (Zetlan & Gunn) BST 139, N/D: Vroon
GORECKI: Qt 3; 2-V Son (Tippett Qt) Naxos 574110, S/O: Dutterer
GOSSEC: Symphonies (Gaudenz) CPO 555263, J/F: French
GOTOVAC: Ero the Joker (Croatian & Munich Radios) CPO 555080, N/D: Locke
GOULD: Quartet (Acies Qt) Gram 99028, M/J: Sullivan
GOUNOD: Faust (Rousset) BruZ 37, J/F: Reynolds
GRADENER: Violin Concertos (Pollick) Tocc 528, M/A: O'Connor
GRANADOS: Goyescas (Dichamp) Brill 96067, S/O: 127, Kang
GRANDI: Motets+ (Accademia d'Arcadia) Arcan 464, J/F: Gatens
GRAUN: Passion Oratorium (Schwarz) CPO 555270, J/F: Loewen
GRAUPNER: Passion Cantatas III (Heyerick) CPO 555230, J/F: Loewen
GREGSON: Brass pieces (London Brass) Chan 20127, S/O: Kilpatrick
GREIF: Chants de l'Ame (Garnier+) B 24, M/J: Sullivan
GRETRY: Raoul Barbe-Bleue (Wahlberg) Apart 214, M/A: Locke
GREVE: Palace of the Dreaming+ (Greve) Navon 6257, M/A: Kilpatrick
GRIEG: Lyatrickric Pieces (Booth, s; Glynn, p) Avie 2403, J/F: Oberoi
V Sons (Urioste) Orch 126, S/O: Magil
GRILL: Elements; In Praise of Reason; Mystical (Camerata Philadelphia) Innov 47, J/A: new, Faro
GRISEY: Songs (Hannigan) Alpha 586, J/A: see HAYDN
GRONAU: Organ Pieces (Szadejko) MDG 9062139, M/J: Gatens
GROSLOT: PC; CC; HpC (Composer) Naxos 579057, M/A: Gimbel
GROVEN: Sym 1+2 (Szilvay) Naxos 573871, S/O: O'Connor
GUINJOAN: Piano Pieces (Calderon de Castro) IBS 102019, M/J: Haskins
GULDA: Quartet (Acies Qt) Gram 99028, M/J: see GOULD
GUNDERMANN: Kreuzleich (Krahner) Genui 19657, J/F: Loewen
GUNNING: Sym 2,10,12 (Woods) Sign 593, M/J: Gimbel
VC; CC; Birdflight (Composer) Sign 621, N/D: Moore
GURDJIEFF: Guitar transcriptions (Herbig) BIS 2435, M/A: Smith
HADLEY: Cello Pieces (Buchholz) Cent 3780, N/D: Moore
HAHN: Qt 2 (Noga Qt) Avi 8553106, M/J: Dutterer
Songs (Prokofieva) Stone 80888, S/O: Fisch
HANCOCK: Raptures; VC (Liebeck/Parikian) Orch 111, M/A: new, Faro
HANDEL: Agrippina (DiDonato, Pomo d'Oro) Erato 533658, J/A: Locke
Alto Cantatas (Zazzo) Inven 1002, M/A: Reynolds
Arias with cello (Romabarrocca) Brill 95622, J/F: see CAPORALE
Brockes Passion (Egarr) AAM 7, M/A: Loewen
Con Grossi op. 6: 7-12 (Alte Musik Berlin) Penta 5186738, M/J: Gatens
Gamba Pieces (Aziz) FHR 91, S/O: Moore
Messiah (Boult) Decca 4840411, M/A: Vroon
Messiah (Griffith) Sign 610, S/O: Vroon
Trio Sonatas+ (Apotheose) IBS 162019, J/F: Loewen
HANDL: Motets (Musica Nova) Palai 10, M/J: Loewen
HARBACH: Luther Suite; Arabesque; Early American (Angus) MSR 1672, J/A: Gimbel

HARBISON: North & South; Mirabar Songs (Oberlin Ensemble) Oberl 1902, J/A: Gimbel
Songs (Gibbon) Alb 1818, S/O: Haskins

HARSANYI: Piano Pieces (Koukl) Grand 806, M/J: Beck
Piano Pieces 2 (Koukl) Grand 807, S/O: Haskins

HART: Violin Sonatas (Collins) Tocc 470, M/A: Magil

HARTMANN, JPE: Violin Suite; Character Pieces (Telmanyi) DACO 853, M/J: Thomson

HATZIS: Lamento; Ecstasy (Slean/Hatzis) Centr 27820, M/J: new, Boyd

HAYDN: Canzonettas (Horak) Gram 99212, S/O: Fisch
Cello Concertos (Clein) Oehms 1895, N/D: Moore
Lyra Concertos (Trondheim Soloists) Penta 5186823, M/J: see STAMITZ
Mass 14, Harmonie; Sym 99 (Christophers) Coro 16176, M/A: Vroon
Mass 5, Cellensis (RIAS Chamber Choir) HM 902300, M/A: Gatens
Organ Concertos (Quinn) Chan 20118, M/A: Althouse
P Son 32,37,40,47,48.49 (McCawley) Somm 602, J/F: Repp
P Son 35,37,40,49,50 (O'Connor) Stein 30110, M/A: Repp
Qts, op 17 (Leipzig Qt) MDG 3072141, M/J: Dutterer
Qts, op 20:1,4,6 (Dudok Qt) Reson 10262, S/O: Thomson
Qts, op 20:2,3,5 (Dudok Qt) Reson 10248, J/F: Vroon
Qts, op 76:1-3 (Chiaroscuro Qt SACD) BIS 2348, S/O: Thomson
Qts, opp 71+74 (London Haydn Qt) Hyp 68230, J/F: Althouse
Qts, various (Hanson Qt) Apart 213, M/J: Thomson
Scottish Songs (Poker Club Band) BIS 2471, M/J: Moore,R
7 Last Words (Pellizzari, org) Brill 95889, S/O: Delcamp
Sym 28,43,63 (Giardino Armonico) Alpha 682, M/J: Vroon
Sym 49 (Hannigan) Alpha 586, J/A: Vroon
Trio 28 (Gaspard Trio) Avi 8553105, N/D: see SCHUBERT
VPC (Ivakhiv, Pompa-Baldi) Cent 3742, S/O: French

HELBIG: Piano Pieces (Poetzsch) NeueM 301387, J/A: Vroon

HELLINCK: Missa Surrexit (Brabant Ens) Hyp 68304, M/J: 170, Loewen

HENRIQUES: Piano Pieces (Bjorkoe) DaCap 8226150, J/F: Kang
Piano Pieces (Trondhjem) DACO 840, J/F: Kang

HENSEL: Biblical Oratorio (Wolf) Carus 83468, M/A: Greenfield
Songs; Qt (Musica Vitae) DB 191, J/F: see MENDELSSOHN
Trio (Rodberg Trio) Alba 451, S/O: see MENDELSSOHN

HENZE: Contrabass Concerto; Trauer-ode (Roccatò) Wergo 7391, S/O: Moore
Floss der Medusa (Eotvos) SWR 19082, J/F: Gimbel
Prince of Homburg (Stuttgart Opera) Capr 5405, N/D: Locke

HERSKEDAL: Behind the Wall (Meland, Robak, Hjertvik) Naxos 574189, J/A: new, Boyd

HERTEL: Woodwind Chamber Music (Concert Royal Cologne) Music 56958, N/D: Gorman

HERZOGENBERG: Piano Duos (Duo Nadan) Brill 95647, S/O: Harrington

HESSE: Toccata; Elegy; Epigram (Various) Music 55725, M/A: new, Faro

HETU: Trombone Concerto; PC 2 (Trudel) ATMA 2793, S/O: Kilp

HEWITT: Piano Pieces, all (Johnson) Cent 3736, S/O: Haskins

HINDEMITH: Kammermusik (4) (Eschenbach) Ond 1341, S/O: Kilpatrick
Ludus Tonalis (Laretei) Decca 4840142, M/A: Repp

HO: Monks King—Centr 28020, N/D: new, Vroon

HOFMANN: FCs 3 (Grodd) Naxos 573967, J/F: Gorman

HOLBROOKE: Sextet (Cologne String Sextet) Avi 8553079, J/F: see BRIDGE

HOLLER: Organ Pieces (Rhompson) Raven 161, N/D: Delcamp

HOLMES: Songs (Loilier) Mague 358428, M/J: Reynolds

HOLST: Planets; Perect Fool (Stern SACD) Ref 146, M/A: Kilpatrick
Songs (Bevan, Williams) Albio 38, M/A: see VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

HOMILIUS: Christmas Cantatas (Cologne Academy) CPO 555278, N/D: Loewen

HOTTER: Chamber Pieces (Boston Musica Viva) Alb 1820, S/O: new, Faro

HOVHANESS: Cello Pieces (Gullans) Alb 1805, J/A: Moore

HOWELLS: Mass, Sabrinensis (Hill) Hyp 68294, N/D: Delcamp

HUBER: Trio (Trio Fontane) SoloM 336, S/O: Dutterer

HUGHES: Cuckmere; Sinfonia (Composer) Met 28597, J/A: new, Faro

HUMMEL: PC in A; VPC (Commellato) Brill 95894, M/J: Repp
VPC (Ivakhiv, Pompa-Baldi) Cent 3742, S/O: see HAYDN

HUNDSNES: Clavinatas (Mikkola) Grand 800, M/J: new, Boyd

HUTTER: Choral Pieces (Minnesota Choral Artists) Naxos 559868, J/F: Greenfield

HYMAN: Organ Pieces (Saunders) ProOr 7269, J/F: Delcamp

ICHMOURATOV: Octet; Romances; Con Grosso 1 (Bushkov) Chan 20141, J/F: new, Faro
Overtures; Ruins Symphony (Tremblay) Chan 20172, N/D: new, Faro

INDY: V Son (Prouvost) EP 7, S/O: 140, Magil

INGEGNERI: Mass, Laudate Pueri (Girton College Choir) Tocc 556, J/A: Gatens

IPPOLITOV-IVANOV: 2-Piano Transcriptions (Ivanova & Zagarinsky) Hans 19039, M/A: Harrington

IRIBÁRREN: Sacred Pieces (Il Narvalo) Brill 95859, S/O: Brewer

ISAAC: Presulem Ephebeatum Mass (Cappella Mariana) Sup 4273, J/F: Brewer

IVES: Songs (Wagner) MDG 6132178, N/D: Sullivan
Sym 3+4 (Thomas SACD) SFS 74, M/A: Hecht

JACOB: Horn Concerto (West Chester Wind Ens) Mark 54389, J/F: 183, Kilp

JACOB, J: Sym 5; Sanctuary 1+final (Various conductors) Navon 6248, J/F: new, Faro

JACQUET: Violin Sonatas (Les Dominos) Ricer 142, J/A: Brewer

JANACEK: Diary of One Who Vanished (Pribyl) Sup 4269, J/F: Moore,R
Piano Pieces (Ades) Sign 600, S/O: Haskins
Qt 1 (Navarra Qt) Orch 135, N/D: see SCHUBERT

JANCEVSKIS: Choral Pieces (Riga Cathedral) Hyp 68328, M/J: Greenfield

JAQUES-DALCROZE: Piano Pieces 3 (Pares) Tocc 540, M/A: Harrington

JENKINS: Miserere (Layton) Decca 4818580, M/A: Greenfield

JENNER: Songs (Bastlein) Naxos 551422, N/D: Moore,R

JOHANSSON: Short Pieces (Echo Collective) DG 4837218, M/A: Gimbel

JOHANSEN: PC; Sym Var; Epigrams (Triendl) CPO 555246, N/D: O'Connor

JOLIVET: FC 2; Flute Pieces 2 (Boulegue) Naxos 574079, N/D: Gorman

JONGEN: Songs (Defrise) MusW 1993, M/J: Altman

JOSQUIN: Mass, Mater Patris (Tallis Scholars) Gimel 52, J/F: Brewer

KABALEVSKY: Piano Preludes (Korstick) CPO 555272, N/D: Harr
KAKABADSE: Odyssey; Songs (Royal Holloway Choir) DivA 25188, M/A: new, Faro
KALABIS: Piano Pieces (Kahanek) Sup 4259, J/F: Sull
KALKBRENNER: Etudes (Hay) Piano 10190, M/J: Beck
KANCHELI: Piano Miniatures (Vatchnadze) Piano 10198, M/J: Gimbel
KAPSBERGER: Theorbo Pieces (Jacobs) Metro 1093, J/F: Lehman
Theorbo Pieces (Nordberg) BIS 2417, J/F: Lehman
Villanelles (KasperGirls) Muso 37, S/O: Loewen
KAPUSTIN: Sax Qts (Clair-Obscur Qt) Capr 5369, J/A: Hanudel
KARCHIN: Jane Eyre (Composer) Naxos 669042, J/F: Altman
KAUFMANN: Chamber Pieces (ARC Ensemble) Chan 20170, N/D: Thomson
KAYSER: Horn Concerto; Trio (Linder) DACO 857, M/J: Kilp
KEELEY: Sym 2; Var; FC (Mann) Tocc 462, N/D: Gimbel
KEISER: Theatrical Music (Capella Orlandi Bremen) CPO 555068, N/D: French
KELLY: Etudes; Monographs (Wilson) Tocc 524, N/D: Becker
KERNIS: Color Wheel; Sym 4 (Guerrero) Naxos 559838, N/D: Gimbel
Sym 2: FC; Air (Slatkin, Alsop) Naxos 559830, J/F: Gimbel
KHACHATRYAN: Piano Sonatas (Composer) Alb 1795, M/A: Gimbel
KHACHATURIAN: Masquerade & Spartacus Suites (Kitaenko) Oehms 471, N/D: see PROKOFIEFF
Piano Sonata & Pieces (Sughayer) BIS 2436, M/A: Harr
Spartacus Suite (Petrenko) Onyx 4211, J/F: Vroon
VC (Pine) Avie 2411, M/A: see DVORAK
VC: Rhaps (Weithaas) CPO 555093, J/A: French
KHAN: Strings for Peace (Isbin) Zoho 202004, S/O: McCutcheon
KIEL: Cello Pieces (Zentgraf) MDG 6122175, N/D: Moore
KIM: Music—Gramo 0, N/D: new, Vroon
KLEMENT: Schutten—Gramo 1, N/D: new, Vroon
KNABLE: Song of the Redwood Tree (Pool) MSR 1749, J/A: Gorman
KNECHT: Nature Symphony (Berlin Academy) HM 902425, J/A: see BEETHOVEN
KNEHANS: Backwards from Winter (Weusten) Ablaz 54, N/D: new, Boyd
KODALY: Cello Pieces & Duo (Steckel) Avi 8553272, J/F: Moore
KOECHLIN: Cello Sonata (Meunier) Palai 19, M/J: see FAURE
Sur les Flots Lointaines (Rosner) Odrad 364, M/J: see POULENC
KOMITAS: Miniatures (Akhtamar Qt) Cypre 1681, J/A: Thomson
KOPPEL: PC 3; P Pieces; Pastorale (Koppel) DACO 856, J/A: O'Connor
KORNGOLD: Orchestral [4CD] (Richter) Capr 7350, J/A: O'Connor
P Qn (Lane, Goldner Qt) Hyp 68290, M/J: see BARTOK
Symphony; Variations (Wilson SACD) Chan 5220, J/F: O'Connor
KOSHKIN: Guitar Preludes & Fugues (Selyutina) Naxos 579058, J/A: new, Boyd
KOZELUCH: Joseph; Mass in C+ (Stilec) Naxos 573929, M/A: Greenfield
Symphonies 2,9,10,11 (Stilec) Naxos 574047, J/A: Hect
KREIN: Chamber Pieces (Various) Tocc 546, M/A: Dutt
KREISLER: V Pieces (Park) Cent 3816, N/D: Vroon
KREUTZER: VC 1,6,7 (Breuninger) CPO 555206, M/J: French

