

# music

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

## IMOGEN COOPER

How Liszt has inspired  
the great British pianist  
to reinvent herself

110  
REVIEWS  
CDS, DVDS  
& BOOKS  
see p67

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

#### Haydn in London

A walk with the great composer

#### Kiri Te Kanawa

An operatic life in photographs

#### Iestyn Davies

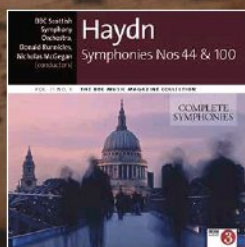
The countertenor interviewed

#### Dinu Lipatti

The pianist with the golden touch

#### Amy Beach

America's thwarted genius





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“When I started learning the cello, I fell in love with  
the instrument because it seemed like a voice. My voice.”

MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH (1927-2007)

## THE MONTH IN MUSIC

*The recordings, concerts, broadcasts and websites exciting us in March*

### ON STAGE Nighty-night

On 3 March we'll be packing a member of the *BBC Music Magazine* team off to Birmingham along with pyjamas and teddy. The reason? An all-night piano recital at the city's Town Hall. The nocturnal music-making begins at 7.30pm, with performers including Peter Donohoe, Di Xiao (pictured) and a 'mystery special guest'. See p98

### ON AIR Dead good

Radio 3 ponders mortality on 6 March when it broadcasts a Southbank Centre concert entitled 'Music to die for'. Dipping into opera and film music, the BBC Concert Orchestra explores musical responses to death, including Wagner and Janáček, plus Richard Rodney Bennett's score to the film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. See p102

### ONLINE Novel idea

Head to our website, where we are offering the chance to win *The Gustav Sonata*, Rose Tremain's hugely acclaimed musical novel about two boys growing up during World War II – one is a budding Jewish pianist, the other a German policeman. We've ten copies to give away at [www.classical-music.com/competitions](http://www.classical-music.com/competitions)

### ON DISC Chopin first

French pianist Julien Broca, a protégé of the brilliant Maria João Pires, has released his first album. It's an all-Chopin affair, featuring the 24 Preludes and the Second Sonata, and the playing, says our reviewer, is 'spellbinding'. All in all, then, an auspicious start for Rubicon Classics, the new label behind the recording. See p88







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Imogen Cooper explains  
the delights of Liszt

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to James Naughtie

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Haydn gives us the  
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With a BBC TV programme set to celebrate her career, the singer shares a few memories with us

## THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

### Jessica Duchen

Critic, journalist and author



'As a teenager I played in a masterclass with Imogen Cooper and ever since I've followed her deepening artistry with great joy. She is more than a pianist: she is a musician's musician, and a true inspiration.' Page 22

### Roger Nichols

French music expert



'Here in the Marches it has been raining for four days almost non-stop. Dinu Lipatti's Chopin Waltzes are a reason to go on living and a perfect antidote to the pungent smell of wet dog.' Page 50

### Anthony Burton

Writer and editor



'As a Radio 3 producer in the 1970s, I was intrigued when a US pianist offered a programme including music by "Mrs H.H.A. Beach". Since then, I've enjoyed discovering about this remarkably gifted composer.' Page 60

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COVER: JOHN MILLAR THIS PAGE: JOHN MILLAR, SHINJI TAKEHARA

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## Welcome



In his opinion column this month, Richard Morrison describes how composers' houses (with reference to the recent Ravel house debacle) can give some treasured insight into the great masterpieces. As someone who has visited a few composer homes over

the years, I would add that it's the smaller details in those houses that contribute, too, to our view of a composer's life and mindset.

Sibelius's home, Ainola, just outside Helsinki, is preserved, as far as possible, in the state it was when the Finn was writing some of his finest work. His desk chair has been charmingly placed at a slight angle, as if the composer has pushed it back and stepped out to make himself a cup of tea. Or indeed a stiff vodka. In some small way it humanises Sibelius – a man who may have found it as distracting to work from home as the rest of us. Richard

## Composers' surroundings are valuable in our search for an interpretation

mentions Mendelssohn's mansion in Leipzig, but despite its considerable size and comfort, the bedroom in which he died aged 38 from a series of devastating strokes is, in contrast, tiny, with barely the space to walk round the bed. It has an intimacy and privacy that the composer of some of music's most beautiful, personal miniatures maybe craved at the end of a long day.

And if the printed score gives an impression of a composer writing feverishly, quill or pencil in hand, manuscript filling up with wave after wave of inspiration, you only have to visit the Louis Viéne museum in Paris to see the inch-thick spectacles, huge-scale manuscript and thick crayons with which the organist-composer struggled as his eyesight failed towards the end of his life.

Performance practice involves more than poring over scores, treatises and contemporary accounts – composers' surroundings and possessions are equally valuable in our search for that elusive 'informed' interpretation.

Finally, do turn to p33 where you'll find a 12-page special, in association with the World Federation of International Music Competitions, looking at the art of competing in some of the world's fiercest musical arenas.

Oliver Condy

Oliver Condy Editor





# LETTERS

Write to: The editor, *BBC Music Magazine*, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol, BS1 3BN or email: [music@classical-music.com](mailto:music@classical-music.com)

## LETTER OF THE MONTH



STATESIDE STEREO:  
Dr Harvey Fletcher working  
in a sound laboratory in 1972

## STEREO STARS

Yes, Alan Blumlein was one of the pioneers of stereo sound (January issue). But, as with many innovations, there were others too who contributed to the development of stereo. It was not just Blumlein, as implied by the exclusive credit in your article.

Harvey Fletcher, of Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc., achieved stereo recording on film in 1931. He and Arthur Keller invented a 45-degree stereo recording method, and in 1936 a stereo phonograph record. In 1933, Fletcher managed to transmit a



Every month the editor will award a SolarDAB 2 Roberts radio (retail value £80 – see [www.robertsradio.co.uk](http://www.robertsradio.co.uk)) to the writer of the best letter received. The editor reserves the right to shorten letters for publication.

Philadelphia Orchestra performance from Philadelphia to Washington DC in stereo over telephone lines. Conductor Leopold Stokowski collaborated with Bell Labs scientists on some of these early projects.

So while Alan Blumlein was inventive, so too were the scientists of Bell Labs. They – and others – all deserve sharing in the credit for bringing us the realism of stereophonic recorded sound.

A Michael Noll, Stirling, NJ Jersey, US

## KEY MEMORIES

How saddened I was to read in the February issue of the passing of Anthony Goldstone (b1944) at the beginning of this year. As soon as I heard Goldstone play, I knew that he was a pianist whose tone and interpretation was going to enlighten me. He also had a deep understanding of the music itself, as reflected in his expansive and intelligent sleeve notes. My hearing of Schubert and the other greats led me to listen to other works he recorded by lesser-known composers such as Lyapunov, Gál and Graham Whetnam – none of which ever disappointed.

Paul Lofthouse, York

## A FRESH VIEW?

As I was going through my old issues of *BBC Music*, I stumbled upon and re-read Berta Jancus's review of Rolando Villazón's CD of Handel arias (DG 477 8056; May 2009 issue). I agreed with it then as I do now. But combining this experience with the premise of your regular *Rewind* section, I wonder whether your critics have ever changed their minds about a CD after a period of time? Have they ever thought they had been harsher or nicer than they should have been?

Ali I Tekcan, Istanbul, Turkey

## THE EDITOR REPLIES

We'll ask them and report back!

## LOST IN MUSIC

I was sorry to see the *Building a Library* on *Sheherazade* (January) did not mention the violinists, especially in the Thomas Beecham recording chosen as the best. It is Steven Stryk, still alive and well at 84. Though admired by

other violinists, he is still not well enough known by the public.

His lack of a solo career on major labels may have been due to his being one of the 'Symphony Six' – members of the Toronto Symphony banned by the US from a tour during the height of McCarthyism. This was especially strange in the case of Stryk, because the ban was based on his playing with a Ukrainian Youth Orchestra when he was 12 and 13. When the Red Scare was long past he became concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, but you still have to root around on smaller labels to find his legacy as a soloist. It is a legacy that is well worth celebrating.

Gil Gross, California, US

## ALL THE NOTES

The conclusion of Daniel Jaffé's delightful article on Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade* (January issue) suggests Respighi's *Belkis*, *Queen of Sheba* as possible further listening. However, the only recording mentioned is of the condensed four-movement suite. Is there a recording of the complete ballet? It would be wonderful to hear the entire score.

FJ Papp, via email

## THE EDITOR REPLIES

There is indeed a recording of the full ballet, recorded in 2007 on DVD by the Stuttgart Philharmonic under Gabriel Feltz on the Dreyer Gaido label (DVDGBR21081). It's a wonderfully lavish affair.

## CINEMA SENSATION

I'd like to add my own modest follow-up suggestion to what to listen to after Rimsky's

*Sheherazade*: Miklós Rózsa's *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940), whose new two-CD release on Prometheus is the world premiere recording of the complete film score. It is a colourful, masterful work from a young composer who went on to distinguish himself in the concert hall and at the cinema.

Preston Neal Jones, California, US

## SOL-FA, SO GOOD

When I entered the Junior section of school in 1931 our weekly music lessons were all taken using Tonic sol-fa (February). Miss Goldfinch, our teacher, used no instrument – only a tuning fork. We learned many songs from *The National Song Book*, including 'Drink to me only' and 'Here's a health unto His Majesty'. We learned the hand signs and could sing to 'la la' following these. In the top infants' class we learned sight reading and could be called out to sing from a sight-reading book.

J Gordon, Hull

## SYMPHONIC SPLIT

In the 1980s I attended concerts in which Mozart's *Haffner* Symphony was wrecked by breaking it to perform other works – on one occasion between the Second and Third movements, and on another between the Third and Fourth. So, it is infuriating, three decades later, to read of a new recording, *The Vienna Concert*, which purports to re-create Mozart's grand concert of 23 March 1783 (reviewed by Michael Tanner, February) in which, in the name of historical practice, the work is broken again.

All that Mozart said when writing to his father was that the *Haffner* was played at the start of the concert and the finale of the symphony was played (presumably for a second time) at the end.

There is no reason to infer that the symphony was not performed in its entirety at the start of the concert. On the contrary, to repeat the brilliant finale of the symphony, heard at the start, was simply an elegant way to round the event off.