KROMMER: Sym 6+9 (Griffiths) CPO 555337, N/D: Alth
KROUSE: Nocturnes (Rivera+) Naxos 559877, N/D: new, Faro
KULJERIC: Croatian Requiem (Repusic) BR 900331, N/D: Greenf
KUULA: Piano Pieces (Oksanen) Alba 445, M/A: Kang
LABOR: P Qn; P Qt (Triendl+) Capr 5390, M/A: Dutt
LAHTI: Division (Division) Alb 1779, J/F: new, Boyd
LAITMAN: Secret Exit; Butterfly; Body (Soprano & clarinet) Naxos 559890, N/D: Gimbel
Songs (Various) Naxos 559872, J/A: Gimbel
LAMBERT: Songs; P Duet (Geer) Somm 614, S/O: see WALTON
LANG: The Loser (Bang on a Can) Canta 21155, M/J: Vroon
LANGGAARD: Antichrist Prelude (Dausgaard) SSM 1023, J/F: O'Connor
LEBEGUE: Hpsi Pieces (Alvarez) Brill 95671, J/A: Lehm
LECOCQ: Dr Miracle (Robinson) Cameo 9113, M/A: see BIZET
LECOINTRE: Cello Suite (Holtrop) Aliud 109, M/J: see STAM
LEDROIT: St John Passion (Reimer) Skarb 2194, M/A: Gatens
LEFREK: Gloriosa (Gloriosa Trio) Cent 3744, M/J: see SAINT-SAENS
LEGRENZI: Vocal & instrumental pieces (Zenit Ens) Brill 96006, M/J: Kilp
LEHAR: Merry Widow (Frankfurt Opera) Oehms 983, J/F: Fisch
LEONCAVALLO: Pagliacci (Graz/Lyniu) Oehms 987, J/A: see MASCAGNI
LERDAHL: Arches; Qy 4; Bagatelles (Daedalus Qt) Bridg 9522, J/A: Haskins
LESHNOFF: Clar & Bassoon Concerto (Honeck SACD) Ref 738, S/O: see TCHAIKOVSKY
Quartets 3+4; Dances (Carpe Diem Qt) MSR 1765, N/D: Gimbel
LEVY: Violin Pieces (Levy+) HM 902506, J/F: new, Boyd
LIGETI: Musica Ricercata (Prisuelos) IBS 182019, J/A: see SHOSTAKOVICH
LINDBERG: Accused; Episodes (Lintu) Ond 1345, S/O: Gimbel
LINDROTH: Wilfred Owen Songs (Eleby) Sterl 3005, M/A: Moore,R
LINKE: Chamber Pieces & Wind Concertos (Cologne Concert Royal) Music 56972, M/A: Loewen
LIPKIN: Chamber Pieces (Nash Ensemble) DivA 25202, N/D: Faro
LIPTAK: PC; Constellations (McCormick) Innov 31, J/F: new, Faro
LISZT: Ballade; Legends; Benediction (Filjak) Prof 18074, M/J: Vroon
Dante Sonata; Mephisto 1 (Shen) Genui 19555, J/F: see CHOPIN
Dante Symphony; Tasso; Kunsterfestzug (Karabits) Audit 97760, J/A: Hecht
Don Juan; Jeux d'eaux (Li) Warnr 537957, M/A: see TCHAIKOVSKY
Opera Transcriptions (Hamelin) Hyp 68320, N/D: Kang
Organ Pieces 1 (Ferjencikova SACD) MDG 9062140, N/D: 128, Delcamp
Petrarch Sonnets (Schuen, bar) Avi 8553472, M/J: Moore,R
PC 2 (Moura Castro) DMC 3, M/J: see RACHMANINOFF
PC 2 (Senyshyn) Alb 1777, N/D: see CHOPIN
P Pieces (Batsashvili) Warnr 542786, J/F: Estepe
P Pieces 54 (Jando) Naxos 574059, M/J: Kang
P Son & Consolations (Chuang) Palai 16, M/J: see CHOPIN
P Sonata (Mikulska) Genui 20718, N/D: see CHOPIN

P Son; St Francis Legends (Moog) Onyx 4195, M/A: Becker
P Son (Oh-Havenith) Audit 20043, M/A: see SCHUBERT
Poetic & Religious Harmonies (Waleczek) Naxos 573773, M/A: Vroon
Prometheus; Hamlet; Mazeppa; Mephisto (Munchinger) Decca 4828427, M/A: Hecht
Schubert Transcriptions 8 (Williams) Sign 838, N/D: Repp
Songs 6 (Kletter) Hyp 68235, S/O: Moore,R
Via Crucis (Estonian Phil Chamber Choir) Ond 1337, J/F: Greenfield
LITTA: Trilogy (Then-Berge, v) Genui 20690, S/O: O'Connor
LO MUSCIO: Piano Pieces (Padova) Brill 95952, J/F: new, Boyd
LOCATELLI: VCs, op 3 (Conti) Tact 691280, M/J: Loewen
LOCKLAIR: Sym 2; Organ Concerto; Phoenix (Trevor) Naxos 559860, J/F: Gimbel
LOEB: Distant Carillons+ (Factory Seconds Brass) Cent 3802, N/D: Kilpatrick
Lyric Trombone (Avitsur) Cent 3727, J/A: Kilp
Wind Pieces (Various) Cent 3803, N/D: new, Boyd
LOPEZ: Sym 1; Bel Canto (Harth-Bedoya) MSR 1737, J/F: new, Faro
LORENZ: King Mangoberry; Pataruco (Mich State Winds) BlueG 517, M/A: Kilp
LOS: Lute Suites (Lindberg) BIS 2462, M/J: Loewen
LUKASZEWSKI: At; Trio; Choral Pieces (Various) Dux 1515, S/O: Gimbel
LULLY: Isis (Talents Lyriques) Apart 216, M/A: Locke
Te Deum; De Profundis; Dies Irae (Cappella Mediterranea) Alpha 444, J/F: Gatens
LUND: Poetic Etudes (Alver) LAWO 1196, S/O: Kang
LUPI: Sacred Pieces (Brabant Ens) Hyp 68304, M/J: see HELLINCK
LUTOSLAWSKI: Sym 2+3 (Lintu) Ond 1332, J/A: Sulliv
LYMBURGIA: Music (Miroir de Musique) Ricar 402, J/F: Loewen
MACDONALD: Modules+ (Composer+) CompC 48, J/F: new, Boyd
MACHAUT: Single Rose (Orlando Consort) Hyp 68277, J/F: Brewer
MACK: Lucinda & the Flowers (SF Opera Scouts) Alb 1811, N/D: Reynolds
MACKAY: Time Release; Urban Ocean (Rose) BMOP 1068, M/J: Gimbel
MACMILLAN: Miserere (Clare College Choir) HM 905323, S/O: see PART
Sym 5 (Christophers) Coro 16179, S/O: Gimbel
MAGARELLI: Mass & Motets (Magarelli) Dig 99, N/D: Greenfield
MAGNARD: Syms 1+2 (Bollon) Naxos 574083, M/J: Hecht
Sym 3+4 (Bollon) Naxos 574082, J/F: Hecht
MAHLER: Das Lied (Ferrier, Svanholm/Walter 1948) Somm 5007, M/J: Moore,R
Das Lied (Romberger, Smith/Fischer SACD) Chani 40020, N/D: Althouse
Ruckert; Kindert (Braun) Smith 36901, J/F: Moore,R
Sym 1 (Vanska SACD) BIS 2346, J/F: Hecht
Sym 1 (Leinsdorf) Decca 4840184, M/J: Hecht
Sym 2 (Feltz) Drey 21116, J/F: Althouse
Sym 4 (Krips) Cameo 9112, J/F: Althouse
Sym 4 (Vanska SACD) BIS 2356, M/A: Althouse
Sym 6 (Netopil) Oehms 1716, J/A: Hecht
Sym 7 (Vanska SACD) BIS 2386, N/D: Hecht
Sym 8 (Fischer,A) Avi 8553474, M/J: Althouse
MAKAN: Dream Lightly; If We Knew the Sky (Rose) BMOP 1066, J/F: Gimbel
MALCYS: Blackthorn Eyes; Hyacinth (Ipp-Ivanov Qt) Naxos 574073, J/A: see VASKS
MALIPIERO: Piano Pieces (Hirose) Strad 37133, S/O: Kang
Sym 6; Ritrovati; Studies (Iorio) Naxos 574173, J/A: O'Connor
MANNA: Sacred Pieces (Lux Animae) Uran 14052, M/A: Greenfield
MARAIS: Gamba Suites (Karpeta) Acco 259, M/J: Moore
Pieces de Viole (Smith) Reson 10244, J/F: Moore
Pieces en Trio (Ricercar Consort) Ricar 154, S/O: Loew
Viol Pieces (Corriveau) ATMA 2785, S/O: Moore
MARCHAND: Organ Pieces (Ponsford) Nimb 6390, M/A: Gatens
MARTINI: Azione Teatrale (Euridice Chorus) Tact 701307, S/O: Fisch
MARTINU: PC 4 (Kahanek) Sup 4236, M/J: see DVOR
Trios (Martinu Trio) Music 56970, J/F: Dutterer
MASCAGNI: Cavalleria Rusticana (Graz) Oehms 987, J/A: Reynolds
Cavalleria Rusticana (Janowski) Penta 5186772, J/A: Reynolds
MASCITTI: Violin Sonatas (Vanvitelli Qt) Arcan 473, S/O: Thomson
MASLANKA: Sym 4 (West Chester Wind Ens) Mark 54389, J/F: see JACOB
Sym 10; O Earth O Stars (Fansler) Navon 6261, M/A: Kil
MASSENET: Don Cesar de Bazan (Aedes Ens) Naxos 660464, N/D: Locke
Songs (Silver) Somm 600, J/F: Oberoi
Thais (Toronto/Davis) Chan 5258, N/D: Reynolds
MATHIAS: Choral (St John's) Naxos 574162, M/J: Greenfield
Songs & Chamber music (Williams, bar) Naxos 574053, M/J: new, Boyd
MATSUSHITA: Choral Pieces (Saarbrücken Chamber Choir) Carus 83505, M/J: Greenfield
MAW: Spring Music; Solo V Son (Mackenzie/Boughton) Lyrit 385, J/A: Gimbel
MAYR: Le Due Duchesse (Hauk) Naxos 660422, S/O: Locke
Mass in E-flat (Hauk) Naxos 574057, J/A: Greenfield
MAYR,R: Sacred Antiphons (Ars Antiqua Austria SACD) Chall 72828, M/J: Gatens
MAYSEDER: Mass; VC (Christian) Gram 99200, J/A: Alt-house
Trios; V Son 2 (Lissy, Grun, Gelleva) Gram 99197, M/J: Dutterer
MCCORMACK: You are Evaporating (Klangforum) Kairo 18003, N/D: new, Vroon
MCDONALD: Piano Pieces (Holzman) Bridg 9528, J/A: Estep
MCDOWELL: Girl from Aleppo (National Children's Choir, UK) Conv 54, S/O: Greenfield
MCENCROE: Chamber Orchestra Pieces 2 (Armored) Navon 6269, M/J: new, Faro
MCKINLEY,EM: Qt 8; Trio 1; Letter to Say I Love You (Janacek Trio+) Navon 6264, M/A: Moore
MEALOR: Choral Pieces (Same Stream) GIA 1078, M/J: Vroon
Choral Anthems: Blessing (Voce) Sign 613, J/A: Delcam
MEDTNER: Skazki; Piano Pieces (Sama) 2L 156, M/A: Estep
MELANI: Concerti Spirituali (Gran Principe) Brill 95970, J/A: Moore,C
MENDELSSOHN: Cello Sonatas (Moser) Penta 5186781, J/F: Moore
Clarinet Chamber pieces (Zingales) Brill 96081, J/A: Hanudel
Early VC; VPC (Ivakhiv) Brill 95733, M/J: Althouse
Octet (Gringolts Qt & Meta4 SACD) BIS 2447, S/O: French
Octet (Henschel Qt) SoloM 332, N/D: see SCHUBERT
Octet; Qt 1 (Merel & Castalian Qts) SoloM 293, J/F: Dutt

Octet (Roctet) Chall 72822, J/A: see AFANASIEV
 Organ Sonatas (Davidsson) Loft 1166, M/A: Delcamp
 PC 1; VPC (Lerner) Merid 84656, J/A: Althouse
 Piano Pieces, early (Monteiro) Naxos 573946, J/F: Kang
 Songs without Words, all (De May) Pavan 7591, S/O: Estep
 Trio 2 (Rodberg Trio) Alba 451, S/O: Althouse
 V Sons (Kantorow) MDG 6502153, S/O: French
 VPC (Musica Vitae) DB 191, J/F: Althouse
 VPC (Ambartsumian) Cent 3707, J/F: French
MESSIAEN: Corps Glorieux (Gillock) Raven 984, J/F: Delcamp
 Holy Trinity Meditations (Winpenny) Naxos 573979, J/F: Delcamp
 Piano Pieces (Cipelli) Piano 10200, S/O: Haskins
 Qt End of Time (Estelles+) IBS 72020, N/D: Hanudel
MEYER, J: Chamber Pieces (Composer+) BST 128, J/F: new, Faro
MIASKOVSKY: P Son 5+8 (Mustakimov) BlueG 511, J/F: Harrington
MIGUEZ: V Son (Baldini) Naxos 574118, J/F: see VELASQUEZ
MIHAJLOVIC: Bageteles; Memento; Melancholy (Grif-fiths) CPO 555296, N/D: Faro
MIKALSEN: VC; PC (Dahl, Ugelvik) Auror 5104, M/A: Gimbel
MOKRANJAC: Piano Pieces, all (Martinovic) Grand 829, M/A: Kang
MOLIQUE: Flute Quintet; Piano Quartet (Parnassus Akademie) MDG 3032132, J/F: French
MOLTER: Concertos (Gottesauer Ens) Music 56968, M/A: Loewen
MONFERRATO: Motets (Celadon Ens) Ricer 405, M/A: Moore, C
MONIUSZKO: Quartet 1 (Messages Qt) Dux 1586, N/D: Estep
 Qt 1+2 (Plawner Qt) CPO 555124, J/F: Vroon
 Short Pieces (Various) NFM 265, S/O: Fisch
MONK: Memory Game (Monk+) Canta 21153, J/A: new, Boyd
MONTMEZZI: Incantesimo (Fracassi) Bong 2498, J/F: Locke
 Hpsi Pieces (Matteuzzi) Bong 2574, M/J: Moore, C
 Vespers (Green Mountain) OldeF 918, N/D: Brewer
 Vespers (La Tempete) Alpha 552, M/A: Thomson
MOOR: Cello Concerto & Sonata (Stromberg) Oehms 1704, S/O: Moore
MORAVEC: Sanctuary Road (Tritle) Naxos 559884, M/J: Greenfield
MORAWSKI: Songs (Rehlis) RecA 10, M/A: new, Boyd
MORGAN: Organ Pieces (Pipe) Merid 84653, M/A: Delc
MORLACCHI: Tebaldo & Isolina (Fogliani) Naxos 660471, J/A: Locke
MOSZKOWSKI: Joan of Arc (Hobson) Tocc 523, M/A: French
 Piano Pieces (Hirose) DACO 866, S/O: Kang
MOURAT: Pieces with Guitar (Morillas) IBS 232019, S/O: Gorman
MOUSSORGSKY: Boris Godounov (Nagano SACD) BIS 2320, J/F: Hecht
 Pictures, arr (Camerata du Leman) Penta 5186762, J/A: see TCHAIKOVSKY
 Pictures (Petrenko) Onyx 4211, J/F: see KHACHATUR
 Pictures (Roth) HM 905282, J/A: Vroon
 Pictures; Night; Memories (Samoyloff, p) Quart 2135, N/D: Harrington
MOYZES: Gemer Dances; Pohronic Dances; River Vah (Lenard) Naxos 555477, M/A: O'Connor
MOZART: 2-Piano Pieces (Demus & Badura-Skoda) Gram 99214, J/A: Harr
 Apollo & Hyacinth (The Mozartists) Sign 577, M/A: Altma
 Arias & Scenes (Pygmalion) HM 902638, M/A: Altman
 Clar C; Clar Qn; pieces (Altman) Tacet 252, M/J: Hanud
 Clar Qn (Fiterstein) Orch 106, M/A: Hanudel
 Clarinet Quintet & Qts (Heau) Alpha 498, J/F: Hanudel
 Così Fan Tutte for winds (Roseau Trio) MDG 9032144, S/O: Gorman
 Divertimento K 563 (TrioTaus SACD) 2L 148, M/A: Thom
 Divertimentos K 136-138; EKN (St Cecilia Strings) Arcan 471, M/J: Vroon
 PC 5, 15, 16 (McDermott) Bridg 9523, J/A: Althouse
 PC 6+13 (McDermott) Bridg 9518, J/F: Vroon
 PC 10, 11, 23 (Blocker) Nimb 6394, M/J: Vroon
 PC 11-13 (Schimpf) Avi 8553112, N/D: French
 PC 17+23 (Kim) Chall 72816, J/A: Althouse
 PC 22+24 (CR Hamelin, Violons du Roy) Anal 9147, S/O: Althouse
 P Son 8, 12, 13, 14 (Black) CRD 3538, M/A: Repp
 P Son 8+15; Rondos (Yoshikawa) Ypsi 5, M/J: Repp
 P Son 9, 12, 16; Rondo (Asuka) Hans 19082, S/O: Kang
 P Son 10, 11, 18 (Donohoe) Somm 613, J/A: Repp
 Qt 14+15 (Van Kuijk Qt) Alpha 551, M/J: Kell
 Qt 14-19, arr Qn (Pentaedre) ATMA 2756, J/F: Vroon
 Qt 15 (Voce Qt) Alpha 559, J/F: Althouse
 Serenade 10, Gran Partita (Toronto Chamber Winds) Crys 646, J/A: Hanudel
 Serenade, Haffner; Musical Joke (Cologne Academy SACD) BIS 2394, J/A: French
 Sym 40; Sym Conc Violin & Viola (Netherlands Chamber Orchestra) Tacet 236, N/D: Vroon
 Trio reconstruction by Levin (Levin+) Palai 20, M/J: Thomson
 Unfinished Violin Pieces, arr Levin (Poulet) Palai 7, M/J: French
 Variations (Demeyere, hpsi) Chall 72845, N/D: see BACH, CPE
 VC 1+5 (Nikolic) Tacet 231, M/J: Vroon
 V Sons K 301, 305, 376, 378 (Faust) HM 902361, S/O: Magil
MOZART, FX: Polonaises; P Son (Drogosz) Acco 260, M/A: Repp
 Variations (Laun) Music 56977, M/A: Repp
NAPRAVNIK: Violin Pieces (Trotovsek) Tocc 305, N/D: Estep
NATHAN: Space of a Door (Rose) BMOP 1071, N/D: Gimbel
NICKEL: Woodwind Pieces (Various) Centr 27019, M/A: Hanudel
NIELSEN: Clar Con (Beltramini) Brill 95994, M/A: see FRANCAIX
 String Quintet (Telmanyi) DACO 853, M/J: see HART-MANN, JPE
 Sym 1+2 (Dausgaard) SSO 1024, N/D: O'Connor
 V Son 1+2 (Sjogren) DACO 850, M/J: Magil
NIXON: Gay Typewriters; Orch Pieces (Mann) Tocc 374, N/D: O'Connor
NORLAND: 13 Pieces (Various) Denov 322, M/A: Fisch
O'KEEFE: Piano Pieces (Ulezko) Alb 1785, J/A: Sullivan
O'REGAN: Choral Pieces (Pacific Chorale) Yarl 2592, N/D: Greenfield
O'RIORDAN: Autumn Winds (Composer) Ravel 8029, M/J: new, Boyd
OCKEGHEM: Songs 1 (Blue Heron) BlueH 1010, M/A: Loewen
OFFENBACH: Fontaine Fables; Overtures (Haeck) Alpha 553, M/A: Fisch
 Maitre Peronilla (Radio France/Poschner) BruZ 1039, J/A: Locke
 Overtures & Orchestral (Kruger) Genui 20698, J/A: Fisch
OSTLUND: VC; Forgotten Garden (Podgoretsky) DivA 25199, M/J: Gimbel
 Voyages (Various) DivA 21232, M/A: new, Faro
OSWALD: P Qn (Iruzun, Coull Qt) Somm 609, S/O: see BEACH

- OURKOUZOUNOV:** Guitar Sonatas (Tosidis) Naxos 574117, J/A: new, Boyd
- PACHELBEL:** Magnificats+ (Himlische Cantorey) CPO 777707, N/D: Loewen
- PADEREWSKI:** PC (Sung) Berl 1096, M/A: Estep
P Son; V Pieces (Tomasik & Morawski) FFV 7, N/D: Mag
- PAGANINI:** VC 1 (Feng) Chant 40719, M/A: French
Violin & Guitar (Sjogren) DACO 850, M/J: see NIELSEN
- PAINE,B:** Guitar Pieces (Herbig) Naxos 574121, N/D: McCutcheon
- PAISIELLO:** Gare Generose (Di Stefano) Bong 2575, S/O: Locke
La Serva Padrona (Manzo) Bong 2578, N/D: Reynolds
- PAJAK:** Mental Illness (Whitehead+) Cent 3729, J/F: new, Boyd
- PALESTRINA:** Lamentations II (Cinquecento) Hyp 68284, J/F: Gatens
Mass, Fratres (The 16) Coro 16175, M/A: Brewer
- PARADISI:** Hpsi Sonatas (Paradiso) BIS 2415, S/O: Lehman
- PARRY:** Songs of Farewell (Westminster Abbey) Hyp 68301, S/O: Gatens
The Hours (Royal Holloway Choir) Sign 629, N/D: new, Boyd
- PARRY,B:** Christmas Music (Selwyn College) Regen 542, N/D: Estep
- PART:** Choral Pieces (Estonian Phil Chamber Choir) Ond 1337, J/F: see LISZT
Stabat Mater+ (Clare College Choir) HM 905323, S/O: Greenfield
Stabat Mater (Gloriae Dei Cantores) GloD 65, J/A: Gree
- PAUS:** The Beauty that Remains (Norwegian Youth Choir SACD) 2L 157, J/A: new, Faro
- PEETERS:** Organ Pieces (Marini) Brill 95637, M/J: Delc
- PELAZZA:** Organ Sonatas (Bergamini) Tact 841601, M/J: Delcamp
- PENALOSA:** Lamentations (NY Polyphony) BIS 2407, J/F: Loewen
- PENDERECKI:** St Luke Passion (Nagano SACD) BIS 2287, N/D: Gimbel
Quartet 3 (Messages Qt) Dux 1586, N/D: see MONIUS
Sym 6; Clarinet Concerto (Rajski) Acco 270, S/O: Gimb
- PERKINS:** Requiem; Hymns (Judson) Goth 49322, N/D: Delcamp
- PERLE:** Serenades (Rose) BMOP 1067, J/F: Gimbel
- PERRY:** Ballet & Film Scores (Composer+) Naxos 573954, M/A: Fisch
- PERSICETTI:** Organ Pieces (Winpenny) Tocc 549, S/O: Delcamp
- PETERSON:** Choral Pieces (Uppsala Vocal Ens) Footp 109, N/D: Greenf
- PETITGIRARD:** States of Mind+ (Composer) Naxos 574034, J/A: new, Faro
- PETRIDOU:** Asmata; Byzantine Doxology (Smart) DivA 21233, M/A: new, Boyd
- PETTERSSON:** Vox Humana; songs (Hansson) CPO 999286, M/J: Gimbel
- PFITZNER:** PC (Trinks) Hyp 68258, J/F: O'Connor
- PFOHL:** Beach Pictures; Elegiac Suite (Gerl) Grand 784, M/A: Repp
- PHILLIPS:** Organ Pieces (Wells) ProOr 7256, J/F: Delc
- PIATTI:** Opera Fantasies (Bradbury, vc) Merid 84659, N/D: Moore
- PICKARD:** Gardener of Aleppo (Nash Ens SACD) BIS 2461, S/O: new, Faro
- PILATI:** Music (Adriano) Naxos 574168, M/J: Kilp
- PING:** Oriental Wash Painting (Tao) Naxos 570627, M/A: Gimbel
- PINTO:** Piano Pieces, all (Toporowski) Piano 10177, J/A: Becker
- PISENDEL:** Solo Violin (Schmitt) Mague 358408, M/J: Magil
- PIZZETTI:** Cello Sonata (Cicchese) Brill 95812, J/A: Moore
- PLATTI:** Cello Sonatas (Galligioni) Brill 95763, J/F: Moor
- POHL:** Stories (Rudny, p) RecA 20, M/A: Vroon
- PONCHIELLI:** Organ Pieces, all (Ruggeri) Brill 96019, M/J: Delcamp
- PORPORA:** Cantatas (Musica Perduta) Brill 96077, M/J: Gatens
- POTT:** At First Light; Word (Berry) Naxos 573976, N/D: new, Faro
- POULENC:** Organ Concerto (Conte) Raven 159, S/O: see SAINT-SAENS
Organ Concerto (Jansons) BR 900178, J/A: see SAINT
PC; Con Champetre; Wind Trio (Bebington) Reson 10256, J/A: Vroon
PC; Sinfonietta (Rosner) Odrad 364, M/J: Vroon
Stabat Mater (Flemish Radio) EvilP 32, M/J: Delcamp
Voix Humane; Babar (Mazzucato) Brill 96030, M/J: Fisch
Wind music (Confederatio Ens) MDG 9032152, M/J: Hanudel
- PRADO:** PC 1; Fribourg Concerto (Rubinsky) Naxos 574225, S/O: Sull
- PRAETORIUS:** Motets (Alamire) Inven 1, J/F: Loewen
- PRIMROSC:** Songs (Gibbon) Alb 1818, S/O: see HARBISON
- PROKOFIEFF:** Alexander Nevsky; Lt Kije (Fischer SACD) Ref 735, J/F: Vroon
Cello Sonata (Lim) Sony 80497, J/A: see RACHMANIN
Cello Son (Von Bulow) DACO 843, M/J: see RACHMANIN
Old Grandmother (Trpceski, p) Onyx 4191, M/A: see RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF
P Son 1+6; Etudes; Cinderella (Argentieri) DivA 25156, J/A: Harrington
P Son 3,8,9 (Kempff) BIS 2390, M/A: Kang
P Son 4,7,9 (Melnikov) HM 902203, M/A: Harrington
Romeo & Juliet sel (Falletta) BeauF 524, J/F: see BRAHMS
Romeo & Juliet; P Pieces (Khristenko) Stein 30114, M/J: Haskins
Songs (Gritskova) Naxos 574030, S/O: Harrington
Stone Flower & Gambler Suites (Slobodenouk SACD) BIS 2301, J/A: Vroon
Summer Night; Scythian Suite (Kitaenko) Oehms 471, N/D: Vroon
Sym 3+6 (Inkinen) SWR 19086, S/O: Vroon
Sym 5+7; Peter; Lt Kije; Love 3 Oranges (Boult, Martinon+) Decca 4840357, J/A: Hecht
Sym Conc; Cello Sonata (Philippe) HM 902608, M/A: Moore
- PROKOFIEV,G:** Cello Concerto; Turntables (Bogorad) Sign 628, S/O: Moore
- PUCCINI:** Tosca (Andersson-Palme) Sterl 1837, J/F: Reynolds
Le Willis (Elder) OpRar 59, J/F: Altman
- PUJOL:** Studies (Bungarten.g) MDG 9052131, N/D: McCutcheon
- PURCELL:** Royal Welcome Songs 2 (The 16) Coro 16173, J/F: Greenfield
- QUANTZ:** Flute Concertos (Dikmans) Reson 10252, M/J: Gorman
- QUILTER:** Songs 3 (Rothschild, Vale) Nimb 5983, S/O: Moore,R
- QUINN:** Choral & Organ Pieces (Selwyn College Choir) Regen 538, M/A: Delcamp
- RACHMANINOFF:** 2-Piano Pieces (Genova & Dimitrov) CPO 555326, N/D: Harr
Bells (Kitaenko) Oehms 470, N/D: Hecht
Cello Sonata (Kim) Delos 3574, N/D: see BARBER
Cello Sonata (Lim) Sony 80497, J/A: Moore
Cello Son (Von Bulow) DACO 843, M/J: Moore
Etudes-Tableaux (Ferro) Muso 36, S/O: Harrington

Moments Musicaux (Douglas) Chan 20121, M/A: see TCHAIKOVSKY
 Moments Musicaux; P Son 1 (Soldano) DivA 25155, M/J: Vroon
 P Son 2; Moments Musicaux op 16 (Poghosyan) Cent 3772, M/J: Harrington
 PC 1 (Martino/Ettinger) Hans 19048, J/F: Harr
 PC 1+3 (Trifonov) DG 4836617, M/J: Estep
 PC 1; Pag Rhaps; Preludes (Fedorova) Chantl 42620, M/J: Vroon
 PC 2; Sym Dances (Lim; Argerich/ Vedernikov) Warnr 545551, J/F: Harrington
 PC 2+3; Pag Rhaps (Moura Castro) DMC 3, M/J: Vroon
 PC 3 (Abduraimov) RCO 19003, J/A: Estep
 Songs (Sitkovetsky) Hyp 68309, N/D: Reynolds
 Trio 1 (Mezzena Trio) Dyn 7825, M/A: see TCHAIKOV
RACZYNSKI: Choral Sacred (Various Choirs) RecA 22, M/A: Greenfield
RADZYNSKI: Cello Pieces (Plesser) Cent 3480, J/A: Moore
RAFF: Benedetto Marcello (SW German Radio) Sterl 1123, M/J: Locke
 V Sons 1+2 (Kayaleh) Naxos 573841, J/F: Kell
RAHBARI: Sym Poems 4-8 (Composer) Naxos 574065, M/A: Gimbel
RAMEAU: New Hpsi Pieces (Malafronte) Quart 2136, J/A: Lehman
 Pygmalion (Bernolet) Ramee 1809, J/F: Brewer
RASMUSSEN: Andalog (Aldubaran) DaCap 8226133, J/A: Gimbel
 4 Seasons after Vivaldi (Concerto Copenhagen) DaCap 8226220, J/F: Vroon
 Sinking Through the Dream Mirror (Concerto Copenhagen) DaCap 8226221, N/D: new, Vroon
RAUTAVAARA: Lost Landscapes (Kamenarska) Utxet 299, M/J: French
 Vigil (Helsinki Chamber Choir SACD) BIS 2422, J/F: Greenf
RAVEL: Miroirs; Valse; Tombeau (Biret) IBA 571404, M/J: Harrington
 Miroirs; La Valse (Rana) Warnr 541109, M/A: Harrington
 PC: Alborada; Tombeau (Perianes/Pons) HM 902326, M/A: Kilpatrick
 PCs; Tzigane (Dumont, Gilbert/Slatkin) Naxos 573572, J/F: French
 Piano pieces [2CD] (Fergus-Thompson) Decca 4829041, M/J: Harrington
 Trio (Amatis Trio) Avi 8553477, J/A: see ENESCO
 Trio (Vienna Trio SACD) MDG 9422130, J/F: French
 La Valse (Roth) HM 905282, J/A: see MOUSSORGSKY
 V Sons (Kiffer) Stein 30103, J/A: Thomson
REALE: Piano Music (Jensen) Naxos 559879, M/J: Gimbel
REBAY: Sonatas for Violin or Viola & Guitar (Kayaleh, Kolk) Naxos 573992, N/D: Estep
REGER: Bach variations; Bocklin Tone Poems (Levin) Naxos 574074, M/A: O'Connor
 Clar Qn; Sextet (Johanns) CPO 555340, N/D: Hanudel
 Intimate Organ (Dobey) ProOr 7204, J/F: Delcamp
 Organ 6 (Weinberger SACD) CPO 777539, M/J: Delc
 String Trios (Il Furibondo) SoloM 323, S/O: French
REICHA: Lenore (Albrecht) Orfeo 1903, J/A: see BEETHOVEN
 Piano Sonatas (Lowenmark) Tocc 273, J/A: Repp
 Wind Quintets (Belfiato Qn) Sup 4270, J/F: Hanudel
REINECKE: PC (Kauten) SoloM 315, M/A: see SCHUMANN
 Sym 1+3; Overture (Raudales) CPO 555114, N/D: Alth
REIZENSTEIN: PC; Serenade; Cyrano Overture (Triendl/Traub) CPO 555245, M/A: O'Connor
RESPIGHI: Piano 4-hands (Baldocchi & Caramiello) Tact 871804, N/D: Harr
 Piano Pieces 1 (Gatto) Tocc 405, M/J: Haskins
 Pines of Rome (Jansons) BR 900183, M/J: see SHCHEDRIN
REZNICEK: Quartets (Minguet Qt) CPO 555002, N/D: O'Connor
RIDIL: Songs; Male Choral (Fluck; Camerata Musica Limburg) Genui 20692, S/O: Moore,R
RIES: Cello Pieces 2 (Rummel) Naxos 573851, J/F: Moore
 Sextet; Octet; Stg Trio (Franz Ens SACD) MDG 9032136, M/A: Dutt
RIHM: Organ Pieces [4CD] (Schmeding) Cybel 12, M/A: Delcamp
RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: Kashchei the Immortal (Samosud 1949) Melya 2605, S/O: Locke
 Russian Fantasy (Gregory) Naxos 579052, J/F: see TANEYEV
 Scheherazade; Cap Esp (Markevitch) Decca 4829378, M/A: Vroon
 Scheherazade; Cap Espagnole; Russian Eas (Petrenko) LAWO 1198, N/D: Hecht
 Scheherazade (Trpceski, p) Onyx 4191, M/A: 190, Harr
RINALDI: Piano Pieces (Bonucelli) Tact 841880, J/F: Becker
 P Pieces (Simonacci) Uran 14059, N/D: Becker
RINCK: Trios+ (Parnassus Trio SACD) MDG 9032171, N/D: Thomson
RIPPE: Lute Pieces (O'Dette) HM 902275, M/J: Moore,C
RODRIGO: Chamber Orchestra Pieces (Liuna) IBS 82020, N/D: O'Connor
 G Pieces (Rojas-Ogayar) IBS 172019, S/O: McCutcheon
ROHDE: It Wasn't a Dream (Mundy+) Alb 1812, J/A: Vroon
RORE: Madrigals (Blue Heron) BlueH 1009, J/F: Moore,C
 Mass, Vivat Felix Hercules (Weser Renaissance) CPO 777989, M/A: Moore,C
ROREM: 14 Stations of the Cross (Robinson, org) Delos 3549, M/J: Delcamp
ROSE,G: Red Planet; VC; Suite for Strings (Skaerved/Rose) Tocc 558, S/O: Gimbel
ROSNER: Masses (Blossom Street) Conv 53, M/J: Gimbel
ROSSI,G: Cantata for 2 Voices+ (Romabarocca) Bong 2577, N/D: Moore,C
ROSSINI: Marriage of Thetis & Peleus (Gorecki Choir, Cracow) Naxos 574282, N/D: Reynolds
 Zelmira (Cracow/ Gelmetti) Naxos 660468, M/J: Locke
ROTA: P Pieces 1 (Hodgkinson) Grand 827, M/J: Fisch
ROUSE: Sym 5; Concerto for Orchestra (Guerrero) Naxos 559852, N/D: Estep
ROUSSEL: Spider's Feast (Rophe) BIS 2432, M/J: Frch
ROZYCKI: PC; Sym Poem & Scherzo (Makowski) Dux 1591, J/A: O'Connor
RUBBRA: PC (Lane/Botstein) Hyp 68297, S/O: O'Connor
RUBENSON: Songs (Gentele) Sterl 1839, J/A: Moore,R
RUBINSTEIN: Cello Sonatas & Trio (Von Bulow) DACO 858, S/O: Moore
 P Sons 1+2 (Chen) Naxos 573989, M/J: Harr
 P Pieces (Mamou) Pavan 7589, J/F: see TCHAIKOV
 4-hand Piano, vol 2 (Pianistico di Firenze) Brill 95965, J/A: Harrington
RUDERS: PC 3; Cembal d'Amore II; Kalkapriccio (McDermott+) Bridg 9531, M/J: Gimbel
RUTTER: Requiem (Baker) Amber 119, N/D: Greenfield
SACHSEN-WEIMAR: VCs (Thuringian Bach Collegium) Audit 97769, J/F: Loewen
SAINT-SAENS: Ascanio ballet; overtures (Markl) Naxos 574033, M/A: French
 PC 3+5; Auvergne (Lortie) Chan 20038, M/J: Vroon
 P Pieces 5: rarities (Burleson) Grand 626, J/F: Harr
 Sym 1; Sym in A; Carnival (Fischer) Hyp 68223, M/A: French