John Stone, London



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# TheFullScore

OUR PICK OF THE MONTH'S NEWS, VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS

## Radio 3 to celebrate a Nobel cause

Peace Prize winner will take centre stage as station marks International Women's Day



INSPIRING WORDS:  
education activist and Nobel  
laureate Malala Yousafzai

Radio 3 has revealed how it plans to mark International Women's Day on 8 March with a range of programmes devoted to the work of female composers. As well as championing the music of women composers of the past, the station will also be celebrating today's leading talent, not least by broadcasting the premieres of three new choral works.

Perhaps the most eye-catching of those premieres will be *Speak Out* by Kate Whitley, which sets words from a speech given to the UN in July 2013 by Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai. In 2012, Yousafzai, then 15, hit the headlines when she was shot by the Taliban for writing a blog in which she campaigned for the rights of all

girls to receive education. Airlifted from Pakistan, she was treated in the UK, where she continued her campaign.

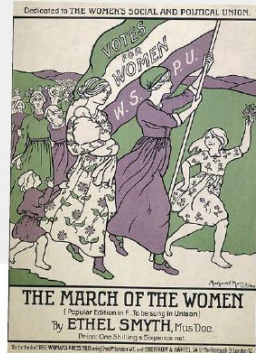
'As the speech is a call to raise our voices,' she says, 'it makes me very happy that it will be sung by a large choir, that so many voices will rise to share the message of education for all.' Conducted by Xian Zhang, *Speak Out* will be performed by the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales at Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff and broadcast at 9.30pm. Works by Sasha Johnson Manning and Dobrinka Tabakova will also be premiered on the day, both performed by the girl choristers of Truro Cathedral Choir, themselves making their first appearance on Radio 3.

Female composers will not just be the subjects of Radio 3's International

Women's Day programmes, however. They will be curating them too, as six composers – Alissa Firsova, Sally Beamish, Tansy Davies, Errollyn Wallen, Annette Peacock and Kerry Andrew – have been invited as guest editors. In addition, on the previous Saturday (4 March) Andrew McGregor will be exploring the music of Ethel Smyth in *Record Review* and Tom Service will be investigating a manuscript by Fanny Mendelssohn in *Music Matters*; and, throughout the week, *Composer of the Week* will be looking at music by women working in 16th-century Ferrara.

### International Women's Day

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL Women's Day was instigated at a conference in Copenhagen in 1910, and was aimed at championing women's rights and, in particular, suffrage. From 1914, 8 March became fixed as its date. 1910 was also the year in which Dame Ethel Smyth, a leading figure in the suffragette movement, composed her song 'The March of the Women' (below).



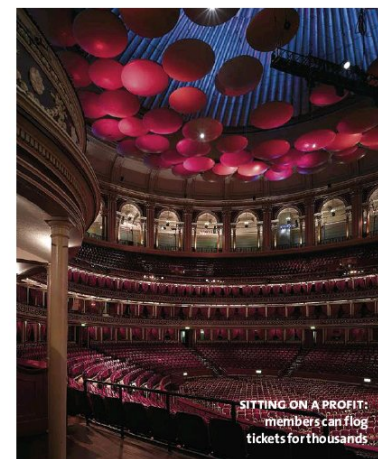
## All for one and none for Hall

Royal Albert Hall members accused of selling on seats at inflated prices

Members of the Royal Albert Hall have come under fire for privately selling on unwanted seats at events for a large personal profit. The members, who control 1,276 of the London venue's 5,272 seats, stand accused of using websites such as Viagogo and StubHub rather than using the hall's own returns system to let other event-goers purchase them

**'For this to have been unregulated for so long is a national disgrace'**

– though not illegal, the practice is regarded by many as morally dubious, given the Albert Hall's status as a charity. The issue has come to a head following the recent discovery of a memo circulated among members that advises them how to maximise the income from their seats and accuses the returns system of resulting in a 'direct, unfair and unnecessary cost to members by paying



SITTING ON A PROFIT:  
members can flog  
tickets for thousands

significantly less than can be achieved in the open market.' How many members have actively made use of the memo's advice is not known, however.

Leading the chorus of disapproval is former Albert Hall president Richard Lyttelton, who has targeted the venue's council in particular. 'Members of the hall's council own 145 seats,' he says. 'This interest is largely undeclared and as trustees of the charity, their position of privilege and the advantages afforded by the hall's charitable status puts them in a position to profit personally. For this to have been unregulated, despite being in the public domain for so long, is a national disgrace.'

The history of permanently owned membership seats at the Albert Hall dates right back to 1867 – as the project ran out of money at the building stage, the seats were sold off at £100 each to help complete the job. Each 'debenture' has a lease of 999 years.

## RISING STAR Great artists of tomorrow

**Soraya Mafi**  
soprano

'I didn't think I'd be a singer when I was little,' says Soraya Mafi. 'I was a dancer.' And so she might have been until, as a teenager, she began to have issues with her back. 'I couldn't manage the intensity of the training anymore. But I started doing well with singing, and got a few solos at school.'

Mafi entered a local music festival in Lancashire, and was invited to compete for the Junior English Song Prize, which she won. The prize was a bursary to spend on singing lessons. 'My mum got in touch with the Royal Northern College of Music junior department to see if they'd hear me sing. I never looked back.'

That said, during her undergraduate degree, she suffered a serious setback. 'The doctors discovered that I had a cyst in my vocal folds. I had to have an operation to have it removed, and afterwards I completely lost my voice. I think I

was scared of using it.' Any thoughts of quitting? Not a bit of it. 'I couldn't give up. I knew I was always going to be on stage – it's what makes me happy – so I didn't allow myself to wallow or be negative.'

Mafi surrounded herself with 'the right people' who could help her return to singing, including a voice coach who specialised in vocal trauma. Now, returned to full vocal health, she views this period as a blessing in disguise. 'I'm far more informed as a singer now than I would have been if I hadn't had those problems.'

Since she moved to London, Mafi's career has taken off. While still completing her opera course at the Royal College of Music she won a role in Grange Park Opera's production of Poulenc's *Les Dialogues des Carmélites*. 'I was very busy! I'd be rushing from college assessments to professional rehearsals,' she remembers, 'but it gave me just the right amount of pressure at the right time.' Now, she is preparing to play Mabel in Mike Leigh's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*



EARLY DANCE:  
'I didn't think  
I'd be a singer'

at English National Opera. 'She is such a joyous character to play,' says Mafi, 'very sure of herself, grounded, and feisty. This is exactly the kind of role I want to be performing right now.' Interview by Elinor Cooper; *The Pirates of Penzance* runs at English National Opera from 9 February to 25 March



## THE OFFICIAL CLASSICAL CHART

The UK's best-selling specialist classical releases

Chart for week ending 26 January 2017

-  **1 In War and Peace**  
Joyce DiDonato (mezzo-soprano); Il Pomo d'Oro/Maxim Emelyanychev  
Erato 9029592846  
A stunning Baroque recital from the US mezzo
-  **2 Tchaikovsky Symphonies Nos 3, 4 and 6**  
Royal Liverpool PO/Vasily Petrenko  
Onyx Classics ONYX4162  
Three Tchaikovsky symphonies show Petrenko and his Liverpoolian forces on exceptional form
-  **3 The Lost Songs of St Kilda**  
Trevor Morrison (piano); Scottish Festival Orchestra/James MacMillan  
Decca 481 2795  
The haunting music of an abandoned archipelago
-  **4 New Year's Concert 2017**  
Vienna Philharmonic/Gustavo Dudamel  
Sony Classical 88985376152  
Gustavo Dudamel leads the Viennese New Year bash for the first time, with winning results
-  **5 Shostakovich Piano Concertos Nos 1 & 2**  
Boris Giltburg (piano); Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/Vasily Petrenko  
Naxos 8.573666  
Scintillating stuff from the brilliant Israeli pianist
-  **6 JS Bach Cantatas Nos 54, 82 and 170**  
Iestyn Davies (countertenor); Arcangelo/J Cohen Hyperion CDA 68111  
This month's James Naughtie interviewee (see p28) shows his prowess as a Bach singer
-  **7 Tchaikovsky and Sibelius Violin Concertos**  
Lisa Batiashvili (violin)/Daniel Barenboim  
Deutsche Grammophon 479 6038  
Two greats, performed by two greats
-  **8 Mahler Symphony No. 3**  
Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra/Bernard Haitink BR Klassik 900149  
Haitink and his vast orchestral forces revel in the many challenges of Mahler's longest symphony
-  **9 JS Bach The French Suites**  
Murray Perahia (piano)  
Deutsche Grammophon 479 6565  
The pianist's debut recording for Deutsche Grammophon has deservedly won many admirers
-  **10 Voyages: Orgue de la Philharmonie**  
Transcriptions of Bach, Debussy, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Rimsky-Korsakov, Wagner et al  
Olivier Latry (organ) Erato 9029588850  
A glorious feast from one of today's finest players



Visit our website at [www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com) for weekly chart updates, and download the regular Radio 3 specialist chart podcast from iTunes



**LABEL CHANGE:**  
violinist Ray Chen has moved over to Decca

## Times of the sign

There have been two major record label signings this month: tenor Roberto Alagna has signed to Sony, while violinist Ray Chen heads to Decca. The French singer, thought to be the country's best-selling classical artist with five million albums sold there to date, will release the first recording in a multi-album deal in 2018. The repertoire hasn't yet been announced. Meanwhile, Chen, who recorded three acclaimed albums with Sony, hopes that his new label will foster his love of the internet alongside his recordings. The Australian violinist has reached two million people on SoundCloud, and says he's 'super stoked' that he will get to explore multimedia projects with Decca.

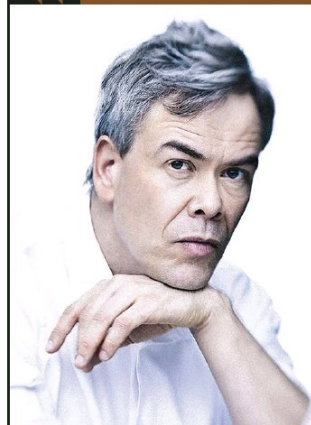
## Brontë chorus

The first recording of John Joubert's *Jane Eyre* is being released this March by Somm to mark the South African composer's 90th birthday. His two-act operatic take on Charlotte Brontë's classic novel was completed in 1997, then revised over the years to reach its current form. However, the piece only received its premiere last year in Birmingham. This recording was made at that performance, with April Frederik in the title role, David Stout singing the part of Mr Rochester and Kenneth Woods conducting the English Symphony Orchestra. It was, said *The Guardian*, 'a timely reminder of the melodic strengths and potency of Joubert's music'.

## Convent class

A new recording by Musica Secreta and Celestial Sirens turns the spotlight on the musical world of Lucrezia Borgia's daughter for the first time. Suor Leonora d'Este was a princess, nun and gifted musician, known to have played clavicord, harpsichord and organ. She was immersed in the rich musical world of the convent, which saw the nuns singing polyphony ever day. Around this period, in 1543, an anonymous book of motets was published in Venice, entitled *Musica quinque vocum motetta maternal lingua vocata*. It's thought to be the earliest published polyphony intended for nuns, perhaps even connected to the convent in which Suor Leonora spent 60 years. It will be released this March on Obsidian Records.

## REWIND Artists talk about their past recordings



### THIS MONTH Hannu Lintu conductor

*The Finn's discography is particularly strong on 20th- and 21st-century composers, including Lindberg, Messiaen and Sibelius. He is chief conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra; their recording of concertos by Tüür is reviewed next month.*

### My finest moment

**Berio Sinfonia; Calmo etc**  
Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra/  
Hannu Lintu *Online ODE 12275* (2014)  
Berio's Sinfonia is one of the reasons I wanted to become a conductor. I've always admired its layers, sound and inventiveness. This was my first recording with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the first recording in our new hall which had opened that season. It was a very happy session. We realised we had a perfect recording hall and achieved something special with this monumental, complex piece. Editing and mixing it was such a pleasure. It also deepened my relationship with my new orchestra. I knew all the recordings of the Sinfonia but didn't feel any of them really revealed all its secrets. Sometimes when you record something that's been done several times with great

conductors and great orchestras, you start to think why am I doing this. But in this case I feel we did something differently, and added to the performance tradition.

### My fondest memory

**Enescu Symphony No. 2; Chamber Symphony, Op. 33**  
Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra/  
Hannu Lintu *Online ODE11962* (2012)  
This was my last recording as chief conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra. We recorded all the Enescu Symphonies and I'm really proud of them, especially Symphony No. 2. I already knew that I was leaving the orchestra, so it was very emotional. We all felt that somehow we had grown up with this project.



You could ask why a Finnish conductor and Finnish orchestra were doing Enescu, why we bothered rehearsing this really difficult music. During the recording I realised why: we had become better musicians and technically better together. The musicians had to find a completely different type of sound, but they were able to do it. They got some international attention because of these recordings. I had the feeling that I had done something for them, and they had done something for me. We were a family.

### I'd like another go at...

**Rautavaara Cantus Arcticus; Laura Mikkola (piano); Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Hannu Lintu**  
*Naxos 8.554147* (1999)  
This was my first orchestral recording – I was young, and it was exciting. Mr Rautavaara was very helpful, and I went to his house many times. We read through scores, he told me what he was thinking when he composed and he helped me to put this together. In *Cantus Arcticus* there's a tape with birds on it. I asked him if there was anything I should know about it. He said, 'No, no, it's very simple. Just make sure you finish before the tape finishes.' I went to Glasgow and recorded it. When the CD arrived he called me: 'Look, the timing is entirely wrong'.



In the last movement you can hear the swan wings flapping, there's this huge kind of whooshing. He wanted this to be synchronised with the climax of the movement. He hadn't told me and I was so angry, but there was nothing we could do about it. He died last year, so I was thinking about this. One day I would like to make another recording and time the swans as he wanted them.

## STUDIOSECRETS


We reveal who's recording what, and where




**MORE MOZART:** Jean-Efflam Bavouzet

 Jean-Efflam Bavouzet has returned to Mozart with the Manchester Camerata and Gábor Takács-Nagy, to record Piano Concertos Nos 14 and 15 for Chandos. It's the second volume in their Mozart series together.

 Soprano Joyce El-Khoury and tenor Michael Spyres have also been in Manchester to record two discs inspired by leading singers of the bel canto era, Gilbert Duprez and Julie Dorus-Gras. El-Khoury and Spyres appear with the Hallé and conductor Carlo Rizzi, and their recitals will be out on the Opera Rara label.

 Schubert's song-cycle *Die Winterreise* is most often heard in German, but Jeremy Sams has recently translated it into English.

 Roderick Williams and Christopher Glynn gave the first performance of this version at the Wigmore Hall last November, and have now recorded it for Signum. It's the first in a three-CD series called 'Lost Song Cycles'.

 His recordings of Rachmaninov's First and Fourth Piano Concertos were widely acclaimed; now Yevgeny Sudbin has turned to the Second and Third concertos, recorded at the BBC Maida Vale Studio with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Sakari Oramo. It'll be out on BIS.

 Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* is often seen as a lesser cousin of his numbered symphonies, but Neeme Järvi and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra are heading to the studio to disprove this myth. It'll be partnered with the *Hamlet Fantasy* and *1812* overtures, and out on Chandos.



## #8 | BAROQUE

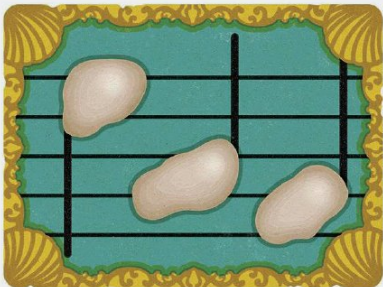
GRANDEUR, INTRICACY, delight in ornament, a sense of theatre, but also reassuring, solid formality – that, judging from examples I've seen in print recently, is how people view the notion of the 'Baroque', especially in music. Baroque style, said to range from around 1600 to the mid-18th century, is the manner of the courtly opera house and ballroom, and of the church. Think of the gardens of Versailles, of the cathedral-like Les Invalides in Paris. There's plenty to astonish and entrance the eye, but underpinning it is a sense of order.

Play the Kyrie from Bach's *Mass in B minor* (1724–49) and Haydn's 'Nelson' *Mass* (1798). The first suggests magnificent order, however painfully intense the emotions; the second conveys turmoil, doubt. The Bach speaks of an age when people received their certainties ready-wrapped from the pulpit or the royal throne; the Haydn is a product of the Enlightenment, with its restless drive to question.

But then play Tallis's glorious Tudor motet *Spem in Alium* (1570) and follow it with 'Winter' from Vivaldi's impeccably 'Baroque'

## DISCOVERING MUSIC

Stephen Johnson gets to grips with classical music's technical terms



*Four Seasons*: result – reverse culture shock! While the Tallis seems to float serenely, the Vivaldi is full of weird gestures and effects, disturbing dislocations. Suddenly the etymology of the word 'Baroque', from the Portuguese 'barroco', meaning a deformed pearl, makes sense. Its earliest use was often

unflattering, signifying harshness and incoherence. Nineteenth-century critics tended to view it not as an era in itself, but as the final collapse into decadence of Renaissance art.

So are there general statements to be made about Baroque music – features that unite Monteverdi, Purcell, Vivaldi, Handel and JS Bach? Well, contrast is important, however formalised it might seem in the late Baroque concerto. So too is elaborate decoration, often applied to long, emotionally charged melodic lines. And expressive dissonance acquires new kind of emphasis – think of the great choral shout of 'Barabbas!' ('Barabbas') in Bach's *St Matthew Passion*.

But perhaps the great discovery of Baroque music is the role of the bass line, no longer one voice amongst many, as in Renaissance church music, but the foundation and controller of the harmonic movement. The notion of 'melody and bass' comes into focus in the Baroque period. It's clearly central in Monteverdi and Bach, however rich the inner parts, and it just as clearly isn't in Tallis. A change in fashion, or a shift in human values? That needs more than a column to unravel.

## Frédéric says 'Cheese' again



WELCOME EXPOSURE: Frédéric Chopin, perhaps

The Polish Institute in Paris has announced the discovery of a previously unknown photo of Frédéric Chopin. If found to be authentic, the picture, a copy of a daguerreotype image made in around 1847, would be only the second photo of the Polish composer known to exist. Unearthed in a collection in Switzerland by Alain Kohler, a

Swiss physicist and Chopinophile, it was probably taken by Louis-Auguste Bisson, the photographer who took the other confirmed image – given the similar backgrounds, and similar grimness of expression, the two would appear to have been taken on the same occasion. Kohler himself, though, says that confirming the authenticity of the image may only be possible if the original daguerreotype is found. The physicist has previous Chopin form, having unearthed in 2015 a Pleyel piano played by the composer during 1845.

## Rattle goes silent



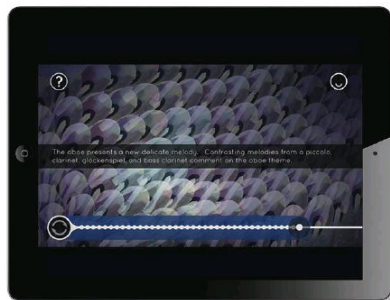
The London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Simon Rattle (above) have announced plans for their first season together. Sir Simon takes up his position as music director in September and, in his first few weeks, he and his players will present a ten-day musical celebration to mark his appointment. As well as 'Silent Symphony', an opening concert of all-British music broadcast live to personal headsets in the Barbican Sculpture Court, other projects for the first week include creating an opera in a day with children and young people. BBC Radio 3 will broadcast live throughout the opening ten days, including three symphonic concerts from the Barbican Hall.

## APP REVIEW

Every issue we explore a recent digital product

## Octava FREE

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is trialling a new app, Octava, to help audience members starting to discover classical music. During the concert, pertinent short paragraphs about the music are sent to your phone, cued by someone following the score, so in theory each piece of text is fully co-ordinated to the actual performance. You need to log into the venue's guest Wi-Fi and switch off your phone's autolock – otherwise the text will freeze when your phone tries to 'sleep'. RPO personnel are in charge of writing the texts and deciding how many cues there are per work: on the evening I reviewed, Sibelius's Violin Concerto got just one cue per movement – no



explanation, for instance, about the first movement cadenza – yet Prokofiev's Third Symphony got at least three or four cues per movement, all pertinent and helpful if sometimes dumfsy in describing the music itself. No doubt, given time and audience feedback, this will be refined. Daniel Jaffé ★★

## TWITTER ROOM

Who's saying what on the micro-blogging site



@danielongpiano Oh Birmingham, city of a thousand dreams, the new-flowering buds of ambition, demanding pedagogy and the bullring shopping centre. A visit to the Midlands brings out the romantic in pianist Daniel Tong

@cargillmezzo The downside of singing Wagner? Tunes galore swirling around your head at 5am. The upside? What amazing tunes they are.