Sym 3 (Conte) Raven 159, S/O: Delcamp
 Sym 3 (Jansons) BR 900178, J/A: Vroon
 Trio 2 (Gloriosa Trio) Cent 3744, M/J: Vroon
 V Sons (Kantorow) MDG 6502153, S/O: see MEND
SALIERI: Cantatas (Herrmann) Hans 19079, J/A: Reynolds
SALMENHAARA: Organ Pieces, all (Lehtola) Tocc 515, J/A: Delcamp
SALVIUCCI: Serenade; Chamber Sym; Qt (Ens Uberbretti) Naxos 574049, J/F: Sullivan
SAMUEL-HOLEMAN: Jeune Fille+ (Claes) MusW 1892, J/A: Moore,R
SANCES: Motets (Scherzi Musicali) Ricer 141, S/O: Moore,C
SATIE: Piano Pieces 4 (Horvath) Grand 823, M/A: Harr Vexations (Ogawa) BIS 2325, N/D: Estep
SAURET: Etudes-Caprices (Rashidova, v) Naxos 574159, N/D: Magil
SAWER: Rumpelstiltskin Suite; Cat's Eye; April (Birmingham Contemp Mus Ens) NMC 251, M/A: Gimbel
SAWYERS: Sym 4; Kandinsky Homage (Woods) Nimb 6405, N/D: Gimbel
SCARLATTI: Sonatas (Dichamp) Brill 96067, S/O: see GRANADOS
 Sonatas (McCabe) DivA 21231, M/A: Kang
 Sonatas K 98-146 (Ullrich) Tacet 247, M/A: Lehman
SCARLATTI,A: Cantatas & Recorder Sonatas (Collegium Pro Musica) Brill 95721, M/A: Brewer
SCHARWENKA: P Music vol 1 (Pipa) Tocc 521, M/J: Becker
SCHARWENKA,P: Violin & Viola Pieces (Breuninger) Capr 5391, S/O: Dutt
SCHNABEL: Solo V Son (Ingolfsson) Genui 20711, S/O: Magil
SCHNEIDER: Mozart Ascending; Inner Worlds (Gaudenz) Wergo 5125, M/A: Kilp
SCHNITTKE: String Trio (Trio Lirico) Audit 97753, J/F: see VAINBERG
 Various Works (Rozhdestvensky+) Melya 2630, N/D: Gimbel
SCHOCKER: Flute Sonatas (Stroud) Cent 3741, M/A: Gorman
 Piano Pieces (Composer) Cent 3818, N/D: new, Faro
SCHOENBERG: Pelleas & Melisande; Erwartung (Gardner SACD) Chan 5198, S/O: Haskins
 Qt 2 (Arod Qt) Erato 542552, M/A: see ZEMLINSKY
 VC; Transfigured Night (Faust+) HM 902341, M/J: Thom
 VC (Liebeck) Orch 129, J/A: see BRAHMS
SCHREKER: Intermezzo & Scherzo (Veses) Apart 207, J/A: see BERG
SCHUBERT: Fantasy (De Maeyer) EvilP 34, N/D: see STRAVINSKY
 Impromptus op 90; P Son D 960 (Kobrin) Cent 3695, M/J: Repp
 Impromptus; Moments Musicaux; 3 Pieces (Demus) DG 4840777, M/A: Repp
 Moments Musicaux; Impromptus (Carbone) DaVin 253, N/D: Becker
 P Son in A, D 959; Impromptus, op 90 (Chukovskaya) Dux 1618, S/O: Kang
 P Son in A, D 959 (Volodos) Sony 86829, M/A: Becker
 P Son B-flat; 3 Pieces (Lucchesini) Audit 97766, N/D: Becker
 P Son B-flat; Impromptus (Vanden Eynden) Palai 9, M/J: Repp
 P Son B-flat; P Pieces; Moments Musicaux (Ugorskaya) Avi 8553107, M/A: Vroon
 P Son C minor (Miyamoto) BlueG 503, J/A: Repp
 P Son D 664; Wanderer Fantasy, arr Liszt (Park) Capr 5412, S/O: Estep
 P Son in G (Oh-Havenith) Audit 20043, M/A: Repp
 P Sons & Pieces (Williams) Sign 831+2, M/J: Repp

Piano Sonatas, 4 late (Wosner) Onyx 4217, J/A: Repp
 Qt 13+14 (Fitzwilliam Qt) DivA 25197, S/O: Dutt
 Qt 14 (Valchev Qt) Gega 413, N/D: Dutterer
 Qt 14 (Navarra Qt) Orch 135, N/D: French
 Qt 15 (Voce Qt) Alpha 559, J/F: see MOZART
 Qts, vol 1 (Alinde Qt) Hans 19071, S/O: Vroon
 Sakontala (Bernius) Carus 83509, S/O: Locke
 Schone Mullerin (Gliemans) B 25, J/A: Moore,R
 Schwanengesang (Finley) Hyp 68288, J/F: Moore,R
 Schwanengesang (Williams) Chan 20126, S/O: Moore,R
 Songs (Richter) Penta 5186839, J/A: Moore,R
 Songs (Sulayman) Avie 2400, J/A: Moore,R
 String Trio & Quintet (Aviv Qt) Naxos 573891, S/O: Vroon
 Sym 3+7 (Edusel) SoloM 339, N/D: Vroon
 Trio 2 (Gaspard Trio) Avi 8553105, N/D: French
 Trio 2; Notturmo (Hamlet Trio) Chanl 41719, M/A: Dutt
 Trout Qn (Thymos Qt, Eschenbach) Avie 2416, S/O: Alth
 Trout Quintet (Henschel Qt) SoloM 332, N/D: Moore,R
 V Fantasy (Kamenarska) Uxtex 299, M/J: see RAUTA
 V Sons (Carrettin) SonoL 92240, J/A: Magil
 Violin Pieces (Daskalakis) BIS 2363, J/F: Kell
 Violin Sonatas (Skaerved) Athen 23208, N/D: Magil
 Winterreise (Buet) Muso 35, J/A: Moore,R
 Winterreise (Bostridge) Penta 5186764, J/F: Moore,R
 Winterreise (Gee, trombone) Naxos 574093, J/A: Kilp
 Winterreise (Hedegaard) DACO 865, M/J: Moore,R
 Winterreise (Matter SACD) BIS 2444, J/F: Moore,R
 Winterreise (Oliemans) Chanl 42119, M/A: Moore,R
 Winterreise (Sabata) Berl 1309, M/J: Moore,R
 Winterreise (Schwarz, mz) Rond 6182, J/F: Moore,R
 Winterreise, arr (Voyager Qt) SoloM 335, S/O: Dutt
SCHULLER: Fisherman & His Wife (Odyssey Opera/Rose) BMOP 1070, S/O: Altman
SCHUMANN: C Son 2; Intermezzo (Poltera) BIS 2167, M/J: Moore
 Carnaval; Kreisleriana; Arabesque (Min) Hans 19024, S/O: Repp
 Cello Pieces (Ythier) Met 28590, J/F: Moore
 Cello Pieces (Bohorquez) Berl 1282, M/J: Moore
 Clarinet Pieces (Punzi) Brill 95871, J/A: Hanudel
 Davidsbundlertanze (Avramovic) Genui 20684, J/A: Repp
 Dichterliebe; Lenau Songs (Pregardien, C SACD) Chall 72788, M/A: Moore,R
 Fantasy Pieces, op 12; PC (Downes) Flip 0, J/F: Becker
 Fantasy; Kreisleriana (Son) Onyx 4202, S/O: Repp
 Faschingsschwank; Fantasy; Arabesque (Tong) Quart 2134, J/F: Becker
 Frauenliebe; Liederkreis; Maria Stuart (Kielland & Weiss-er) LAWO 1197, N/D: Moore,R
 Humoreske; Forest Scenes; Night Pieces (Fejervari) ATMA 2816, S/O: Repp
 Kerner Songs; Dichterliebe (Wilfisch) Reson 10247, J/F: Moore,R
 Kreisleriana; Sym Etudes (Zagor) BlueG 509, J/A: Beck
 Myrthen songs (Tilling, Gerhaher) Sony 94536, M/A: Moore,R
 P Qn; P Qt (Mortensen, Enggard Qt) LAWO 1189, M/J: Dutterer
 Piano 4-hands (Fischer & Lutes) Cent 3751, J/A: Harr
 Piano 4 Hands (Plano & Del Negro) Brill 95675, M/J: Harrington
 Sym 1+3 (Gardiner SACD) LSO 844, J/A: Hecht
 Sym 1+4; Concertos (Rosbaud) Prof 19085, M/A: Alth
 Sym 2+4; Genoveva Overture (Gardiner SACD) LSO 818, J/F: Vroon
 Sym 2+4 (Herreweghe) Phi 32, M/A: Vroon
 Trios; Fantasy Pieces (Kungsbacka Trio SACD) BIS 2437, S/O: Dutterer
 V Son; Romances (Poulet) Palai 11, M/J: Magil
 VC (Weithaus/Manze) CPO 555172, M/J: Althouse

- SCHUMANN, CAM:** Horn Pieces (Halsdorf) Naxos 579051, S/O: Kilp
- SCHUMANN, C:** Chamber Pieces (Schenkman+) BSF 191, M/A: Dutt
PC: Var (Kauten) SoloM 315, M/A: Repp
Piano Pieces (Codispoli) Piano 10193, M/A: Repp
Piano Transcriptions (De Beenhouwer) MDG 9032115, J/F: Becker
Romances (Downes) Flip 0, J/F: see SCHUMANN
- SCOTT:** Piano Pieces (Gvetadze) Chall 72819, M/A: Becker
- SCRIABIN:** P Sons, all (Maltempo) Piano 10168, J/A: Harrington
Piano Pieces [5CD] (Fergus-Thompson) Decca 4829034, M/A: Harr
Piano Preludes, all (Pereira) Odrad 352, S/O: Harr
Piano Sonatas, all (Trotta) Dyn 7864, N/D: Harr
- SCZINER:** Echoes of Youth (Masi) Navon 6260, M/J: see BRAHMS
- SEREBRIER:** Orchestral Pieces—BIS 2423, M/J: Gimbel
- SHCHEDRIN:** Carmen Suite (Jansons) BR 900183, M/J: French
- SHEBALIN:** Suite 3+4; Ballet Suite (Vasiliev) Tocc 164, J/A: French
- SHOSTAKOVICH:** Cello Concertos (Gerhardt) Hyp 68340, N/D: Sull
Cello Sonatas (Anouchka) Genui 20701, N/D: Moore
Piano Sonatas & Preludes (Gugnin) Hyp 68267, J/F: Har
Preludes (Prisuelos) IBS 182019, J/A: Estep
Qt 2,7,8 (Haas Qt) Sup 4271, M/J: Estep
Sym 1+5 (Mosedra SACD) LSO 802, J/A: Estep
Sym 2+12 (Tabakov) Gega 388, N/D: Hecht
Sym 3+14 (Tabakov) Gega 387, J/F: Estep
Sym 7 (Jansons) BR 900184, M/J: Estep
Sym 10 (Jansons) BR 900185, M/A: Hecht
Sym 10 (Liss) FugaL 756, M/A: Hecht
Sym 11 (Storgards SACD) Chan 5278, J/A: Estep
Sym 13 (Karabits) Penta 5186618, N/D: Estep
Sym 13 (Muti) CSO 1901, J/A: Estep
Trio 2 (Marvin Trio) Genui 19678, M/A: see VAINBERG
VCs (Ibragimova) Hyp 68313, S/O: Estep
VCs (Pochekin) Prof 19073, J/A: Estep
- SIBELIUS:** Kullervo (Lintu SACD) Ond 1338, M/A: Alth
Sym 2; King Christian (Rouvali) Alpha 574, J/A: Vroon
Sym 4+6 (Elder) Halle 7553, J/A: O'Connor
VC (Tetzlaff/Ticciati) Ond 1334, J/F: see BEETHOVEN
VC (Tjeknavorian) Berl 301424, S/O: see TJEKNAVOR
- SIERRA:** Cantares; Triple Concerto (Marcelletti) Naxos 559876, S/O: Gimbel
- SILVESTRI:** Piano Pieces (Borac) Prof 20028, N/D: Kang
- SINIGAGLIA:** Quartet Pieces (Archos Qt) Naxos 574183, S/O: Dutterer
- SKALKOTTAS:** PC 3 (Vandewalle) Palad 106, M/J: Estep
Sinfonietta+ (Fidetzis SACD) BIS 2434, J/A: Sull
Sinfonietta; Classical Sym (Tsialis) Naxos 574154, J/A: Sullivan
- SKEMPTON:** Music (Sirinu) Met 28580, J/A: new, Faro
Preludes; Nocturnes; Images (Howard.p) Orch 100116, J/A: Haskins
- SKORYK:** VC 1-4 (Bielow) Naxos 574088, J/A: Gimbel
- SLONIMSKY:** Choral Pieces 2 (Kontorovich) Melya 2598, M/J: Greenf
- SMYTH:** Mass; Wreckers Overture (Oramo SACD) Chan 5240, M/A: Greenf
Songs (Stevens) Somm 611, J/A: Moore.R
- SOMMERVELL:** Maud; Shropshire Lad (Williams) Somm 615, S/O: Moore.R
- SOR:** Guitar Pieces (Giglio) Somm 604, N/D: McCutch
Guitar Pieces (Grondona) Strad 37129, N/D: McCutch
- SORABJI:** Sequentia Cyclica on Dies Irae (Powell, p [7CD]) Piano 10206, S/O: Estep
Toccata 2 (Sanchez-Aguilera) Piano 10205, J/A: Estep
- SORENSEN:** La Mattina; Serenidad; Trumpet Concerto (Andsnes, Frost, Helseth) DaCap 8226095, J/A: Vroon
- SOWERBY:** Piano Pieces (Guillman & Tsien) Ced 7006, M/J: Harrington
- SPEKTOR:** Songs (Mesko) Navon 6256, M/A: new, Boyd
- SPONTINI:** Metamorfosi di Pasquale (Montesano) Dyn 7836, M/A: Locke
Olimpie (Flemish Radio) BruZ 1035, M/J: Locke
- STADELMANN:** Flute Pieces (Lotscher) Genui 20717, N/D: new, Vroon
- STAM:** Cello Sonata+ (Holtrop) Aliud 109, M/J: Moore
- STAMITZ:** FC; F & Ob C (Trondheim Soloists) Penta 5186823, M/J: Gorman
- STANCHINSKY:** Piano Pieces (Solovieva) Grand 766, M/J: Harrington
- STANFORD:** Motets (Westminster Abbey) Hyp 68301, S/O: see PARRY
Quartets 1,2,6 (Dante Qt) Somm 607, M/J: O'Connor
Travelling Companion (Sussex Opera) Somm 274, M/A: Hecht
- STEFFAN:** Hpsi Concertos (Keglerova) ArcoD 211, S/O: Lehman
- STEFFANI:** Duets (Vinikour+) MusOm 802, J/A: Lehman
- STENHAMMAR:** Romances (Ruubel) Sorel 16, N/D: see ELGAR
- STEVENS:** Prevailing Winds (Composer+) DivA 25194, J/A: new, Faro
String Quartets & Quintet (Behn Qt) DivA 25203, N/D: new, Boyd
- STEVENSON:** Piano Pieces (Hamilton) Prima 107, M/J: Sull
- STOHR:** Chamber Music vol 4—Tocc 536, N/D: Thoms
- STRAUSS:** Alpine Symphony (Dausgaard) SSM 1023, J/F: see LANGGAARD
Alpine Symphony (Petrenko) LAWO 1192, J/A: Hecht
Also Sprach Zarathustra; Till; D&T (Chailly) Decca 4833080, M/J: Hecht
Zarathustra; Burleske (Trifonov/Jansons) BR 900182, J/A: Hecht
Don Quixote (Bailey/Llewellyn) Stein 30156, N/D: see WALTON
Don Quixote; Don Juan; Till (Petrenko,V) LAWO 1184, M/A: O'Connor
Macbeth; Rosenkavalier Suite; Death & Trans (Shui SACD) BIS 2342, N/D: Hecht
Metamorphosen (Salonen) Alpha 544, J/F: see BEET
Rosenkavalier Suite (Leinsdorf) Decca 4840184, M/J: see MAHLER
Songs (Siegel) Hans 19078, M/J: Moore.R
Sym F minor; Concert Overture (Baumer) CPO 555290, J/A: O'Connor
V Son (Golcea) Genui 19668, J/F: 179, Magil
- STRAUSS FAMILY:** 2020 New Year Concert (Nelsons) Sony 70240, J/A: Fisch
- STRAUSS, J:** Waltzes+ (Krips) Decca 4840692, M/A: Fisch
Waltzes (Wei.p) Cent 3734, M/A: 190, Fisch
- STRAVINSKY:** Ballet Movements (Rana) Warnr 541109, M/A: see RAVEL
Firebird & Petrouchka Pieces (Kiffer) Stein 30103, J/A: see RAVEL
Firebird Suite; Petrouchka mvmts (Poghosyan) Cent 3772, M/J: see RACHMANINOFF
Mass (Berlin Radio) Penta 5186774, N/D: see BRUCKN
Suite Italien (De Maeyer) EvilP 34, N/D: 141, Magil
- STROZZI:** Songs (Youngdahl+) Cent 3672, M/A: Loewen
- SUCCARI:** Near Eastern Album (Frasse-Sombet) Mague 358432, M/A: see GELANIAN