Mezzo Karen Cargill revels in some Tristan and Isolde. @kathystott Working on Bartók Sonata 2 pianos/percussion. I'm totally fixated on a bar which reminds me of 'Live & Let Die' #Bond The name's Stott. Kathryn Stott. Licence to play piano.

@ifagiolini Sitting at home with shakes/aches but reading Monteverdi's 1608 letter complaining of shingles/migraine and not being paid. He had it worse. Conductor Robert Hollingworth puts it all in perspective

@Violinlenny Lovely/weird moment after concert in Sweden – audience member with flowers: 'Nice to meet you again. 17 years ago I took your appendix out!' Violinist Jennifer Pike's post-concert banter is a cut above the normal



## Notes from the piano stool

David Owen Norris



Strolling down a narrow country lane, I noticed where a prudent householder had fixed a convex mirror on a tree in the hedge opposite his drive, I suppose so that he could reverse his car out into the road with confidence. In the middle of the mirror was taped a notice: 'Will the owner of this mirror kindly contact the owner of this tree.' It gave a phone number.

I hope the neighbourly difference will be settled amicably. Musicians are all too attuned to this sort of thing. In Paris, my piano teacher Yvonne Lefebvre would suddenly rush to her studio wall in the middle of my lesson, and bang on it with her shoe, screaming at the complaining neighbour. I've had some very disturbing neighbours myself, though in all fairness, I've probably been one too.

But the mirror and its accompanying notice took me beyond this slight shudder of Schadenfreude. For a start, it reminded me of JS Bach's *Jesu, joy of man's desiring* and *Sleepers Wake* (and Peter Cornelius's *Three kings from Persian lands afar*, for that matter), where the melody turns out to be fixed to the tree of the chorale

I've had some very disturbing neighbours, though in all fairness, I've probably been one too

tune. And then I loved the reversal of expectation – the fact that the tree had an opinion, as it were.

The manipulation of expectation is an important part of performing technique. One of my masterclass mantras is 'Surprise or Satisfy', and both depend on setting up an Expectation. The composer Charles Avison had something to say about that in his *An Essay on Musical Expression* of 1752: it is safer to aim at pleasing than surprising, especially in the musical art. He uses 'please' rather than 'satisfy', but the idea is similar. I'm sorry he aimed at safety – that may be why so few people have heard of him. He seems to have worried about the critics a good deal: elsewhere he warns against arousing disgust, or weariness of attention.

Avison crops up whenever I'm invited to explain How to Perform. Generally I give a talk I've built up over the years, called 'Through the Looking-Glass' because the point of music, like all the arts, is to hold up a mirror to our souls. The magical thing is that a mirror automatically reverses expectations.

I'll chew over some of these ideas during my Reeth Lecture in June. No, that's not a misprint, but a rather cunning idea dreamt up by Malcolm Creese, the director of the Swaledale Festival up in the Yorkshire Dales. Reeth, you see, is a little Swaledale town about eleven miles west of Richmond. And it hosts Malcolm's Reeth Lectures. Clever, eh? ■

David Owen Norris is a pianist, composer and Radio 3 presenter



## MUSIC TO MY EARS

What the classical world has been listening to this month



CHAMBER NOTES: The Schumanns reveal their inspirations

## THE SCHUMANN QUARTET

Erik Schumann (violin): I've loved Schubert's Ninth Symphony since my childhood, but thank to Frans Brüggen's recording with the Orchestra of the 18th Century, it has become my all-time favourite work. The performance, the timing, the sound – everything seems to me ideal and as close as one can get to honest, devoted music making. It is like an ode to life, humanity and beauty, and every time I listen to it, I feel free and full of positive energy and inspiration.

Liisa Randalu (viola): the album *Morimur*, violinist Christoph Poppen and the Hilliard Ensemble's recording of JS Bach cantatas and Violin Partita No. 2, is exceptional. I am fascinated not just by the concept of this album, but by the purity of the music. For me, the Hilliards and Poppen create a symbiosis that makes me forget what it is to be a 'musician' or an 'artist' – I hear the music just as it is in the moment. The Chaconne transcription for violin and four voices is very special.



Ken Schumann (violin): Whenever I can, I listen to the music of JS Bach. One of my favourite recordings is a large box set of his orchestral and chamber works by Baroque ensemble Musica Antiqua Köln under Reinhard Goebel. I've just had the great opportunity to work on a Bach programme with Goebel who, like us, was born near Cologne. I love how alive, clear and strong and without any kind of artificiality the music of Bach sounds on this recording.

Mark Schumann (cello): I enjoy listening to a cappella groups such as The King's Singers or The Real Group. The latter is one of a kind – not only do

## OUR CHOICES

The BBC Music team's current favourites

Oliver Condy  
Editor

I was fortunate to attend the opening concert of Hamburg's stunning Elbphilharmonie, featuring a programme designed to show off the hall's flexible acoustics. From Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* to the crystal clear vocal lines of Praetorius and simple, fluid lines of 'Pari' from Britten's *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid* for solo oboe, the hall revealed the music in impressive, resonant detail. Worth the 800m euros? Time will tell...

Jeremy Pound  
Deputy editor

My love of flippant viola jokes is stopped instantly in its tracks by an evening spent in the company of Kim Kashkashian's recording of Bartók's Viola Concerto. Left unfinished at the composer's death, it's an exquisite work that leaves me in two minds. The soloist's darkly sinuous lines tell of a troubled composer in equally troubled times, but do I also hear glimpses of happy reminiscence here and there?

Rebecca Franks  
Reviews editor

I've been enjoying a discovery: the piano works of Hélène de Montgeroult, an aristocratic French pianist-composer whose musical improvisations saved her from prison during the Revolution. For this premiere recording, Edna Stern has put together an involving programme, featuring the Ninth Sonata and 12 of the composer's 114 Etudes. Like Chopin's later set, they lift technical exercises into the realm of poetry.

they have some of the best voices in the business along with some of the most fascinating and creative arrangements, but they know how to write a song. I listened to them in Cologne and was amazed by their appearance, perfection in rhythm and intonation. 'Landscapes', the Schumann Quartet's new disc of Haydn, Bartók, Pärt and Takemitsu, will be reviewed in a future issue

## AIDA GARIFULLINA soprano



I travel a lot at the moment and so on flights I like to listen to the operas I'm learning. My favourite opera is Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, in a performance conducted by Valery Gergiev. Two years ago Gergiev asked me to sing Natasha Rostova in a new production of this opera at the Mariinsky Theatre. I was so happy and fell in love with this music, especially Natasha's arioso and the famous moment when Prince Andrei and Natasha dance together for the first time.

I love the DVD of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* from 1976, with baritone Hermann Prey and sopranos Mirella Freni and Kiri Te Kanawa, conducted by Karl Böhm with the Vienna Philharmonic. I've watched this opera movie so many times and I still think it's one of the best ever. Freni is amazing as Susanna – both as a singer and actress – and Te Kanawa sings 'Dove sono' wonderfully, with a magnificent pianissimo. I love this opera and Susanna was the first role in my career.

I love to buy new CDs and vinyl. I listen to operatic singers most of the time, like Cecilia Bartoli, Maria Callas, Joan Sutherland and Lily Pons, but also singers including Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald and Frank Sinatra. I especially love Sinatra's Christmas album from 1987, the year I was born. Some singers I only listen to when I need to learn something from them, while other singers I can listen to the whole day on repeat. Sinatra's voice is so light and relaxing.

Four months ago something special happened in my life that changed so many things. I gave birth to my daughter Olivia and now I play lullabies to her to get to sleep, and also wonderful pieces like JS Bach's *Air on the G string* from Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D. And also I play her one of my favourite pieces: Debussy's *Clair de Lune*. She enjoys listening

to classical music more than any other genre, which makes me really happy.

Aida Garifullina's new album *Aida* (Decca Classics) is out now and will be reviewed next month

## RYAN WIGGLESWORTH

composer and conductor



I remember vividly Günter Wand's last performance in London, at the 2001 BBC Proms – I sneaked into the rehearsals and went to the concert.

He was the master Bruckner

conductor, because he gave everything a seemingly infinite amount of space without ever losing the direction and thread of the drama. Without seeming to do very much, he was in total command. I became hooked on his Bruckner recordings, not least his more recent one of the Ninth Symphony with the Berlin Philharmonic.

I regularly return to the Takács Quartet's recording of the Beethoven Razumovsky Quartets. What I love about middle-period Beethoven is that things aren't quite stretched to breaking point yet, but you can see him pushing at all of the boundaries, and the sheer inventiveness is breathtaking. The sound of the Takács Quartet's recording is wonderful, as is the players' ability to plumb the depths of this music. It's ambitious work for Edward Gardner to take on at the start of his tenure as chief conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic, but their recording of it shows how glorious that orchestra is – the depth of its string

## OUR CHOICES

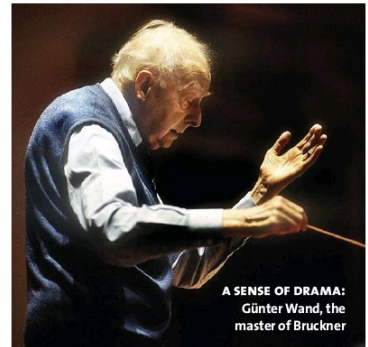
The BBC Music team's current favourites

Neil McKim  
Production editor

I've been enjoying Hindemith's Sonata for Double Bass & Piano, performed by Ferenc Csontos and Balázs Szokolay. This frenetic 1949 piece pushes the bassist's technique, with strings that are tuned higher for a tauter sound. In the Allegretto, the bass soars over the restless piano, edged higher by string harmonics. After the jarrings of the Scherzo, the finale is calmer.

Elinor Cooper  
Editorial assistant

There's nothing I like better than listening to a piece I know well after a long break, especially when it is sung as well as The Sixteen's recording of Fauré's Requiem. Performed with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and soloists Elin Manahan Thomas and Roderick Williams, this disc has been giving me much needed respite in the busyness of the new year.

A SENSE OF DRAMA:  
Günter Wand, the master of Bruckner

sound in particular is just wonderful. Ed is a great architectural conductor – he is so good at pacing large paragraphs of music, which is what Gurrelieder needs. He knows exactly when to put his foot on the pedal and ratchet up the drama.

When I became organ scholar at New College, Oxford in 1998, the choir had just released its disc of Byrd and Tallis's *Lamentations* – this recording is just for men's voices, without the trebles. To hear that music sung with such spaciousness and genuine emotion behind it is very special, and the choir had a particularly wonderful line-up of singers at that time. This was the disc that began my deep love of English Renaissance polyphony, and I still listen to it regularly. Ryan Wigglesworth conducts his opera *The Winter's Tale* at English National Opera from 27 February

## AND MUSIC TO YOUR EARS...

You tell us what you've been enjoying on disc and in the concert hall

Lindsay Pereira  
Mumbai, India

I was fortunate to catch the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra with conductor James Gaffigan and Khatia Buniatishvili on piano at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Mumbai. They played two nights, and the performance I attended featured Weber's Overture to *Oberon*, Grieg's Piano Concerto and Dvořák's Symphony No. 9. It was special because it is rare for a world-class orchestra to play in Mumbai which has little to offer lovers of western classical music.

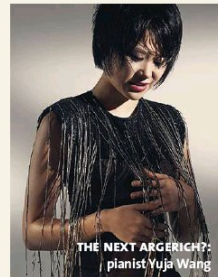
Polly Mortimer  
London

My recent listening has included harpichordist Mahan Esfahani's new Goldberg Variations and Voces8's rather

soupy Winter CD (I love them but have issues with the repertoire). There is also the *Lost Songs of St Kilda* – I'm addicted to this and wish James MacMillan would expand his contribution into a symphony. I've also been trying to play Paul Dessau songs.

Benard Fournier  
Quebec, Canada

I have recently listened to many concert performances by pianist Yuja Wang on YouTube. She is a fearless and amazing performer and gets me on the edge of my seat. Piano concertos by Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Rachmaninov or Ravel seem easy to her, while in the hugely difficult Prokofiev Concerto No. 2 with the Berlin Philharmonic, the orchestra was taken to the limit. For me, she is the next Martha Argerich.

THE NEXT ARGERICH?:  
pianist Yuja WangChris Evans  
Earby, Lancashire

I was delighted recently to discover your cover CD recording of John Adams's *The Dharma at Big Sur*, played by Chloë Hanslip and the BBC National

Orchestra of Wales (February issue). I had heard the work on the radio some time ago, and tried to buy one recording, only to find that it was deleted, and the only available options were second-hand ones for silly money – indeed, one at over £500!

Henry Robinette  
Georgia, US

I've been listening to the orchestral music of Canadian composer Paul M Douglas on CD. His *Helvetia – A First Symphony for Orchestra* is the best symphony by a living composer that I bought last year. It's one of those rare works that make me want to stand up and cheer after hearing it. The first movement and the last movement are based on the Dies Irae while the Scherzo is influenced by the music of Anton Bruckner. Tell us what concerts or recordings you've been enjoying by emailing us at [musicstomyears@classical-music.com](mailto:musicstomyears@classical-music.com)



## NEWSINBRIEF



BONDED: Alison Balsom and Sam Mendes

## WEDDED BRASS

Let us blow a celebratory fanfare for trumpeter Alison Balsom, who has married leading stage and film director Sam Mendes. Mendes, who has directed the last two James Bond films and who was previously married to the actress Kate Winslet, tied the knot with Balsom in a hush-hush ceremony in Oxfordshire in late January.

## JOHANN SEBASTIAN SHARK

News reaches us from the Pacific Shark Research Center that a recently discovered species of deep-sea catshark has been named after JS Bach. Though we are not told why Bach's Catshark (*Bythaelurus bachi*) has been presented with such a title, we suspect it may be because it has a distinctive chordal fin and very counterpointy teeth.

## PRINCIPAL BEN

The BBC Philharmonic has announced that Ben Gernon is to become its principal guest conductor. Gernon, 27, begins his new role in the autumn, joining a classy BBC Phil roster that includes chief conductor Juanjo Mena and John Storgårds, who now moves up from principal guest conductor to chief guest conductor.

## TABAKOVA TAKES OVER

The BBC Concert Orchestra, meanwhile, has named Dobrinka Tabakova as its new composer-in-residence. The Bulgaria-born composer, who became familiar to television viewers as chair of the BBC Young Musician jury last year, will take over the role from jazz musician Guy Barker.

## The keys to untold wealth

*Golden hoard is discovered in family piano*



Strings and hammers aside, do you know what lurks inside your piano? Chances are it's little more than years of dust or maybe a dead mouse or two. Hardly worth looking. So imagine a Shropshire piano tuner's surprise when he discovered a hoard of gold coins stashed away in a family's Broadwood upright. Though the history of the piano itself is known

— it was sold in 1906 by a shop in Saffron Walden, Essex, then purchased in 1983 by a family who later moved to Shropshire — the identity of who hid the gold is a mystery. If it remains unknown, then UK law dictates that the piano's owners and the tuner will be entitled to split the gold between them. The hoard's worth, say sources, is potentially 'life-changing'.

## AFTER HOURS

Musicians and their hobbies

**WILLIAM YOUN**  
Pianist

## KOREAN COOKERY

I find many similarities between cooking and music making. I enjoy cooking during my free time and feel especially happy to make food for people I love. Good ingredients are the essential basics for a good chef, just like we pianists need a well-tuned and sensitive piano through which we can express ourselves. The dish I'm making in the photo is called 'Bibimbap', probably the most famous Korean dish. For an authentic Bibimbap, you have to prepare the ingredients separately, focusing on each ingredient's own taste. It's quite similar to practising a Bach fugue — you have to practise each voice patiently and accurately, so that they don't lose their own individuality, but at the end, they can harmonise to celebrate the unique character of the fugue. Likewise, in both music and cookery, timing



and proportion is something you learn just by doing it — when I ask my mother how much I need of certain herbs for her recipe, she often replies 'just enough'. This doesn't help! When tasting food, you taste the sincerity of the chef and the love he or she put into their creation.

A GOOD EGG:  
Youn assembles  
his Bibimbap

## Farewell to...



NATIONAL ICON:  
Estonian Veljo Tormis  
taught Arvo Pärt

VELJO TORMIS *Born 1930 Composer*

Veljo Tormis will be remembered not just as one of the most accomplished and distinctive choral composers of his generation, but also as a significant voice of the Estonian nationalist movement. Much of his music expressed his Estonian heritage by drawing on traditional ancient folksong, bringing people's attention to Finno-Ugric languages on the edge of extinction. Tormis was one of the key composers at the heart of the 'Singing Revolution' that took place in Estonia in the 1980s — in which thousands of people would gather to sing in protest at Soviet rule — and when the country finally did win independence, his music began to enjoy worldwide popularity. Born in Kuusalu in northern Estonia, Tormis studied at the Tallinn Conservatory and then in Moscow. After a period teaching at Tallinn Music School, where his students included Arvo Pärt, he worked as a freelance composer. Among his most famous choral works was the pounding, chant-like *Curse Upon Iron* (1972) which, complete with ancient drum, harks back to shamanistic rituals. He retired from composing in 2000.

ROBERTA PETERS *Born 1930 Soprano*

A career of over 35 years at New York's Metropolitan Opera saw Roberta Peters win huge popularity with her agile coloratura voice, clear diction and stunning stage presence. Lighter roles — notably in Mozart and Rossini — were her preference, though she did touch upon weightier parts such as Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor. The Met, where Peters made the first of more than 500 appearances in 1950, was not her only stamping ground, and she also sang in venues such as Vienna State Opera and Covent Garden.

## Also remembered...

Conductor *Rudolf Bibl* (born 1929) enjoyed a long career in Austria and Germany, holding posts in Graz, Innsbruck, Trier and, most notably, Vienna where, at the Volksoper, he conducted over 2,200 times. He continued to conduct until a few days before his death. One of Hungary's most popular opera singers, mezzo *Klára Takács* (born 1945) enjoyed a career that saw her perform at the New York Met, Venice's La Fenice and the Salzburg Festival among others. She recorded widely, not least for the Hungaroton label.



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Nadine Koutcher  
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# March Releases



## Disc of the Month

### Sullivan: Songs

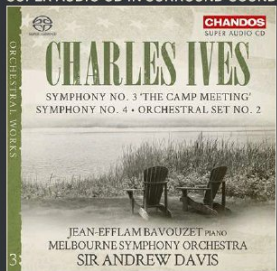
Mary Bevan | Ben Johnson | Ashley Riches | David Owen Norris

This exceptional set gathers the finest young British vocal talents in a unique programme of songs by Sir Arthur Sullivan, many of them very rarely recorded.

Widely acclaimed in key operatic roles across the UK and abroad, the soprano Mary Bevan, tenor Ben Johnson, and bass-baritone Ashley Riches – who here appears on Chandos for the first time – explore fifty years of Sullivan's large non-operatic vocal output. They are accompanied by the pianist David Owen Norris, highly praised for his many concerto performances at the BBC Proms.

CHAN 10035(2)

SUPER AUDIO CD IN SURROUND SOUND



## Ives

### Orchestral Works, Vol. 3

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet  
Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Sir Andrew Davis

In this third volume of an already globally popular series, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet takes on the challenging solo piano part in Ives's Symphony No. 4. Also including the rarely performed Orchestral Set No. 2 and Pulitzer Prize winning Symphony No. 3.

CHSA 5174



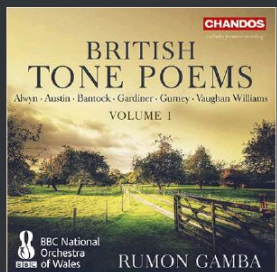
## Liszt / Wagner

### Piano Works

Imogen Cooper

After highly successful recordings of works by Brahms, the Schumanns, and Chopin, Imogen Cooper plunges into the world of another great romantic, Franz Liszt, and places him alongside that other giant, Richard Wagner. Breathtaking music in unique interpretations: romanticism without melodrama, virtuosity without fuss.