SUK: Serenade for Strings (Anima Musicae) Hung 32824, S/O: see DVORAK

SUSMAN: Collision Point (Piccola Accademia) Belar 7, M/A: new, Boyd

SWAYNE: Stations of the Cross (Nieminski) Reson 10118, J/A: Delcamp

SWEELINCK: Hpsi Pieces (Egarr) Linn 589, M/A: Lehm

SZARZYNSKI: Mass; choral pieces (Wroclaw Baroque) Acco 261, M/J: Gatens

SZYMANOWSKI: Preludes & Etudes (Vivanet) Naxos 551401, J/F: Repp

Qt 2 (Eliot Qt) Genui 19661, M/A: Thomson

Quartets (Carmina Qt) MDG 6502167, S/O: Magil

TABAKOV: Sym 2+6 (Tabakov) Tocc 562, N/D: Gimbel

Sym 5; Db Concerto (Tabakov) Tocc 530, J/F: Gimbel

TANEYEV: John of Damascus (Kitaenko) Oehms 470, N/D: see RACHMANINOFF

Songs, all (Cent 3749, M/J: Moore, R

Suite de Concert (Gregory) Naxos 579052, J/F: O'Con

TANSMAN: Guitar Pieces 1 (De Vitis) Naxos 573983, M/A: Smith

G Pieces 2 (De Vitis) Naxos 573984, N/D: McCutcheon

TCHAIKOVSKY: Ballet highlights; Serenade (Fistoulari) Decca 4829366, J/A: Vroon

Liturg; Sacred Choruses (Latvian Radio) Ond 1336, J/F: Greenfield

Mazeppa (Bolshoi/Mansurov) Melya 2613, N/D: Locke

Nutcracker (Jurowski) Penta 5186761, M/A: Vroon

PC 1 (Li) Warnr 537957, M/A: French

P Son in G (Douglas) Chan 20121, M/A: Harrington

P Son in G; Pieces (Donohoe) Sign 594, J/A: Harr

Piano pieces (Schellenberger) Hans 19007, J/F: Harr

Qts; Sextet (Danel Qt) CPO 555292, J/F: Dutt

Seasons (Mamou) Pavan 7589, J/F: 175, Harr

Serenade (Anima Music) Hung 32764, J/F: see DOHN

Serenade (Amsterdam Sinfonietta) Chanl 37119, M/J: see ARENSKY

Serenade (Balkan Chamber Orch) Audit 20045, N/D: see DVORAK

Song transcriptions (Severus) Grand 795, M/A: 189, Estep

Souvenir de Florence (Camerata du Leman) Penta 5186762, J/A: Vroon

Sym 3; Suite 3; Hamlet; VC (Elman/Boult) Decca 4840381, J/A: Vroon

Sym 4 (Honeck SACD) Ref 738, S/O: Hecht

Sym 4+5 (Gergiev) Mari 17, J/F: Vroon

Sym 4+5; Suite 3; Cap Italien (3 conductors) Decca 4840407, J/A: Hecht

Sym 4+6; VC (Ricci/ Kleiber) Decca 4840373, J/A: Hecht

Sym 5 (Ettinger) Hans 19048, J/F: see RACHMANINOF

Syms, all; PCs, all; Serenade; Romeo; Fr (Bychkov) Decca 4834942, J/F: Vroon

Trio (Gluzman, Moser, Sudbin SACD) BIS 2372, M/A: Vroon

Trio (Mezzena Trio) Dyn 7825, M/A: Vroon

VC (Dalene/ Blendulf) BIS 2440, M/J: see BARBER

VC & Pieces (Lozakovich) DG 4836086, M/A: French

Vigil; Hymns (Latvian Radio Choir) Ond 1352, S/O: Greenfield

TCHEREPNIN, A: My Flowering Staff (Acmeist Male Choir) Tocc 537, S/O: Reynolds

TCHEREPNIN, N: Marcissus & Echo (Borowicz) CPO 555250, N/D: Estep

TELEMANN: Cantatas & Sonatas (Spanos; Pandolfis Consort) Gram 99215, S/O: Loewen

Cantatas for countertenor (Potter) CPO 555192, J/F: Gatens

Chamber Pieces (Elephant House Qt) Penta 5186749, M/J: Loewen

Flute Fantasias (Nahajowski) RecA 9, M/J: Gorman

Flute Fantasies (Roselli) Naxos 579054, M/J: Gorman

Frankfurt Sonatas (Von der Goltz) Apart 217, M/A: Thom

Miriways (Labadie) Penta 5186842, S/O: Locke

Oboes (Corall & Griesshaber) Talan 90012, J/F: Hanudel

Partitas (6) (Goen, hpsi) Brill 95683, S/O: Lehman

Recorder Concertos (Lauzer) ATMA 2789, N/D: Gorman

Recorder Sonatas (Dahl) LAWO 1181, M/J: Gorman

VCs (Les Accents) Apart 206, J/F: see BACH

TEODORESCU: Piano Pieces (Smolyar) Tocc 448, J/F: Harrington

TESSARINI: Violin Sonatas (Losito) Brill 95861, J/A: Loewen

THALBERG: Fantasies on French Operas (Viner) Piano 10178, J/F: Kang

Opera Transcriptions (Hamelin) Hyp 68320, N/D: see LISZT

THEILE: St Matthew Passion (Weser Renaissance) CPO 555285, N/D: Gatens

THOMAS: Auditions+ (ICE Ensemble) Nimb 6402, S/O: Gimbel

Diary of Anne Frank; Rilke Meditations (Thomas) SFS 79, N/D: Gimbel

THWAITES: Choral Pieces (Ex Cathedra) Somm 612, J/A: Delcamp

TICHEL: Wind Band Pieces 2 (Corporon, Fennell) GIA 1082, S/O: Kilpatrick

TIN: To Shiver the Sky (Tin) Decca 32422, N/D: Vroon

TISHCHENKO: Harp Con; pieces (Marinutsa) Naxos 579048, M/J: Gimbel

TJEKNAVORIAN: VC (Tjeknavorian) Berl 301424, S/O: Althouse

TODD: Choral Pieces (Bach Choir) Sign 591, S/O: Moore, R

TOMKINS: Choral Works (Hampton Court) Reson 10253, M/J: Gatens

TORROBA: Sonatina; Sonata-Fantasia (Locatto) Strad 37127, J/F: Smith

TURINA: Piano Pieces (Jones 4CD) Nimb 1710, N/D: Kang

TURNER: Horn Pieces 1 (Composer+) Naxos 579050, J/A: Kilpatrick

TURRINI: Hpsi Sons (Barchi) Brill 95522, M/A: Lehman

UEBAYASHI: Misericordia (Wincenc) Azica 71325, J/F: Gorman

UNG: Space between Heaven & Earth; Spirals (Various) Bridg 9533, J/A: Gimbel

USTVOLSKEYA: Orchestral Suites & Poems (Mravinsky, Jansons+) Brill 96084, J/A: Gimbel

VAINBERG: Cello Concerto; Fantasy; Concertino (Wall-fisch) CPO 555234, N/D: Estep

Cello Pieces (Fudala) Dux 1545, M/A: Moore

Chamber Sym 1+3 (Krimer) Naxos 574063, J/F: Hecht

Clarinet Pieces (Oberaigner) Naxos 574192, S/O: Hanu

Flute Concertos (Stein) Naxos 573931, M/A: Gorman

Qt 14+15; 3 Palms (Silesian Qt) Acco 268, J/A: Estep

Solo Viola Sonatas (Dinerchtein) SoloM 310, J/F: Magil

String Trio (Trio Lirico) Audit 97753, J/F: French

Trio; Cello Sonata 1 (Trio Khnopff) Pavan 7590, J/F: Sull

Trio (Marvin Trio) Genui 19678, M/A: Estep

Violin Pieces; Trio (Kremer) DG 4837522, M/A: Estep

Violin Pieces (Newicka) RecA 6, M/A: Magil

VALENT: Poetic Logbook (Ensemble/Valent) DG 4818169, J/A: new, Faro

VALI: For violin, quartet (Carpe Diem Qt) MSR 1738, M/A: Gimbel

VALLS: Mass, Regalis (Academy Ancient Music) AAM 8, S/O: Brewer

VARESE: Ameriques (Langree) FanF 16, M/A: see GERSHWIN

VASKS: P Qt (Ipp-Ivanov Qt) Naxos 574073, J/A: new, Faro

Trio pieces (Palladio Trio) Ond 1343, J/A: Gimbel

VC; Summer Dances; P Qt (Gluzman+ SACD) BIS 2352, S/O: Haskins

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Dona Nobis Pacem (Smith) Ref 732, J/F: see BATES

Life & Work (Albio 39, M/A: O'Connor Songs (Bevan, Williams) Albio 38, M/A: Moore, R Songs (Whately, Williams) Albio 37, J/F: Moore, R Sym 3+4 (Brabbins) Hyp 68280, M/J: Althouse Sym 5 (Collins SACD) BIS 2367, N/D: Vroon

VELASQUEZ: V Son 1+2 (Baldini) Naxos 574118, J/F: Kellenberger

VENABLES: Requiem (Gloucester Cathedral) Somm 618, N/D: Vroon

VENDETTI: Piano Pieces; Sax Pieces (Vendetti) 4Tay 4055, M/J: new, Faro

VEPRIK: Orchestral Pieces (Mueller SACD) MDG 9012133, J/F: Hecht

VERACINI: Overtures (Arte dell'Arco SACD) CPO 555220, S/O: French

VERDI: Attila (Bavarian Radio) BR 900330, S/O: Locke 4 Seasons (Minasi) PHR 112, N/D: see VIVALDI

Macbeth (Verrett, Cappuccilli/Abbado) DG 4835601, J/F: Altman

Songs (Solis) IBS 192019, J/A: Reynolds

Trouvere (Bologna/R Abbado) Dyn 7835, J/F: Hecht

VERESS: Stg Trio (Lockenhaus) Alpha 458, J/F: see BARTOK

VICTORIA: Mass, Gaudeamus (Contrapunctus) Sign 608, S/O: Brewer

Requiem (Toulouse) Regen 551, M/J: Brewer

VIEUXTEMPS: VC 4 (Feng) Chant 40719, M/A: see PAGANINI

Violin & Orchestra (Kuppel) Naxos 573993, N/D: Thoms

VILLA-LOBOS: Guitar C; Harmonica C; Qn (Barrueco/Guerrero) Naxos 574018, N/D: McCutcheon

Piano Pieces; Bachianas 4 (Solounios) Sheva 218, J/F: Estep

Sextet; Guitar Etudes (Sextuor Mystique Ens) Uran 14050, J/F: Smith

VILSMAYR: Solo Violin Partitas (Bernardi) Strad 37147, S/O: Brewer

VINCI, L: Gismondo—Pam 17, N/D: Locke

VINCI, P: Spiritual Sonnets (Note Bene) Tocc 553, N/D: Moore, C

VINE: Piano Sonatas 1+4; Preludes; Bagatelles (Garritson) LG 0, M/J: Gimbel

VIOTTI: Flute Qts (Viotti Qt) Brill 95645, S/O: Gorman

VITALI: Chamber Sonatas op 14 (Italico Splendore) Tact 632202, J/A: Moore, C

Sonatas (Italico Splendore) Tact 632206, N/D: Brewer

Violin Sonatas (Italico Splendore) Tact 632204, S/O: Thomson

2-Violin Sonatas (Italico Splendore) Tact 632203, S/O: Thomson

VIVALDI: Concertos for Strings (Archicembalo) Brill 95835, J/F: Lehman

Concertos, Paris (Modo Antiquo) Tact 672260, M/J: Brewer

Concertos (Tafelmusik) Tafel 1039, M/A: Loewen

4 Seasons (Sulic, cello) Sony 98635, M/A: Moore

4 Seasons (Minasi) PHR 112, N/D: French

4 Seasons, with Piazzolla (Steinbacher SACD) Penta 5186746, N/D: Thomson

VCs (Plewniak) Evoc 7, M/J: French

Violin Concertos VII, Castello (Tampieri) Naive 7078, M/A: Magil

Manchester V Sons (Fewer) Leaf 229, M/J: French

VLADIGEROV: Piano Pieces (Gatev) Gega 412, N/D: Estep

VLASSE: Songs (Plitman) MSR 1754, N/D: new, Boyd

VOGLER: Gustaf Adolf (Farnscombe) Sterl 1121, M/A: Reynolds

VOLCKMAR: Organ Pieces (Szadejko) MDG 9062139, M/J: see GRONAU

VON EINEM: The Trial (Gruber) Capr 5358, J/F: Sullivan

WAGNER: Overtures & Excerpts [2CD] (Levine) DG 4840636, M/A: Hecht

Siegfried, sel (Inkinen) SWR 19078, J/F: Altman

Wesendonck Songs (Pregardien, C SACD) Chall 72788, M/A: see SCHUMANN

Wesendonck Songs (Siegel) Hans 19078, M/J: see STRAUSS

WALKER, D: Chamber Music (Various) Alb 1794, M/A: new, Faro

WALTON: Cello Concerto (Bailey/Llewellyn) Stein 30156, N/D: O'Connor

Facade Suites+ (Geer) Somm 614, S/O: Moore, R

V Sons (Huang) Cent 3681, J/F: Magil

WEBER: Clarinet Concertos; Symphonies (Lluna) IBS 222019, S/O: Hanudel

Euryanthe (Vienna Radio/Trinks) Capr 5373, J/F: Locke

Flute Sonata & Trio (Seo) Naxos 573766, J/F: Gorman

Freischutz (Leipzig Radio/Janowski) Penta 5186788, M/A: Altman

Freischutz (Essen/Netopil) Oehms 988, S/O: Reynolds

Peter Schmoll (Vienna Radio) Capr 5376, J/F: Locke

WEIGL: Qt 7+8 (Thomas Christian Ensemble) CPO 555201, N/D: Dutterer

WEILAND: Quartets 4+5 (Melbourne Qt) Naxos 574028, N/D: new, Boyd

WEINER: Pieces for Orchestra 3 (Csanyi) Naxos 574125, N/D: French

WEIR: Chamber Pieces & Songs (Hebrides Ens) Delph 34228, M/A: Gimbel

WELTER: Cantatas (Ecco La Musica) Chris 77440, J/F: Loewen

WHITACRE: Marimba Qts (Burgess+) Sign 625, S/O: new, Faro

WHITBOURN: Choral Pieces (Cor Cantiamo) DivA 25192, J/A: Greenfield

WHITE, J: Piano Sonatas (Powell) Conv 515, J/A: Haskn

WHITING: Percussionist-Storyteller (Composer) NewF 259, N/D: new, Vroon

WIDOR: Organ Sym 1; Latin Suite (Bell) Cent 3763, J/A: Delcamp

Organ Syms 1+2 (Rubsam) Naxos 574161, M/J: Delc

Organ Sym 2+3 (Bell) Cent 3764, N/D: Delcamp

Organ Sym 4+7 (Bell) Cent 3765, N/D: Delcamp

Songs (Hays, Hanig, Saunders) Alb 1813, S/O: Moore, R

WILLAN: Songs (Various) Centr 26719, M/A: Moore, R

WILLIAMS, L: Songs (Faux) NewW 80818, J/F: new, Boyd

WILMS: Flute Sonatas (Dabringhaus) MDG 9032149, N/D: Gorman

P Qts (Valentin Qt) CPO 555247, J/F: Kell

WINTERBERG: Piano Pieces (Helbig) Tocc 531, M/J: Haskins

WOLF: Italian Songbook (Seefried, Fischer-Dieskau) DG 4840556, M/A: Moore, R

Songs, vol 10 (Various) Stone 80918, M/J: Althouse

WOLFE, J: Fire in My Mouth (Van Zweden) Decca 30845, M/A: Gimbel

WOOLF: Fire & Flood (Haimovitz, Trinity Wall St) Penta 5186803, M/J: new, Boyd

WORDSWORTH: PC; VC (Gibbons) Tocc 526, J/F: O'Co

WOS: Flute Pieces (Kaczka) Hans 20001, M/J: Gorman

YSAYE: Violin Pieces (Various) FugaL 758, M/J: Magil

ZAIMONT: V Son; Qts (Amernet Qt) MSR 1709, J/F: Gim

ZAREBSKI: P Qn (Plawner Qt) CPO 555124, J/F: see MONIUSZKO

ZEBROWSKI: Magnificat; Mass, Pastoritta (Kosendiak) Acco 258, J/F: Greenfield

ZEMLINSKY: The Mermaid (Albrecht SACD) Penta 5186740, N/D: Hecht

Qt 2 (Arod Qt) Erato 542552, M/A: 168, Dutterer
Sinfonietta; Maeterlinck Songs (Malkki) Capr 5377, S/O:
O'Connor
Der Traumgorge (Albrecht) Capr 5395, M/J: Locke
ZEYNALOVA: Chamber Pieces (Composer+) DreyG
21117, J/F: new, Faro
ZIMMERMANN: Piano Pieces (Fernandez) BIS 2495,
N/D: Gimbel
V Sons (Milwidsky) Tocc 541, S/O: Magil
ZIMMERMANN, W: Lokale Musik (Composer) Mode 307,
J/F: Gimbel