CHAN 10038



## British Tone Poems

### Vol. 1

BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
Rumon Gamba

Alongside their British Isles Overtures series, the BBC NOW and Rumon Gamba launch a project to bring often neglected symphonic poems by British composers to wider attention. This first volume presents some of the most rarely heard, British tone poems written in the early twentieth century.

CHAN 10039



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## The Richard Morrison column

# The closure of Ravel's house would be a disaster for music lovers



Even if my head tells me it's rubbish, my heart clings to the notion of *genius loci*: the ancient belief that buildings and other places have presiding 'spirits', or at least an atmosphere that reflects what their stones have witnessed over the years. A couple of years ago I was privileged to be part of a choir singing in the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. I'm not usually prone to hallucinations, but I could practically see the terrifying figure of Johann Sebastian Bach standing in front of us, shaking his bewigged head in horror at our intonation lapses. 'What will survive of us is love,' Philip Larkin wrote in one of his greatest poems. But in the case of musicians, what will survive is echoes – albeit silent ones, resonating in the minds of those performing the same music in the same venues, perhaps hundreds of years hence.

In this respect, the houses where composers were born, or where they lived and worked, are particularly interesting. When you visit the Red House in Aldeburgh and see the study in which Britten composed – staring across the windswept reed marshes to the sullen North Sea – you suddenly understand the astringent eeriness that permeates so much of his music. The Mendelssohn family mansion in Leipzig, by contrast, evokes civilised but utterly bourgeois values, solid and refined. Brinkwells, the thatched Sussex cottage where Elgar wrote his most autumnal works, is different again. You can

well imagine the bipolar composer sensing the ghosts of dead friends haunting the surrounding trees. My favourite composer's house, however, is Puccini's birthplace in Lucca. There you really can experience ghosts, because in one of the rooms there is a continuous film-loop of ancient Puccini opera performances in which you can see, hear and feel the charisma of Freni and Callas, Björling and Gobbi reborn every day.

Ravel also has a beautiful museum dedicated to his memory.

possibly worst) composition. 'Le Belvédère! Bien grand nom pour une si petite maison où les objets à l'échelle semblaient joués d'enfants,' wrote the author Hélène Jourdan-Morhange in 1939, and that feeling of a perfectly preserved child's world strikes visitors still.

Or at least it did. But in February, according to an undisputed report in *Le Figaro*, the local council suddenly sacked the museum's curator, a formidable dame who had worked there for 30 years and was a walking

## Imagine the outcry if Monet's garden at Giverny were suddenly closed to the public

It is called Le Belvédère, and is perched just outside the little town of Montfort-l'Amaury, south-west of Paris. He bought the boat-shaped house in 1921, seeking a rural escape from Paris but not wanting to be too far from the action, and lived there till his death in 1937. Exquisite and eccentric, it contains mechanical toys, quirky furnishings, a delightfully stylised garden and an extraordinary sense of a miniature world only partly disclosing to outsiders the inner passions governing it.

In other words, it's the perfect visual complement to the pieces Ravel wrote there, which included the opera *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, the two piano concertos, and *Boléro*, his most famous (though

encyclopaedia of Ravel-lore. The council then closed the museum indefinitely, citing water damage. Nobody believes this is the whole story, especially coming after a series of disturbing incidents. Last year, the council apparently prevented both the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and French TV from filming there, and in January conductor Charles Dutoit and pianist Martha Argerich were unceremoniously ejected from the museum by the local gendarmerie, apparently because a council official reported that the premises were being burgled.

Gosh, I would love to have been a fly on the wall when Inspector Clouseau confronted La Argerich. The whole thing sounds

like a Feydeau farce, but there's actually nothing funny about this dishonouring of one of France's greatest composers. The royalties from *Boléro* alone should have been sufficient to sustain, repair and staff Le Belvédère for centuries, but Ravel's heirs squabbled over his millions for decades before channelling it into offshore tax havens. As a result (and in contrast to the Britten-Pears Foundation, which supports a veritable industry of Britten performance and research as well as the Red House), not a penny of Ravel's royalties goes into preserving his memory and his house.

The French government needs to step in. Imagine the outcry if Monet's garden at Giverny were suddenly closed to the public. Yet Ravel's place in French music is as great as Monet's in French painting. Admittedly, the French have always prized the visual arts over the aural, yet they have spent billions on building gigantic new music venues in Paris. Impressive though the Philharmonie, the Pompidou Centre and the Opéra Bastille are, they can't be said to exude much *genius loci*, whereas tiny La Belvédère oozes it from every nook and cranny. Far be it for a mere Englishman to say this, but French national pride surely demands that La Belvédère be repaired and reopened immediately, with its curator restored to her former glory. ■

Richard Morrison is chief music critic and a columnist of *The Times*



# A Romantic journey

Imogen Cooper's considerable reputation has been carved by her refined, majestic interpretations of late Classical repertoire. But now, she tells *Jessica Duchen*, it's time to shake things up a bit with a little help from Liszt and Wagner

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN MILLAR

Between the big-blocked estates and snaking side-streets of Maida Vale, Imogen Cooper has found a small oasis that is a solitary pianist's dream come true. 'Stephen Hough came house-hunting with me and said I had to get this place – it's perfect for a musician,' she remarks. In her fan-shaped studio, among paintings, bookshelves and a garden full of trees, she can practise to her heart's content. 'I'm a great sleeper, so I usually don't carry on till 3am,' she remarks, 'but this part of the house is not attached to next door, so I can work late without disturbing anybody.'

Cooper is one of those rare and special musicians whose artistic stature has always been high, yet never stops growing and developing. Indeed, many of her admirers feel she is now in her prime, reaching the stratospheres in new and wonderfully inspiring ways. She is the first to admit that she has perhaps taken a 'slow burn' approach. For many years her listeners associated her primarily with the Viennese classics – Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert in particular – although her interpretations of, for example, Schumann and Janáček indicated something very interesting was afoot beyond. But slow cooking can sometimes produce the tastiest results. In her sixties, Cooper has been turning at last to Chopin and Liszt, revealing a vibrant Romanticism with a powerful, personal voice. Was there a closet Romantic lying in wait all the time? 'Definitely,' she beams.

PIANO FRAME:  
Imogen Cooper photographed  
for *BBC Music Magazine* in  
her London home



MUCH AS HER FANS love her Schubert and Mozart, some might be surprised by this change of direction. 'I stayed with that too long,' Cooper says. 'I stayed partly because that repertoire was much demanded of me – and these fellows are so enormously difficult to play well that I was quite happy pushing my comfort zone within my comfort zone, going narrower and deeper – particularly with Schubert. I would never regret those years. But I wasn't terribly pro-active in consciously pushing the envelope. I didn't feel the need, because I was beaver away so strongly with music I loved. Now I'm rather enjoying changing the picture.'

What has made her change it now? 'Simply the wonderfulness of the repertoire,' Cooper smiles, 'and the fact that you don't want to leave such profound, fascinating and rich things untouched, particularly if you realise you've lost a bit of time. Maybe I feel mentally and physically more ready to go there. It seemed quite a natural path for me, even though many would have started with

# 'I don't want to leave such profound, rich things untouched'

that and gone rather in the other direction.' Having started with 'pure' music, she says, 'I've enjoyed the expansion into music that is also healthy pianism rather enormously.'

She has made a new CD of Liszt and Wagner, original works and transcriptions, revealing an approach as profound, faithful and personal as that she brought to her recent, revelatory disc of Chopin. Liszt isn't entirely new to her repertoire, of course: 'It has been a while since I've played much of it, though,' she says. 'I think it's proof of how certain things can stay a little closed inside you for a while, either through an innate reserve about going there, or a lack of belief that one can find a speaking enough voice to make it a viable option. Or it could simply be because life has taken you in a slightly different direction. This was quite a conscious pull-around.'

It was a challenge, too. 'There's still a huge amount of repertoire I haven't done,' she says, 'and I wasn't knocking it all under my belt at the age of 20. But in a way, I don't regret that. It makes it harder to learn now, but my mind is fresher about it and I'm not tired of any of it, which I hope will give me a good few years yet.'

It was not Liszt that provided the first stimulus for the CD's programme, but the composer's son-in-law, Wagner – plus the



THRILLING ENSEMBLE: rehearsing with the Budapest Festival Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, 2013

Hungarian pianist and conductor Zoltán Kocsis, who died, aged 64, a few months ago. Cooper's CD is dedicated to his memory.

'I had been looking at Liszt's transcription of the Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde* and thinking how wonderful it was, and I came across Kocsis's transcription of the Prelude, which is such a great piece of music. When I played it through, I thought this transcription could be as good as the Liszt. It was an obvious thing to do the two together. The Prelude is even more of a challenge than the Liebestod in which to sound like an orchestra, because the music is more sparse – but that's the sort of challenge I love. So I went in, head first.'

She was reluctant to segue straight from the Prelude into the Liebestod, though: 'On the piano, to leave out four-and-a-half hours of

intervening opera is somehow not convincing,' she says. 'I wanted to find a bridge.' Reading Alan Walker's magnificent Liszt biography, she delved into Liszt's stay with the Wagner family in Venice in 1882: among the works he began there were the two *Lugubre Gondola* pieces, resulting from a bizarre premonition that Wagner would die and that his body would be transported up the Grand Canal on a funeral gondola. Three months later, the vision came true. 'This mixture of darkness and love and death that links Wagner and Liszt, with thematic material that is *Tristan*-like, seemed the perfect bridge between the Prelude and the Liebestod.'

Cooper has supplemented this with sparsely written, unsettling, late Liszt pieces including *Nuages gris* and the *Bagatelle sans tonalité*, for



CLASSIC TRIO: with soprano Felicity Lott (left) and conductor Jane Glover (right) in 1987 at the Royal Festival Hall



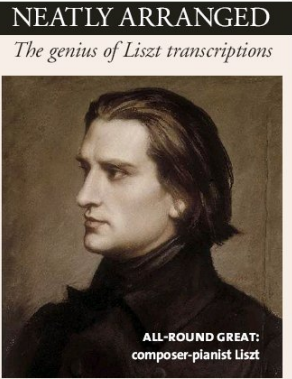
LIFE'S WORK: 'There's still a huge amount of repertoire I haven't done'

contrast she added pieces from the Italian book of the *Années de pèlerinages*, and the *Valse oubliée* No. 2 ('It's like a completely different composer'). A friend alerted her to Wagner's brief *Elegie* – which apparently had been written out by hand, whether by Wagner or someone else, on an old copy of Chopin's *Etudes* in the possession of Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter, who occasionally performed it. Finally, there is Liszt's own transcription of the *Gretchen* movement from his *Faust* Symphony, which Cooper says she came across thanks to the Canadian pianist Janina Fialkowska: 'These two men, Wagner and Liszt, so linked, gave me all the material to get quite an interesting disc together.'

Cooper was born in London, just ten minutes away from where she now lives

('It's rather wonderful to come back after 50-plus years,' she remarks). Her father was the musicologist and critic Martin Cooper. The youngest of four musical siblings, the small Imogen emerged as prodigiously gifted; plans had to be made for a suitable musical education. In those days, she recalls, the UK's specialist music schools had not yet started up; to concentrate seriously on the piano, she had to go to one of the few institutions that accepted students at that young age. That meant Moscow or Paris.

Paris was earmarked, unsurprisingly as the more suitable destination. She left home aged 12 and moved there on her own – a choice that might amaze us today, but that she enjoyed for the precocious independence and the inspiration of studies at the Conservatoire ▶



ALL-ROUND GREAT: composer-pianist Liszt

THE TRANSCRIPTIONS ON Imogen Cooper's new CD are the tip of a large musical iceberg. Over the centuries, transcriptions have fulfilled many roles. Bach's of Vivaldi – eg, his version for four keyboards of a Vivaldi concerto for four violins – gave him a chance to explore the Italian's work from the inside, and brought it to a new audience in a new form. Certain sets of variations by Mozart and Beethoven were a form of transcription and elaboration – for instance, Beethoven's on 'Bei Männern' from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* for cello and piano.

Liszt, though, went further, with transcriptions that took many forms and served a multitude of purposes. His concert fantasias on themes from operas such as Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Weber's *Der Freischütz* and others were fantastical expoundings that provided him and his adoring audiences with virtuosos razzle-dazzle on familiar melodies, yet also brought that music to some who had not heard it before. In his concentrated transcriptions of Lieder by Schubert and Schumann, he effectively became a one-man broadcast channel, popularising these little-known masterpieces and putting technical whirligigs firmly at the service of the music.

Liszt's approach to Wagner, though, eschewed extraneous fuss. In such transcriptions as the Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde* and some selections from *Parsifal*, he sought to capture on the piano an equivalent sonority to that of the orchestra: this feat relies first on his own unrivalled capacity to arrange the notes and their overtones to create a three-dimensional impression, and secondly on the pianist's ability to layer and project that range of sound-colour. This was also his approach to making transcriptions of Beethoven's symphonies, his own *Faust* Symphony and myriad others.



## COOPER ON DISC

## Six recommended Recordings

**Imogen Cooper's Chopin**

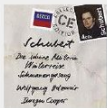
Chandos CHAN 10902  
A very personal take on a selection of Chopin's finest, offering an individual voice of tremendous poetry, integrity and depth.

**Schumann Davidsbündlertänze, Geistesvariationen etc**

Chandos CHAN 10874  
The complexity of Schumann's emotional world shines out in Cooper's masterful interpretations of some of his most challenging creations.

**Schumann and Brahms**

Chandos CHAN 10755  
Placing Schumann's whirlwind imagination in *Kreisleriana* and *Fantasiesstücke* alongside Brahms's Variations (from the B flat major String Sextet), Cooper brings out the best in all of them.

**Schubert Song Cycles**  
with Wolfgang Holzmair (baritone)

Decca 478 4272  
Cooper's long musical partnership with Holzmair is shown at its refined and powerful finest in Schubert's three song cycles: two great artists who seem to think as one.

**Mozart Piano Concertos Nos 24 & 25**  
Royal Northern Sinfonia

Avie AV2175  
Cooper is graceful and incisive in this intimate but stirring account of two of Mozart's biggest concertos, making the most of their chamber-music qualities.

**Schubert Live, Vol. 1**

Avie AV2156  
Recorded at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Cooper gives a visionary account of Schubert's towering A major Sonata D959 and brings sinew and songfulness to the A minor D845 and D major D850.



**MASTER TAPES:** Cooper consults Alfred Brendel and producer Volker Strauss as she records Mozart in 1977

with Jacques Février, Lucette Descaves and Yvonne Lefébure. The difficult part, she says, was coming home again.

It was a very different pianist, though, who changed her life. In London, her father received for review some recordings of a 30-something pianist named Alfred Brendel. She heard them and was blown away, deciding at once that this was the musician with whom she most wanted to study. Soon afterwards, her father coincidentally met Brendel on a competition jury panel. 'It was the only time my connection to my father really helped me,' Cooper says, 'because he said to Alfred Brendel, "I think my daughter would like to play to you".' She went to a concert Brendel gave at the Austrian Institute and approached him afterwards with the words: 'I have to work with you, or I'll die!' Brendel suggested that she should live, and come to Vienna. She remained his student for several years and, in the long term, his disciple.

Brendel, though legendary in the Viennese classics, was a remarkable Lisztian, particularly at the time Cooper was his pupil. His example could have prompted her to take a Liszt plunge too, but the opposite happened. 'I should have jumped in, perhaps,' she says, 'but it was so completely awe-inspiring that instead I took a step back.'

His deeply serious interpretations and rejection of the superficial showmanship accusations often levelled at Liszt nevertheless made a lasting impact on her. 'Even now people say, "Oh, Liszt, too many notes, empty, means nothing..." That's complete rubbish.' Her advice to anyone who doesn't 'get' Liszt is: 'Start by reading Alan Walker and then

listen to great Liszt players – of whom Brendel would probably be the greatest.'

Perhaps the image of Liszt as virtuoso superstar – the dashing heart-throb whose adoring fans stole his washing water from hotel rooms – creates a 'macho' aura around his music that could put off some female performers. 'Of my generation and the one after, that's possible,' Cooper ponders. 'But perhaps it says more about our lack of curiosity, because his scope is so large that even

## 'Liszt must have been devastatingly good-looking'

if you don't want to play the high testosterone stuff, there's a huge amount of strong, noble and passionate music that one can delve into.'

Liszt's public image was no exaggeration. 'He must have been devastatingly good-looking and in his virtuoso years extremely flamboyant,' says Cooper. 'Then, in Weimar and the later years, he became really a different person. He was enormously prolific, almost like a musical Picasso, and besides that, he was the most extraordinary teacher. He travelled everywhere in third-class trains and coaches – imagine how cold that must have been! – and performed at the end of it. He must have been a pianist *sans pareil*. And he was an extraordinarily generous soul.'

Cooper is a generous soul too, and she has recently started a new charitable trust



to help support young pianists on the verge of a career. 'I've never done much regular teaching,' she admits, 'perhaps because I wasn't ready for it. Then two things happened. First the Belcea Quartet made me president of their Belcea Charitable Trust, which enables them to coach young quartets over several years. They get wonderful results. I've heard groups at the beginning and the end of the coaching cycle, and it's clear that once young musicians are technically, humanly and emotionally ready to be pushed that extra step, it can make all the difference.'

'Next, some close friends have a wonderful house in Provence, near St Rémy, which they've restored. It's quiet and very beautiful. When I had the idea for the trust, they agreed

to let me use it for a week in the spring and another week in the summer. Their generosity was astonishing and made me decide this has to go ahead. Contacting the charity commission, getting a bank account open and fundraising was a huge learning curve, but I was determined to make it work.'

The idea is simple, she adds: she gives select students her unlimited time somewhere beautiful and peaceful, to facilitate complete, profound concentration. At the end of the week she offers the public a masterclass and concert, plus a Provençal dinner *al fresco*. Her first sessions have involved young pianists including Lara Melda, Mishka Rusdie Momen, Samson Tsoy, Alexandra Vaduva and Pavel Kolesnikov. 'They've loved it and I've

loved it too,' she says. 'It's simple, but you still have to make it happen – and it's thanks to all these good constellations coming together that it's been able to.'

The world at large, though, has seemed short of beneficial constellations recently. Cooper and I meet up the day before President Trump's inauguration and conversation over tea inevitably drifts to world events. She is determined, though, that music can offer a bridge between people that is second to none.

'Music has never been more necessary. I'm absolutely convinced of it,' she declares. 'It's like that Heineken advert, reaching the parts that other beers cannot reach – it's in that area of depth that we need to swim, to be of good to the people who are listening. I think it's absolutely vital to have music to recalibrate ourselves. You're surrounded all day long, especially if you're a news junkie – and I am – by reports of things that range from unpleasant to dark, dangerous and scary. We have to counter that by getting

## 'Music has never been more necessary. I'm convinced of it'

back to something you might call spiritual, something that is common to us all if we dig deep enough. It's the very centre of ourselves. I call it "it" – whatever "it" is – and we have actively to go back to "it". And music is one of the most immediate ways to get us there. It's up to us on the platform to do that.'

The year ahead brings plenty of excitement, despite all. Cooper picks out as highlights Lieder performances with tenor Mark Padmore and baritone Henk Neven, and three recital programmes next season combining Haydn and Beethoven with a selection of 20th- and 21st-century pieces from Schoenberg to Adès and Anderson. And in May she is playing Mozart's Piano Concerto in C, K503, with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle, shortly before he takes over at the London Symphony Orchestra.

'I think he and the LSO seem to be made for each other and I'm sure it's going to be absolutely wonderful,' Cooper enthuses. 'We've got some golden times ahead. But,' she adds, 'don't ask me about that projected new hall. Of course it would be lovely if we could have something sensational, but the world is as it is. We'll have to see...'

*Imogen Cooper's new disc of Liszt original works and transcriptions is out in March on Chandos*



THE JAMES NAUGHTIE INTERVIEW

# IESTYN DAVIES



Had life's course run differently, the countertenor may have found himself bestriding the pop charts rather than the world's great opera stages. But actually, he says, things have turned out for the best

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN MILLAR

**F**ortunately, the pop career of Iestyn Davies ended before it had really begun.

In the mid-1990s, he and a few friends at Wells Cathedral School answered a magazine advertisement that asked three questions: are you between 16 and 21; are you in a band; and do you want to be famous? They said 'yes' to all three, and attached to their reply a photograph from *Country Life* magazine showing them playing as a group inside the cathedral.