COLLECTIONS ORCHESTRAL

British Tone Poems 2: Foulds, Fogg, Howell, Cowan,
Hadley (Gumba) Chan 10981, J/F: 155, O'Connor
Cantos Islenos (Sanches-Arana) IBS 212019, N/D: new,
Boyd
Cleveland Orchestra Box: Strauss, Prok, Beet, Varese,
Deutsch—Cleve 1, S/O: 113, Hecht
Forgotten Treasures: Schmidt, Weiner, Pizzetti, Tcherep-
nin (Falletta) BeauF 531, M/A: 165, O'Connor
Jascha Horenstein [10CD] Prof 19014, S/O: 114, Hecht
Rafael Kubelik: Russian & Czech [10CD] Prof 19019, M/J:
141, Hecht
Karl Munchinger: Baroque [8CD] Decca 4840160, M/J:
143, Althouse
Karl Munchinger: Classical [8CD] Decca 4840170, M/A:
165, Althouse
Night at the Ballet (Fistoulari) Guild 3502, J/F: 155, Fisch
Opera-Comique Overtures (Halasz) Naxos 574122, N/D:
116, Fisch
Palace Premieres (Countess of Wessex Strings) CW
5001, M/A: 166, Fisch
Piano Concertos: Kapustin, Shostakovich (Masleev)
Melya 2624, J/A: 136, Estep
Hans Swarowsky [10CD] Prof 18061, M/A: 167, Vroon
George Szell, 1950s [9CD] Prof 19018, J/F: 156, Vroon

CHAMBER

Advenio Trio: horn, violin, piano—Atwell, Aurebach, Sar-
gon—Cent 3770, J/A: 137, Kilpatrick
Anders Chydenius Collection: Sacchini, Schulz, Pugnani
(Kokkola Qt) Alba 449, S/O: 117, French
Armenian Piano Trios (Aeternus Trio) Tocc 6, N/D: 117,
Estep
Chamber Music with Jorg Demus: Beet, Schum, Dvor,
Demus—Gram 99203, J/A: 155, Thomson
Cobbett Prize Winners: Hurlstone, Knussen, Lewis
(Berkeley Ens) Reson 10243, J/F: 157, Dutt
English Piano Trios (Anima Mundi Trio) DivA 25158, M/J:
144, O'Connor
Flute-Cello-Piano: Martinu, Gaubert, Weber, Damase
(Boyd-Doane-Snyder) Bridg 9539, N/D: 120, Gorman
Lark Quartet Farewell: Harbison, Weesner, Waggoner—
Bridg 9524, M/A: 169, Kilpatrick
The Leipzig Circle: Schumann 2, Mendelssohn 2, Gade
(Phoenix Trio) Stone 80949, S/O: 117, Althouse
Leipzig Circle 2: Mend Trio 1; Schumanns Trios (London
Bridge Trio) Somm 619, N/D: 117, Dutterer
New England Trios: Piston, Perera, Bernstein (Pitchon+)
Bridg 9530, J/A: 137, Estep
Portuguese Trios: Santos, De Freitas, Delgado (Pangea
Trio) Naxos 574014, J/F: Dutterer
Russian Trios: Rachmaninoff, Babajanian, Alabiev
(Zhdanov) Prof 16092, M/A: 153, Vroon
Silenced Voices (Black Oak Stg Trio) Ced 189, J/F: 159,
Faro
String Quartets before the String Quartet: Purcell, Locke,
Blow (Kitgut Qt) HM 902313, M/J: 145, Thomson

CONTEMPORARY

Apollo Chamber Players: within earth—Brouwer, Wal-
czak, Dubois—Navon 6262, J/A: new, Boyd
Azrieli Music 2: Murphy, Dorman, Glick (St John+) Anal
9262, J/F: new, Boyd
Boston Symphony Commissions: Nathan, Tsontakis,
Andres, Shepherd (Nelsons) Naxos 559874, M/A: 165,
Gimbel
Contemporary American: Lifschitz, James (Beck) N/S
1065, J/A: 136, Gorman
Dancing on Glass—women (violin, cello) Alb 1797, J/A:
new, Boyd
Delicate Omens: flute & guitar—Maret & Bergeron (Folias
Duo) Folia 2, M/A: new, Boyd
Diaries of Adam & Eve: Daugherty, Knific, Chave (Walvo-
ord) Alb 1791, J/A: 140, Sullivan
Dimensions 2: Stem, Whitley, Francis—Navon 6251, M/A:
new, Faro
Empowering Silenced Voices (Chorosynthesis) Cent
3699, J/F: new, Boyd
Figments (Various) Navon 6259, M/A: new, Faro
Flute & Clarinet (O'Connor & Neidlich) NewF 258, N/D:
new, Vroon
For My Love 3 (Mann) Tocc 504, M/J: new, Boyd
Healing Modes (Brooklyn Rider) Circ 14, J/A: new, Boyd
Meredith, Goehr, Matthews (Aurora Orchestra+) NMC
239, S/O: new, Faro
Modules+ (Composer+) CompC 48, J/F: new, Boyd
Moto Celeste (Trio Casals) Navon 6266, M/J: new, Faro
New Armenian Pieces: Avanesov, Kartalyan, Zohrabyan
(Various) NewF 244, M/J: new, Faro
New Music: Movio, Grossman, Gato—Kairo 15070,2,5,
N/D: new, Vroon
New Music: Scelsi & Baltakas—Kairo 15030+45, N/D:
new, Vroon
New Music: Globokar & Hilli—Kairo 15059+78, N/D: new,
Vroon
Panufnik Legacies III (Roth) LSO 5092, S/O: new, Faro
Playing on the Edge: Erickson, Castellano, Field (Sirius
Qt) Navon 6249, J/F: new, Boyd
Prisma 3 (Peterdlik) Navon 6271, M/J: new, Faro
Ran, Higdon, Zwilich (Pacifica Qt) Ced 196, N/D: new,
Faro
Spark Catchers (Chineke Orchestra) NMC 250, M/J: new,
Faro
Third Sound: Heard Havana—Innov 990, J/A: new, Boyd
Untold (Summerhayes, Grainger) Nimb 6398, J/A: new,
Boyd
Viola & Strings: Brill 96053, S/O: 136, Thomson
Vox (Heare Ens) Innov 40, M/J: new, Faro
Voyages: Convery & Boyle (The Crossing) Innov 28, J/F:
new, Boyd

BRASS

(Kilpatrick unless noted)

Brass Showcase—8 groups: Sayd 452, M/A: 170
Chicago Brass & Organ: Reformation—MSR 1735, M/A:
171
Constellations: Gjeilo, Wagner, Gabrieli (Canadian
National Brass) Anal 8924, J/A: 137
From Heaven to Earth: Telemann to Rheinberger (Pfeiffer
Trumpet Consort Cant 58052, J/F: 159
Gewandhaus Brass: Genui 20693, J/A: 138
Night before Christmas (Burning River Brass) Azica
71319, N/D: 159
Norwegian Trombone Ens: Beet, Telemann, Deb—LAWO
1194, S/O: 118
Preludes, Rags, Cakewalks: (London Brass) MPR 5, J/A:
138
River Raisin Ragtime Revue: CMU 241, N/D: 138
Royal Brass King James I (Andre+) Decca 4828527, M/A:
170

OBOE & BASSOON

20th Century Jewish Oboe: Gal, Finzi, Dorati, Haas (Schmidt) Strad 37102, M/A: 182, Hanudel
 Bassoon & Guitar (Ferrara Duo) Antes 319307, N/D: 118, Gorman
 Bassoon Concertos: Mozart, Weber, DuPuy (Sambeek) BIS 2467, J/A: 138, Vroon
 Botanica: Haas, Roven, Soukup (Fraker) MSR 1723, J/F: 170, Hanudel
 Theresa Delaplain: Soler, Rubbra, Bacewicz—MSR 1691, M/A: 181, Hanudel
 French Bassoon (McGovern) Alb 1799, M/J: 146, Hanudel
 Mexican Oboe (Thompson) Equil 158, N/D: 127, Vroon
 Monde d'Hier (Lussier) ATMA 2778, M/J: 146, Hanudel
 Oboe Concertos: Pla, Telemann, Albinoni, CPE Bach (Hauser) BlueG 525, J/A: 145, Gorman
 Oboe Sonatas: Mozart, Grieg, Prokofieff (Willett) Alb 1782, J/F: 171, Gorman
 Oboe Sonatas: Cooke, Jones (Williams) Willo 63, J/A: 145, Vroon
 Theo Plath, bn: Weber, Crusell, Jolivet—Genui 20683, S/O: 118, Hanudel
 Song of the Redwood Tree (Pool) MSR 1749, J/A: Gorman

CELLO

(D Moore mostly)

20th Century Cello: Armstrong, Martinu, Thompson, P (Handy) Sleev 1011, M/A: 172
 21st Century Double Bass: Hodgson, Panufnik, Ellis, Parkin (Bosch) Merid 84655, M/A: 171
 Zuill Bailey: Brahms, Schumann, Bruch Stein—30123, J/F: 160, Althouse
 Baroque Cello (Harnoy) Anal 8907, M/A: 173
 Baroque Cello Concertos: Vivaldi, Boccherini, Haydn (Polo) IBS 52020, N/D: 119
 Baroque Violin-Cello Duos (Tartini Duo) Muso 31, J/F: 163
 British Cello: Smyth, Clarke, Maconchy (Handy) Lyrit 383, M/A: 172
 British Solo Cello (Saram) FHR 45, M/A: 173
 Casals Homage (Abel) Naxos 551418, J/F: 160
 Cello & Marimba (Stick & Bow) Leaf 231, M/J: 147
 Cello Encores (Rummel) Palad 105, N/D: 120, Vroon
 Classic Hauser: Sony 98853, M/J: 147, Vroon
 Complices (Queyras) HM 902274, M/J: 148
 Double-Bass: Schumann, Brahms, Misk (Beringer) Genui 20706, S/O: 119
 Double-bass Encores: (Oppelt) MSR 1731, J/F: 161, Fisch
 Entr'acte: Rach, Deb, Chabrier, Webern (Platte) Alb 1786, J/F: 161
 Exiles in Paradise: Immigrants in Hollywood (Smith) Naxos 579055, S/O: 119
 French Cello (Frankova) Cent 3753, M/J: 147
 Haydn & Friends—Gamba (Eckert) Hans 17064, N/D: 119
 Italian Violin-Cello Duos (Zanisi & Sollima) Arcan 468, J/A: 140
 Antonio Janigro 4CD: Prof 20002, J/A: 139
 Sheku Kanneh-Mason: Elgar, Bloch, Klengel—Decca 31491, J/A: 139
 Kolophonistinnen: 4 cellos—Gram 99218, S/O: 118
 Richard Locker: Short pieces & arias—Leg 518, J/F: 162, Fisch
 Daniel Muller-Schott: Solo cello—Orfeo 984191, M/A: 173
 Requiebro (Saram) FHR 97, S/O: 119
 Russian Cello (Croise) Avie 2410, M/A: 172
 Russian Visions: Strav, Schnittke, Smirnov (Vukotic) Somm 606, M/J: 148
 Denis Severin: Schumann, Cassado, Rach, Faure—SoloM 318, S/O: 119

Summerland: Black American Cello (Yeon-JiYun) MSR 1752, J/A: 141
 Luciano Tarantino: Tortelier, Tcherepnin—Brill 95964, J/F: 162
 Tea for 2 Cellos—Chinese: SoloM 327, J/F: 160, Fisch
 Paul Tortelier [3CD] Audit 21455, J/A: 140
 Benjamin Whitcomb: Bloch, Reger, Muczynski—MSR 1587, J/A: 141

CLARINET

(most by Hanudel)

3 Sax Concertos: Cerha, Latzer, Lauba (Ernst) Genui 19669, M/A: 174, Kilpatrick
 Belle Epoque: Debussy, Brahms, Trojahn (Van Wauwe) Penta 5186808, J/F: 164
 Bernstein Story (Studnitzky & Manz) Berl 1109, J/F: 163, Fisch
 Clarinet Concertos: Lindberg, Hartmann, Farjot (Votano) FugaL 752, J/F: 165
 Clarinet Quintets for Our Time: Ellington, Rogerson, Coleman (Shifrin) Delos 3576, M/A: 175
 Clarinet Trios: Mozart, Schumann, Reinecke (Teton Trio) Cent 3786, N/D: 120
 Clarinets at the Opera (Imep Namur Clarinet Choir) Cypre 2625, M/J: 149
 Contemporary Clarinet: Hajdu, Harrop, Hoffmann, Heimer (Hoffmann+) Genui 20695, S/O: 120
 Fairy Tales: Mozart, Schumann, Kurtag, Prok (Kuff, Self-heims) Music 56969, J/F: 163
 Wesley Ferreira: Duraõ, Derrica, Cattapatoso—Cent 3743, M/J: 149
 Flute & Clarinet Solo (Darling & Arbulu) Cent 3717, S/O: 121, Gorman
 Pierre Genisson: Copland, Bernstein, Stravinsky—Apart 218, J/A: 142
 Latin American Clarinet: Lobato, Saglie, D'Rivera (Figueiredo) Cent 3740, S/O: 120
 Northern Fantasies: Draeseke, Loewe, Winding (Nelson) Sound 1111, J/F: 164
 Second Wind: Bach, Canfield, Handel, Koechlin (Camwell) Navon 6253, M/A: 174
 Solas—Sax & Organ (McChrystal & Wilson) FHR 93, N/D: 120
 Spheres (Trio Eclipse) Prosp 2, N/D: 117

FLUTE

(most by Gorman)

20th Century: Hindemith, Denisov, Prok (Lupachev) Naxos 579069, N/D: 121
 Anonymous Venetian Recorder Sonatas (D'Avena) Ramee 1905, M/J: 173
 British Flute: Scott, VWms, Bowen (Sherman) BlueG 515, J/F: 167
 Early 20th Century Women: Bonis, Boulanger, Chaminade (Hurel) Alpha 573, J/A: 143, Harrington
 Flute & Cello Rarities (Koga & Lomakov) Genui 20700, N/D: 121
 Flute & Clarinet Chronicles (Crescent Duo) BlueG 543, J/A: new, Faro
 Flute & Guitar (Glinka & Botsis) Phasm 15, N/D: new, Boyd
 Flute & Harp: Debussy, Jolivet, Schafer (Kalysta Duo) Leaf 226, M/J: 151
 Flute & Harp: Schub, Schum, Deb, Caplet (Queens Duo) Genui 20691, S/O: 122
 Flute Fantasias w Guitar (Cavatina Duo) Bridg 9541, N/D: 121
 Flute Pieces by Women: Saariaho, Williams—FurAr 6826, N/D: new, Vroon
 Flute Sonatas: Hummel, Reicha, Weber (Pilch) RecA 3, M/J: 151

Flute, Viola, Harp: Debussy, Bax, Genzmer (Trio Partout)
Gram 99196, J/F: 166
Fragile Phrases: flute & guitar (Duo Delinquo) Prop 2083,
J/F: 166
Giantess (Brown) Innov 43, M/A: new, Boyd
Iwona Glinka: Willo 13, M/J: 150
Temo Kharshiladze: Reinecke, Prok, Taktakishvili—Gram
99201, M/A: 176
Opera for Flute (Seel) Hans 19077, J/A: 143
Emmanuel Pahud: Dreamtime: Reinecke, Penderecki,
Takemitsu—Warrn 539244, M/A: 176
Piccolo Concertos: Liebermann, Campo, Damase (Beau-
madier) Skarb 3192, M/A: 175
Piccolo Encounters: 20th Century (Stahel) SoloM 329,
N/D: 122
Recorder Pieces: Marcello, Vivaldi, Bellinzani (Staropoli)
Brill 96052, J/A: 144
Recorder Sonatas, 18th Century Netherlands (Bosgraaf)
Brill 95907, J/F: 165
Sonora Slocum: Barber, Bartok, Copland—Affet 1903,
J/F: 167
Ashley Solomon—historic inst: Bach, Telemann, Leclair—
Chani 43020, J/A: 142
Song in the Night—belle epoque (Mazzoli) Dyn 7862,
S/O: 121
Wiesław Suruto: Taffanel, Doppler, Briccialdi—RecA 27,
M/A: 177
Swedish Women (Gudmundson) MSR 1722, M/J: 150
Voyage: Flute & Guitar (Friend, Ogden) Chan 20037, J/F:
166
Alena Walentin: Amirov, Bowen, Schulhoff—Guild 7820,
M/J: 152

GUITAR

2-Guitar Recital: Petit, Rodrigo, Cast-Ted (Olsen & Haug-
land) Simax 1361, M/A: 181, Smith
Ali Arango: Naxos 574111, M/A: 177, Smith
Arctic Sonata: (Bjornsson) Emec 137, M/A: 178, Smith
Robert Aussel: Tangos—IBS 62019, J/F: 167, Smith
Balkan Guitar: (Grgic) Naxos 573920, M/A: 178, Smith
Anton Baranov: Fleur 58047, J/F: 168, Smith
Eileen Baum: ArcoD 215, N/D: 123, McCutcheon
Rupert Boyd: SonoL 92231, M/A: 177, Smith
Alejandro Cordova: Naxos 573972, J/F: 169, Smith
Davide Fabbri: Viaggio: DotG 1908, N/D: 123, Brewer
Salvatore Fodera: Mediterranean—Brill 95862, M/J: 173,
Brewer
Grawemeyer Award Composers: Tower, Takemitsu,
Andriessen, Currier (Kupinski+) Sound 1112, N/D: 124,
McCutcheon
Liz Hogg: Alb 1801, N/D: 123, McCutcheon
Italian Concertos (Segre) Delos 3546, N/D: 125, McC
Vojin Kocic: Jose, Albeniz, Manen—Naxos 574133, M/A:
179, Smith
Mateusz Kowalski: Acco 251, M/A: 179, Smith
Celia Linde: Shades of Blue—Propr 2085, M/A: 180,
Smith
Napoleonic Sonatas (Valois) Cent 3733, N/D: 126,
McCutcheon
New Canadian 2-Guitar Pieces (Cowan & Cicchillitti) Anal
8792, J/F: 168, Smith
New Zealand Guitars: (Curry & Moriarty) Naxos 579041,
J/F: 169, Smith
New with Guitar 12: Lehrdahl, Bland, Leisner (Starobin)
Bridg 9520, M/A: 180, Smith
Ji Hyung Park Recital: Naxos 574140, S/O: 123,
McCutcheon
Peace: Radice, Johnson, Sor (Johnson) DosA 2019, S/O:
122, McC
Premiere Recordings (Isbin) Zoho 202005, S/O: 122,
McCutcheon

David William Ross: Nakada, Piazzolla, Takemitsu—
Ravel 8019, M/A: 180, Smith
Salut d'Amour: Ponce, Castelnuovo-T, Haug (Gronona,
Ciccolini) Strad 37141, M/A: 178, Smith
Sonatas 19th Century: (Forqueddu) Brill 95558, N/D:
124, McCutcheon
Souvenirs of Spain & Italy (Isbin; Pacifica Qt) Ced 190,
M/A: 179, Smith
Frank Wallace: Wallace, Britten, Segreras—Gyre 10113,
M/A: 181, Smith
Friedemann Wuttke & Friends: Piazzolla, Boccherini,
Rodrigo—Prof 19067, N/D: 126, McCutcheon

HARP

Lauren Scott: 20th Century—Avie 2417, J/A: 144, French
Viola & Harp: Bax, S-S, Schub, Britten (Xu & Schrama)
Prof 19069, S/O: 136, Thomson

HARPSICHORD

Avant-Garde Cembalo (Nyquist) Music 55723, M/A: 181,
Lehman
Fitzwilliam Virginal Book 7 (Belder) Brill 95648, S/O: 124,
Lehman
Hpsi Sons: Scarlatti, Soler, Albeniz (Pozuelo) Strad
37140, J/F: 170, Lehman
Modern Harpsichord: Takemitsu, Saariaho, Bryars (Esfa-
hani) Hyp 68287, S/O: 124, Haskins
Time Flies—contemporary (Funaro) Cent 3783, N/D: 127,
Lehman
Toccata (Buccarella) Ricer 407, J/F: 169, Lehman

MISCELLANEOUS

LSO Percussion Ensemble: Reich, Corea, Locke, Sim-
cock—LSO 5090, S/O: new, Faro
Piano & Erhu III (Li & Hamm) Redsh 474, N/D: new, Boyd

ORGAN

Art & Rhapsodie (Chriss) ATMA 2782, M/J: 152, Delcamp
Berlin Organ: Mendelssohn, Rufer (Sieling SACD) MDG
9462161, S/O: 127, Delcamp
Eastbourne (Eadon) Willo 60, M/J: 153, Delcamp
Alexander Finch: Jongen, Dove, Liszt—DivA 25193, J/F:
171, Delcamp
French Eclet: Messiaen, Widor (Bruns) ProOr 7220, J/F:
171, Delcamp
Gdansk Organ 1 (Szadejko) MDG 9062157, N/D: 129,
Loewen
Amelie Held Recital: Hera 2128, M/J: 153, Delcamp
Nordic Journey 9 (Hicks) ProOr 7290, S/O: 126, Delcamp
Nordic Journey 10 (Hicks) ProOr 7292, N/D: 129, Del-
camp
Once Upon a Time: Ravel, Durufle, Robin (Robin at Dis-
ney Hall) Brill 96134, S/O: 126, Delcamp
Organ Pieces by Women (Ajossa) Strad 37132, J/A: 145,
Delcamp
Organ Trios: Rheinberger, Gustafsson, Storm (Johnsson)
Prop 2084, M/A: 182, Delcamp
Organ at Bobenthal (Brembeck) Cant 58053, N/D: 128,
Gatens
Organic Creatures (Vicens) ConsS 139, J/A: 147,
Lehman
Timothy Parsons: Regen 523, M/J: 153, Gatens
Pax Britannica (Stove) ArsOr 2, J/A: 146, Delcamp
Prairie Sounds (Thevenot) Raven 162, M/J: 154, Del-
camp
Christa Rakich: Bach, Senfter, Woodman—Loft 1139, J/A:
146, Delcamp
St Agostino in Cremona (Bottini) Crem 19049, N/D: 127,
Gatens
Swedish 18th Century (Lundblad) Capr 21928, J/A: 146,
Delcamp

Manuel Tomadin: Strungk, Morhardt—Brill 95758, M/J: 154, Gatens
 Gillian Weir: Dupre, Vierende, Charpentier—Decca 4818742, M/A: 183, Delcamp

PIANO

20th Century Foxtrots (Wallisch) Grand 813, J/A: 152, Fisch
 A New Yorker—Impressions (Chang) Cent 3795, M/J: 155, Harr
 James Adler: Mouss, Moz, Deb, Adler—Alb 1781, J/F: 172, Harr
 All Waltzes (Deliyska) Chall 72841, J/A: 149, Repp
 American Rage: Rzewski, Copland, Wolfe (Tao) Warnr 535477, M/A: 189, Sull
 Miyako Arishima: Chopin, Takemitsu, Szymanowski—Stein 30118, J/F: 172, Repp
 Baroque Suites: Bach, Rameau, Schnittke (Proshayev) Piano 10179, M/J: 159, Lehman
 Jean-Efflam Bavouzet: Clementi, Dussek, Hummel—Chan 20128, N/D: 130, Repp
 Stephen Beus: Dance: Bach, Mozart, Ravel—Cent 3745, S/O: 127, Harr
 Bravura: Addinsell, Turok, Chopin, Litoff (Pierce) MSR 1640, M/A: 188, Vroon
 Sara Beth Briggs: Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Gal—Avie 2418, N/D: 130, Repp
 British 2 Pianos: Bax, Britten, Bowen, Bennett (Berlinskaya & Ancelle) Melya 2565, M/A: 183, Harr
 Dmytro Choni: Deb, Ginastera, Prok—Naxos 574136, N/D: 131, Harr
 Chopin Festival Hamburg 2019 (4 Pianists) Naxos 579068, N/D: 136, Repp
 Jane Coop: Bach, Beethoven, Rach—Sky 1901, M/A: 183, Estep
 Czech cycles (Ahn) Cent 3781, J/A: 148, Repp
 Favorite Encores (Kirova) ConBr 22091, S/O: 130, Estep
 Anna Fedorova: Chopin, Liszt, Scriabin—Chanl 42219, M/A: 183, Repp
 Finnish Favorites (Olszewski) Cent 3732, M/A: 187, Kang
 Fire: Falla, Stravinsky, Liszt (Kosuge) Orch 108, M/A: 185, Repp
 Rudolf Firkusny [10CD] Prof 19013, N/D: 131, Repp
 French Piano (Fialkowska) ATMA 2766, M/A: 184, Harr
 French Piano Rarities: Deb, Messiaen, Boulez (Van Raat) Naxos 573894, N/D: 134, Harr
 Elena Gaponenko: Beet, Schub, Schumann—Oehms 1707, J/F: 173, Kang
 Umi Garrett: Bach, Chopin, Beet, Liszt—Umi 0, J/F: 174, Repp
 Emil Gilels 11: Beet & Rach PC 3 (Jochum & Ormandy) Dorem 8100, S/O: 128, Vroon
 Friedrich Gulda: concertos—SWR 19088, J/A: 150, Haskins
 Great Pianists as Composers: Schnabel, Gould, Lipatti (Miyamoto) BlueG 501, M/J: 158, Haskins
 Gugnin, Kholodenko, Geniusas: Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann—Melya 2619, S/O: 132, Repp
 Half-Remembered Music: Chopin, Bach, Mompou, Crumb (Yang) BlueG 531, M/J: 161, Vroon
 Hidden Treasures: Norwegian (Marin) Alba 446, M/A: 187, Kang
 Hikaye: Turkish, Bloch, Takemitsu (Bengi) FugaL 759, M/J: 155, Kang
 Homage to Godowsky (Gugnin) Hyp 68310, S/O: 128, Kang
 Humoresques: Grieg, Dvorak, Reger, Schumann (Gulbadamova) Hans 19036, M/A: 185, Becker
 Hungarian Melody: Brahms, Liszt, Schubert (Gulbadamova) Hans 19037, M/J: 157, Repp
 Iberia & Francia: Ravel, Falla, Albeniz, Mompou (Cooper) Chan 20119, J/F: 173, Repp

Shinnosuke Inugai: Genui 20680, S/O: 129, Estep
 Italian Inspirations: Bach, Rach, Liszt, Dallapiccola (Bax) Sign 611, J/A: 149, Repp
 Svetozar Ivanov: Intermissions—Gega 419, S/O: 129, Haskins
 Jewish Composers, 1922-43 (Worms) Zefir 9669, S/O: 132, Becker
 Peter Jozsa: Haydn, Schub, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt—Gram 99213, S/O: 129, Repp
 Kete: African & Diaspora (Nyaho) MSR 1708, S/O: 130, Estep
 Honggi Kim: Schum P Qn; Vine, Granados, Ravel—Naxos 574232, N/D: 133, Becker
 Oleg Kleiankina: Salonen, Bolcom, Crumb, Zaimont—BlueG 505, M/J: 157, Haskins
 Latin American 2-Pianos: Gustavino, Pinto, Bolcom (Baltian & Polischuk) BlueG 539, J/A: 148, Harr
 Latin Soul: South Americans (Martino) Tico 2, M/A: 187, Kang
 Lebanese Piano (Khoury) Grand 812, M/A: 188, Sull
 Les Six (Roges) Onyx 4219, J/A: 151, Harr
 Long 17th Century (Pienaar) Avie 2415, M/J: 158, Lehman
 Moura Lympny [6CD] Decca 4829404, M/A: 186, Repp
 Warren Mailley-Smith: Mozart, Chopin, Beethoven, Gershwin—Sleev 1002++, J/F: 175, Vroon
 Moon Rainbow: Bach & Kapustin (Imorde) Berl 301407, S/O: 128, Harr
 Keigo Mukawa: Ravel, Liszt, Bach—Acous 13819, J/A: 150, Repp
 Neo-Classical: Haydn-Stravinsky (Greenberg) FurA 6820, M/J: 156, Repp
 Norwegian piano (Sobon-Wakarecy) Acco 267, S/O: 131, Repp
 Cecile Ousset [7CD] Decca 4827395, M/A: 188, Becker
 Percy & his friends (Masters) Herit 179, M/J: 158, Becker
 Philippine Piano (Pinkas) MSR 1645, J/F: 175, Kang
 Reminiscences of Brazil (Badgerow) DivA 25201, N/D: 129, Kang
 Richter in Prokofieff & Rachmaninoff [11CD] Prof 19052, S/O: 130, Harr
 Ada Aria Ruckschlos: Bach, Franck, Beet, Prok—Hans 20033, N/D: 134, Becker
 Savile Club Composers: Parry, Quilter, Arnold, Stanford (Karpeyev) Somm 601, J/F: 174, Becker
 JeungBeum Sohn: Beet, Schub, Ravel—Genui 20688, S/O: 132, Kang
 Solomon [10CD] Prof 20032, N/D: 135, Becker
 Swedish Miniatures (Forsberg) DB 194, M/A: 184, Vroon
 Alexandre Tharaud: Abrahamsen, Pesson, Strasnot—Erato 532307, J/A: 151, Haskins
 Transcriptions (Taverna) Somm 605, M/J: 160, Becker
 Andrew Tyson: Scarlatti, Schubert, Albeniz—Alpha 546, M/A: 190, Kang
 Aline Van Barentzen: Chopin, Liszt, V-Lobos—APR 6031, N/D: 136, Harr
 Variations: Schumanns, Muhly, Brahms, Iyer (Momen) Somm 603, M/A: 187, Kang
 Versailles: Rameau, Couperin, Duphy (Tharaud) Erato 538642, M/J: 160, Kang
 Heidi Louise Williams: Griffes, Walker, Floyd, Barber—Alb 1790, M/A: 191, Becker
 Women Composers (Wenglin & Lomon) Navon 6254, M/A: new, Boyd
 Jae-Yeon Won: Bach to Bartok—Acous 13919, J/A: 153, Repp
 Amit Yahav: Fantasies—Chopin, Mend, Schumann—Genui 20709, N/D: 136, Repp
 Amy Yang: Bach, Shaw, Schumann—MSR 1655, M/J: 160, Haskins

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- Alison Balsom: Handel, Bach, Purcell—Warrn 537006, M/J: 161
 Keith Benjamin, tpt: Adler, Schoenberg, Garrop—Crys 961, M/A: 191
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 Chris Gekker: Moon Marked—Met 28605, S/O: 134
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 Andrew Stetson: Stephenson, Hagerty, Mikulka—MSR 1664, J/A: 153
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- 2 Moments in a City (Rossels) Music 55722, M/A: new, Boyd
 2-Violin Sonatas: Ysaye, Prok, Gorecki (Milstein, Van Bellen) Chall 72807, J/A: 157, Thomson
 4 Centuries: Mozart, Schum, Bloch, Levinson (Merdinger) Sheri 5, J/F: 182, Magil
 5 Centuries of Violin (Beikircher) Emec 140, M/J: 163, Magil
 American Avenues: Gershwin, Bernstein, Rorem (Haerten) Cent 3722, M/A: 193, Magil
 American Violin Sonatas: Schoenfeld, Stucky, Harbison (Lin) Naxos 559888, N/D: 142, Thomson
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 Bach & Vivaldi Double Concertos (Carmignola & Brunella) Arcan 472, S/O: 148, Loewen
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 Cantilena—Viola Pieces: Piazzolla, Falla, Montsalvatge (Zimmermann) HM 902648, J/A: 159, Thomson
 Tatiana Chulochnikova, solo v: Stein 30131, M/A: 191, Magil
 Czech Viola Concertos: Feld, Flosman, Bodorova (Hosprova) Sup 4276, S/O: 138, French
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 Vilda Frang: Paganini & Schubert—Warrn 541936, M/J: 163, French
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- French Violin: Debussy, Ravel, Poulenc (Ovsyanikova) Stone 80963, N/D: 143, Magil
 French V Sonatas: Faure, Ravel, Deb, Poulenc (Pietsch) Audit 97751, S/O: 140, Magil
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 Ivry Gitlis [4CD] Violin Concertos—Prof 19056, S/O: 137, Magil
 Daniel Hope—Belle Epoque: DG 4837244, J/A: 154, Magil
 Nigel Kennedy Early Years [7CD] Warrn 535574, M/J: 164, Magil
 Klagenfurt Manuscript (Skaerved) Athen 23206, N/D: 150, Magil
 Barbora Kolarova: Francaix, LeBoeuf, Slavinsky—FurAr 6822, J/A: 156, Thomson
 Denes Kovacs concertos: Dorem 8101, J/A: 156, Magil
 Fritz Kreisler 9: Naxos 111410, J/A: 157, Magil
 Tessa Lark: Fantasy: Telemann, Schub, Ravel—FHR 86, J/F: 180, Kell
 Carol Lieberman 2: Cent 3702, M/J: 165, Magil
 Meet at the Horizon: Sleeper, Drew (Powells, v & db) Cent 3728, J/F: 162, Moore
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 Alexander Meshibovsky: Romantics—Cent 3710, J/F: 181, Kell
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 Liya Petrova: Beet, Barber, Britten—Mirar 504, J/A: 158, Thomson
 Michael Rabin 4CD: Prof 20003, J/A: 158, Magil
 Rejoice: Ysaye, Penderecki, Gubaidulina (Stawek) Acco 264, M/J: 148, Moore
 Rose Petals—Canadian Va (Carey) Centr 26319, M/J: new, Boyd
 Dmitry Sitkovetsky: Beet, Schub, Grieg—Melya 2595, M/A: 194, Kell
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 Steven Staryk: short pieces—Cent 3680, M/A: 195, Kell
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 Diana Tishchenko: Strangers in Paradise—Ravel, Enesco, Prok, Ysaye—Warrn 540391, M/A: 195, Magil
 Jac van Steen: VWms, Ravel, Dutilleux—Somm 275, M/A: 195, Kell
 Viennese Divertimentos: Vanhal, Dittersdorf, M Haydn (Cicchitti) Brill 96127, S/O: 116, Thomson
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 Viola Pieces: Bach, Biber, Hindemith, Britten (Mei) Genui 19666, J/F: 181, Magil
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 Viola Sonatas & Pieces: Clarke, Werkman, Milhaud (Zemtsov) Chanl 42320, N/D: 140, Estep
 Violin & Cello by women: Archer, Coulthard, Cummings (Mercer) Centr 27719, M/J: 165, French
 Violin & Guitar: Vivaldi, Corelli, Paganini (Gomyo & Eske-linen) BIS 1998, M/A: 192, Magil
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 Violin Concertos: Bach, Jalbert, Part, Vasks (Batjer SACD) BIS 2309, J/F: 177, Magil

Violin Romances: Beethoven, S-S, Dvorak, Bruch, Svendsen (Alogna) Brill 95896, J/F: 177, Vroon
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Violin-Cello Duos: Eisler, Ravel, Widmann (Gringolts & Kouzov) Delos 3556, J/F: 158, French
Violins of Hope (Ashkenazi) Alb 1810, N/D: 141, Thomson
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Voila Viola 2—French (Dolman) Music 56976, N/D: 139, Thomson
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Alexander Woods: Dvorak, Thorneck, Mozart—MSR 1689, N/D: 144, Magil

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3 Reeds Duo: Britten, Morris, Marie—BlueG 523, N/D: 145, Vroon
Baroque Wind Sonatas (Freitagsakademie) Wint 910263, N/D: 145, Vroon
Elements: Bennett, Giroux (Eastern Wind Sym) Mark 54625, J/F: 182, Kilp
Favorite Marches (Norwegian Navy Band) FMK 2001, N/D: 146, Fisch
Four: Bozza, Bridge, Francaix, Bennett (London Myriad) Met 28587, M/A: new, Boyd
Noteworthy: Sparke, Fouchet, Stephenson (N Texas Wind Sym) GIA 1073, J/A: 160, Hanudel
Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon Trios: Lutoslawski, Veress, Juon, Schulhoff (Trilli Trio) Brill 95688, S/O: 141, Gorman
One for All: Navarro, Vilaplana, Brotons (N Texas Wind Sym) GIA 1076, J/A: 160, Hanudel
Piano & Winds: Mozart, Danzi, Beethoven (Hadland, Oslo Academy) LAWO 1187, M/J: 167, Hanudel
Polish Winds: Lutoslawski, Baird, Zulawski (Sonora Winds) MSR 1702, M/J: 167, Hanudel
Quaternity (UNLV Winds) Klav 11223, N/D: 145, Kilp
Voci Dentro Il Tempo (oboe, bassoon, piano) Bong 5207, M/J: new, Boyd

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12th Century Sacred Pieces (Ens Scholastica) ATMA 2804, S/O: 141, Gatens
15th Century Lute Duos (Lewon & Kieffer) Naxos 573854, J/A: 162, Lehman
17th Century English Consort (Dart) Decca 4828574, M/A: 200, Brewer
Akoe: Dowland, Josquin, Isaac (Taracea) Alpha 597, S/O: 146, Loewen
Anamorfosi: Allegri, Rossi, Monteverdi (Poeme Harmonique) Alpha 438, J/F: 185, Moore,C
Calls of Rome: Victoria, Josquin, Allegri (The 16) Coro 16178, S/O: 145, Gatens
Caroline Shaw: PhilB 12, N/D: new, Boyd
Christmas Songs (Van Veen/Koopman) Erato 539312, N/D: 166, Moore,R
Circle in the Water: Dowland+ (Capella de Ministrers) CdM 1947, M/J: 172, Gatens
Codex Jacobides 1600 (Cizmar) Sup 4278, N/D: 148, Loewen
Coffee Cantatas (Ensemble Masques) Alpha 543, M/A: 201, Loewen
Dialogo d'Amore: frottoles (L'Amorosa Caccia) Brill 95759, S/O: 143, Moore,C
Dumesny—Lully's Counter-tenor (A Nocte Temporis) Alpha 554, M/A: 206, Brewer
Early American Songs (Boston Camerata) HM 902628, J/F: 186, Greenf
Eton Choirbook (Purcell Consort) Decca 4840250, J/A: 163, Loewen

Extra Time (La Serenissima) Sign 641, N/D: 118, Kilp
First Voyage Around the World (Euskal Baroque Ens) AliaV 9933, M/A: 198, Brewer
Florence 1350 (Sollazzo Ens) Ambro 55, S/O: 142, Moore,C
For Milan Cathedral (Siglo de Oro) Delph 34224, M/J: 168, Moore,C
For the Mayflower (Passamezzo) Reson 10263, N/D: 151, Gatens
From Court to Court (Frotolisti Anonima) Tact 400007, N/D: 148, Moore,C
Funeral Cantatas: Bach, Telemann, Riedel (Ricerca Consort) Ricer 148, S/O: 147, Loewen
Guerra Manuscript 5 (Ars Atlantica) Naxos 574092, J/F: 185, Brewer
Impossible Silence: Dowland, Handel, Sephardic (Eratos Trio) Gram 99207, J/A: 166, Brewer
Intermedi della Pellegrina 1589 (Modo Antiquo) Dyn 7856, M/J: 168, Moore,C
Italian Baroque (RedHerring Ens) Antar 14, M/A: 200, Brewer
Judeo-Spanish Songs (Alhambra) Cent 3635, S/O: 143, Brewer
Krummhorn (Syntagma Amici) Ricer 146, S/O: 144, Loewen
Late Medieval Mass (Aeolos Ens) Cant 58049, S/O: 141, Gatens
Leonardo's Age (Caristi, s) Cent 3807, S/O: 143, Moore,C
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Lost Fresco (Umbra Lucis Ens) Uran 14054, M/J: 169, Gatens
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Maria, Dolce Maria (Roobol) Brill 95893, M/A: 197, Moore,C
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Medieval Finland & Sweden (Ens Peregrina) Tacet 248, M/J: 167, Loewen
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O Rose Belli—15th Century (Ens Dionea) Brill 95529, J/F: 183, Loewen
Office of St Sigfrid (Gemma Ens) Sterl 1840, J/A: 161, Gatens
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Saint and Sultan—13th Century (Pera Ensemble) Berl 301383, J/A: 161, Brewer
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Spanish Baroque (Vandalia) IBS 12020, S/O: 146, Brewer
Spanish Baroque Songs & Dances (La Boz Galana) Ramee 1909, M/J: 171, Brewer

Spanish Madrigals (Amystis) Brill 95905, J/F: 184, Loewen
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 Venetian Cello Sonatas (Nasillo) Arcan 465, J/F: 161, Moore
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 Venetian Violin Quartets (Clematis) Ricer 404, J/F: 184, Brewer
 Vihuela Pieces (Cherici) Verm 40024, N/D: 148, Brewer
 Violin Concertos: Locatelli, Leclair, Telemann (Pomo d'oro) Naive 30576, M/J: 170, Loewen
 Winter (Marti+) Ayros 4, J/A: 162, Brewer

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Advent Carols (King's College London) Delph 34226, N/D: 163, Gatens
 Advent Moon (Audite Chamber Choir) Alba 56, N/D: 160, Greenf
 American Christmas Carols (True Concord) Ref 734, N/D: 164, Vroon
 Ash Wednesday (St John's College) Sign 605, J/A: 168, Gatens
 Aufblick: Verdi, Wolf, Reger (Chemnitz) Auris 5089, S/O: 148, Moore, R
 Ave Maria 7 Centuries (Various) Antes 179001, S/O: 154, Gatens
 Be All Merry (University College Dublin) Sign 643, N/D: 161, Vroon
 Black Birch in Winter (Voces Musicales) MSR 1675, J/F: 189, Greenf
 Blessed art Thou Among Women (Patram Singers) Ref 737, S/O: 149, Greenf
 Cantate Domino: Bach, Handel, Telemann (BachWerk-Vokal SACD) MDG 9022138, M/J: 174, Gatens
 Christ Cathedral Dedication: Goth 49326, M/A: 202, Delcamp
 Christmas (Gesualdo 6) Hyp 68299, N/D: 162, Gatens
 Christmas: Britten & Pinkham (Warland) Goth 49317, N/D: 165, Delcamp
 Christmas Day (Eley, choirs) Affet 1904, N/D: 166, Fisch
 Christmas at St George's, Windsor: Hyp 68281, N/D: 165, Delcamp
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 Cornhill Visions (St Michael's) Regen 550, M/J: 174, Gatens
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 Festival of Carols (Indianapolis Choir) Naxos 579065, N/D: 165, Fisch
 Frieder Bernius: Haydn, Schubert, Brahms—Hans 18100, J/A: 166, Althouse
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 Heavenly Display: Shaker melodies (Georgia State Univ) Goth 49324, M/J: 175, Greenf
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 In Paradisum+ (Sofia Vocal Ens) Footp 112, M/A: 203, Greenf
 In Praise of St Catherine (St Catherine College) Reson 10246, M/A: 197, Moore, C
 King's Singers Library 1: Sign 601, J/A: 173, Fisch
 Like to the Lark (Swedish Chamber Choir SACD) Chan 5255, M/J: 175, Delcamp
 Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia: Byzantine Chant (Cappella Romana) CapR 420, M/A: 197, Brewer
 Make We Merry (Benenden Chapel Choir) Regen 547, N/D: 160, Moore, R

Male Chorus Pieces 6 (Limburg Camerata) Genui 19672, J/F: 188, Greenf
 Mirabile Mysterium: Christmas (Saxon Vocal Ensemble) CPO 555318, N/D: 163, Gatens
 New England Choirworks: Olson, Williams, Hill (Yale Schola) Hyp 68314, M/A: 203, Greenf
 North American Choral: Muhly, Larsen, Paulus (Merton College Choir) Delph 34232, S/O: 149, Greenf
 O Schöne Nacht: Rheinberger, Herzogenberg (Orpheus Vocal Ens) Carus 83510, N/D: 153, Althouse
 Opera Choruses (Bavarian Radio) BR 900329, M/A: 201, Reynolds
 Ora Singers: Tallis, Macmillan+ HM 902669, N/D: 147, Gatens
 Papagena: Many composers—Somm 608, J/A: new, Boyd
 Prayers for Notre Dame: Dupre, Poulenc, Demessieux (Walsh) Regen 538, M/A: 202, Delcamp
 Rosa Mystica: Songs to the Virgin (Birmingham Conservatory) Somm 617, N/D: 153, Greenf
 Sacred Fire (Festival Singers) Amber 125, J/F: 186, Reynolds
 Sacred Pieces: Whitacre, Musgrave, Tippett (Scottish National Youth) Sign 604, S/O: 150, Greenf
 Sacred Romantic Partsongs (Meister) Rond 6180, J/F: 187, Althouse
 Secret Life of Carols (The Telling) FHR 94, N/D: 159, Moore, R
 Silent Night (Seattle Pro Musica) SPM 9812, N/D: 164, Greenf
 So Hallow'd the Time: Christmas—Delos 3580, N/D: 165, Delcamp
 Something Borrowed (Christiana Male Choir) LAWO 1188, J/A: 167, Greenf
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 The Waiting Sky: Advent & Christmas (Sansara) Reson 10250, N/D: 160, Brewer
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 Apparition (Zubel, s) Acco 263, M/J: 182, Reynolds
 British Airs w violin (Astrop, s) Cent 3775, S/O: 150, Moore, R
 Caledonian Scenes—songs: Weir, Britten, MacCunn (Vickers) Alb 1800, J/A: 178, Moore, R
 Canadian Art Songs (Haldane) Redsh 464, N/D: new, Faro
 Clytemnestra: Samuel, Mahler, Berg (Hughes) BIS 2408, M/J: 179, Reynolds
 Countertenor Duets: Purcell & Blow (Davies & Hall) Vivat 116, J/F: 190, Reynolds
 Couples in Love—songs: Maier, Rontgen+ (Bisholt) DB 192, J/A: 170, Moore, R
 Czech Duets: Dvorak, Bendl, Bodorova (Dobesova & Ruzickova) ArcoD 210, M/J: 178, Moore, R
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 Orchestral Songs: Berg, Duparc, Rangstrom (Bystrom) SwedS 1168, M/J: 178, Reynolds
 The Other Cleopatra: Queen of Armenia—Vivaldi, Hasse, Gluck (Bayrakdarian) Delos 3591, J/A: 170, Reynold-shut
 Reine de Coeur: songs—Schumann, Poulenc, Zemlinsky (Muller) Penta 5186810, J/A: 174, Moore,R
 Romance: arias & songs (Nafornita, s) Outh 705, M/J: 180, Altman
 Romantic Songs in a Dark Time (Broberg) Thor 2656, J/F: 189, Moore,R
 Sephardic Songs: Cast-Ted+ (Malkin) Brill 95652, M/J: 180, Altman
 Slavic Songs: R-K, Dvorak, Tchai, Rach, Janacek (Romaniv) Orch 131, S/O: 153, Estep
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 Solitude: Purcell, Schubert, Barber, Dove (Gilchrist) Chan 20145, N/D: 155, Moore,R
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 Lilyana Bareva: arias—Gega 408, M/J: 176, Altman
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 Piotr Beczala: Penta 5186733, S/O: 151, Reynolds
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Stephane Degout: songs—HM 902367, J/A: 171, Moore,R
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CRITICAL CONVICTIONS

J/F: Christmas at the Symphony; Youth
 M/A: Sexual Harrassment
 M/J: Beauty; Irrational Feminism; Epidemic
 J/A: Criticism; Concert Cancellations; Epidemic;
 Piano Performance: Scientific Perspective (Repp)
 S/O: Writing & Journalism; Artist Biographies
 N/D: Music Critic and Reader (Locke); Why?

Word Police: Festival of Stupidities

Summer publicity promotes “an immersive walk-through experience”, and a few minutes later “an in-home hi/lo-tech experience”.

The 1970 dictionary defined “campus” as “the grounds of a school or college”. In 2020 we got publicity that said “the Lincoln Center Campus” had suspended public performances for the rest of March “to prioritize the health of our communities”. No one my age could think of Lincoln Center as a “campus”, and none of us would use that miserable word “prioritize”, either. As any good usage book will tell you, “prioritize” smells of bureaucracy.

A publicity notice told us about a famous actor who “commentates a film documentary”. (Obviously an illegitimate back-formation from “commentator”. But note that the latest dictionaries accept it.)

“The process of compromise achieved from our diversity as individual artists can create deeply impactful experiences for our audiences.” —an all-white musical group, promoting their concert (Ah, but some of them are women!)

From liner notes: “Originally written for string quartet, the composer always believed that (it) could be reorchestrated and expanded”. So the composer was written. This kind of stupid sentence is everywhere now. All it needs is “it was” at the beginning and “but” after the comma to be rational. Apparently no one edits liner notes.

From an obituary: “He died sadly....” How do they know how he felt about dying? Maybe he was glad to be free of this miserable world. What they were trying to say was that it is sad for us that he died and that’s not at all the way to say it.

Statement from a medical school about the new virus: “The evidence for these measures are not as strong as we would like it to be.”

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he points out harmonic progressions and pays even more attention to rhythm relations, which are important if the line is to move seamlessly. That is true with most operas from the Romantic era on, but so much so with *Tristan* that Rescigno provides rhythm tables for each scene.

The author makes it clear that such seamlessness is not really possible with operas using recitative or spoken dialogue because of all the stopping and starting. Enter Gounod's *Faust*, an opera where such flow is important and difficult to execute. The reason is that the original version of the opera contained speaking parts, and it is difficult to maintain flow over breaks for speech or recitative. Absent those parts in *Faust*, a long line is difficult to create. *Faust* also comes up in discussing the reliability of metronome markings—Gounod's are usually unreliable.

Rescigno writes that the first version of Bizet's *Carmen* ("the first *verismo* opera") also used dialogue. The better known version, with recitatives, was produced posthumously by Bizet's friend Ernest Guiraud. Rescigno notes that the action is moved mainly by the soloists, that the voices of Carmen and Don Jose should match (the opposite is true in many operas), and that Escamillo's baritone must project without the conductor having to tone down the orchestra too much. He discusses how to treat woodwind solos and notes that the final duet will not respond well to relating

the rhythms mathematically and must be handled otherwise.

The Puccini chapter tells us that the composer's use of motifs "advances Italian opera beyond where Verdi had taken it." Puccini's tempos "tend to correspond to the speed of speech" (Richard Strauss too, the author adds)—one reason not to fool too much with the sung tempos of these composers. Rescigno even identifies 'First Noel' references in *La Boheme*. Some of his points may be controversial, e.g., that the *tutti* passage at the opera's end should be its loudest music. I always assumed that honor went to parts of the Act II cafe scene, but now I think he has a point. As for the cafe scene being held outdoors at Christmas time in the middle of winter, Rescigno tells us that Paris had a climate like Puccini's native Lucca, Italy, so the composer's setting is not far-fetched. In discussing *Tosca*, Rescigno claims that Scarpia's solo in the 'Te Deum' of *Tosca* is "the finest scene Puccini ever wrote for baritone".

There is plenty of technical analysis clearly written, peering into the mind of an experienced opera conductor. Many of Rescigno's comments about various passages are subjective—conductors are interpreters, after all—but his ideas are often compelling. The book should appeal to any young opera conductor and to a devoted opera lover. The bibliography, notes, and detailed citations of relevant scores are all useful.

HECHT

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Signed, Donald R Vroon, President. Date: December 1, 2020