They called themselves Cage – this was the era of one-word band names that meant nothing much (Blur, Pulp and all) – but they'd never played a proper gig, although Iestyn, then 16, had written some songs and they enjoyed playing together.

Someone at Epic Records liked the photo and they turned up at the Sony studios in London for an audition. One of the songs they played was Iestyn's 'Up and Above' – 'it's not a bad ballad; I can still play it, though it doesn't really mean much' – and for a few minutes things looked good. Rob Stringer, now CEO of Sony Music but even then a big man in the record industry, announced that the song could make it to No. 1. Then he added the dreaded proviso: 'with the right financial backing.' That was all.

For a few days the boys thought they might make the big time. But it was not to be.

## A LIFE IN BRIEF



RISING STAIR: in Handel's *Partenope*, 2008

**Early years:** Born in 1979 in York, Iestyn Davies sang as a treble in the Choir of St John's College, Cambridge. He returned to the choir as a countertenor choral scholar when studying as an undergraduate.

**Big break:** Following studies at the Royal Academy of Music, he made his operatic debut in 2005, singing Ottone in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* in Zurich. Roles at opera houses including Glyndebourne, the Royal Opera House and English National Opera (such as Armindo in Handel's *Partenope*, above) followed.

**A man of honour:** In 2010, Davies was named Young Artist of the Year at the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards; he was recently awarded an MBE in the 2017 New Year's Honours.

'They didn't so much drop us, it just went away,' Davies tells me. 'And to be honest, my mum put pressure on me to do some work – A-levels and so on – and that was that. I'm quite glad it didn't work out...'

Everything else did. Within a couple of years his voice had changed and he realised he was a countertenor. A choral scholarship at St John's College, Cambridge (where he read archaeology and anthropology) followed, then time at the Royal Academy of Music. By his mid-twenties, his professional career had begun, a career that has since taken him to international heights.

Davies remembers telling his teachers at the Academy that he wouldn't be able to take part in one of the planned opera performances because he'd got an agent and had been asked to sing at the opera house in Zurich. 'They said OK – but of course there were no prizes for that. Soon after that, I left.'

We are chatting at the Royal Opera House, just after the end of a hugely successful run of George Benjamin's opera *Written on Skin* (first seen here four years ago) which has already taken its place among the contemporary operas that can safely be predicted to enter the repertoire and stay there. Given that Davies has a performance coming up at Covent Garden in the summer in *The Exterminating Angel*, the third opera by Thomas Adès which was something of a





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sensation at its premiere in Salzburg last year, it's a good time to talk about new work.

"The moment you sing it with the orchestra you realise how well-crafted it is," Davies says of Benjamin's opera (with libretto by Martin Crimp). "The balance between the voices and the orchestra is perfect, almost like a chamber piece but with this huge range of instruments, and yet as a singer you're never covered. It reminds me of when you're singing polyphonic music – Palestrina or something. It's so different from Handel, for example. It reminds me more of Bach, frankly."

Davies, whose recent solo disc of Bach cantatas (Nos 54, 82 and 170) has attracted great admiration, talks about the differences between Benjamin and Adès, who approach their work in quite different ways. Of *Written on Skin*, he points out how "it's an extraordinarily detailed score. You can't switch off in George's music."

And the composer – who conducted this revival – is a demanding taskmaster. "One of his big bugbears is the length and the rhythm of the notes. In lots of music, it seems you have much more licence to play around, but if you do that with George's music it won't work. That's not to say it's rigid, but it forces you – like Katie Mitchell's directing – to care about the way the score is marked. You have no choice. It doesn't work otherwise."

And for George, it's a personal, almost physical thing. It hits him in the solar plexus when something is out of time. You see him wince. If you look around, he's pulling a face – "I spent three years getting that rhythm". He thinks about every word and gives it meaning. He says, "Please sing that as a triplet". Now, for a musician it's a very thin line between that and something that's not quite a triplet. Most people don't mind. But George says, "I want you to sound sarcastic there and if it's not a triplet it doesn't sound sarcastic."

Part of the excitement for Davies was in the knowledge that the piece could appeal to many people who might harbour nervousness or even an antipathy to opera. "I think if you come to this production as an opera virgin, you don't feel you're being subjected to a Royal Opera House plush evening. You're going to something that could almost have been a play – and you think, 'gosh they're all singing. How strange.' Opera often takes a long time to say something. But in this it's syllabic drama, in every word. It pushes through. Moves fast."

*The Exterminating Angel* is a contrast. Adès took the story from Luis Buñuel's 1962 film and has produced an intricate, vast score – "symphonic" says Davies – to cope with a dramatic problem that he confronts with relish – 15 characters on stage from start



TABLE TALK:  
Iestyn Davies and James  
Naughtie discuss opera  
at Covent Garden

to finish, trapped at a weird dinner party that lurches from surrealist fantasy to dark comedy. "The director has to work out how all these people make something interesting for us to watch as well as to listen to. You can imagine what it was like for six weeks. But when it finally got going it was great."

"Six weeks rehearsal in Salzburg! And difficult. I can put my finger on how George Benjamin's music is put together, and there's

## 'The biggest pitfall is to accuse the audience of lacking something'

a sheer joy in singing it. With Tom, the satisfaction is not in the joy of singing it, if I can put it like that, because it's hard and not necessarily in your comfortable range. It's much more about emotion for him... but an emotion from an alien world. But you realise afterwards what an amazing work it is."

The Salzburg cast, which will be reunited in London, is a formidable bunch – Anne Sofie von Otter, Thomas Allen, John Tomlinson, Sally Matthews among them – and Adès was exacting with all of them.

"You say to Tom that something is really difficult. And he says "Yes it is; it's meant to be." I say to him that that top A flat is really difficult, and I show him what I mean, and he

says "There you are, you just did it. You just have to do it again. All right?"

The excitement of these two operas for Davies is in the fusion of contemporary music and drama, so we talk about the understanding in his generation of singers that the days of performers being able to get away without a subtle sense of stagecraft – 'park and bark' opera – are long gone. "The style of directing has changed so much," he explains. "We've got much more of a cross-fertilisation from straight theatre and dance too. Film directors coming to opera. There's a lot of pressure on it to be visual art. And think of the cinema broadcasts: when they're done well, they're extremely good."

"People come and they don't feel that it's an intimidating space. I think that has much more of an effect in building an audience than, say, crossover classical which claims to do that. That, incidentally, is complete rubbish most of the time."

By now, Davies is in passionate form. "Crossover? It's just not the same thing as opera. We know that. But there's so much pretence. The biggest pitfall for us is to accuse the audience of lacking something. I think it's the fault of the people who are not giving it to them, not the fault of the audience."

"If record companies, instead of going down the road of Katherine Jenkins and Charlotte Church had taken Danielle de Niese, for example, who really is an opera singer, then they could have done just as well. But they didn't. Crossover is a different business, and





IN THE FLESH:  
Davies (left) with Ben Clifford  
in Benjamin's *Written on Skin*  
at Covent Garden in January

it's just dressed up to look like opera. The pop music pace couldn't work for an opera singer. All they do is tour and make another album; they don't have time to do six weeks' rehearsal and do a serious production. And the trouble is they have to rely on success to justify what they're doing.'

Davies's own career has led him to stellar success around the world, but like any professional singer he's aware of the precarious nature of the business. He got some serious advice as an 18-year-old from James Bowman, the grand old man (in the very best sense) of British countertenors, with whom he took some lessons. 'James said "Think if you want to follow a music career. Remember that if you're ill, that's this month's mortgage payment gone. No one will give you money to say sorry. That's the way it is."'

So what of the fact that countertenors are something of a different breed?

'We're fortunate because we're a niche within a niche, really,' he replies. 'I think if you are a soprano it's much more difficult. Many of them want to be opera singers and they don't want to fall into the trap of being a chorus singer, despite the fact that there are so many great choral singers. A countertenor can't do that. It's all or nothing.'

'We're lucky because Baroque music is always going to attract people, and look at the number of countertenors who are constantly doing castrato roles. Isn't it true that eight out

of ten operas were written before 1780? A lot of them are rubbish, of course, but there are lots of enthusiastic scholars and musicians who are digging about and giving it a good go, and playing the music very, very well. French and Italian Baroque groups are discovering unknown things, and that attracts a whole new generation of young singers.'

'But in the end, the countertenor will only survive if people write music for him,

**'We're fortunate  
because we're a niche  
within a niche'**

and that's why George (Benjamin) and Tom (Adès) are so good. Otherwise it will become a museum voice. We've relied on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the last 40 years.'

As it happens, Davies will sing Oberon in Britten's opera at Aldeburgh this summer, the part written for Alfred Deller in 1960 which later became the making of James Bowman. 'It's one of those roles where you don't do much, but it's memorable because you sing this one stunning aria, which is a gift. It's what everyone had in their audition briefcase: two Handels and one Britten. But now you can do George Benjamin, maybe. George said

to me, "I'm very happy I've written an aria for you", and you look at it and it's got a glass harmonica in it. I can't go round with a glass harmonica in my briefcase.'

Auditions for Davies are, of course, a thing of the past. He's in demand in opera houses around the world. Later in the year, there's a Broadway run of Claire van Kampen's play *Farinelli and the King* (with Mark Rylance), and a regular programme of recitals.

Recordings, too. But that business has changed. 'A friend of mine was telling me that only ten years ago he was doing a recording, and was picked up by a limo driven by a man in a hat. Then paid a good fee. Those days have gone, believe me. If anyone tells you that you'll make any money from recordings, they're lying to you. I suppose at the end of your career you have something to show for it. That's maybe the best way to look at it.'

But he's not complaining. Iestyn Davies, not yet 40 years old, is currently on the crest of a wave. He enjoys the memory of the boy band that never was.

'That thing of being a singer or being in a band was such a distant dream that it seemed very far away. So far away that you didn't think about it. But I did always have in my gut a feeling that something would happen. I don't know why. But I did.'

Iestyn Davies will be singing in Thomas Adès's *The Exterminating Angel* at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, from 24 April – 8 May



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Jakow Zak, winner of the International Frederic Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, 1937; (right) Van Cliburn at a competition party, 1969; (above) Lim Ji Young, the winner of the Queen Elisabeth Competition, 2015



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## A TIME TO JUDGE

As the World Federation of International Music Competitions celebrates its 60th anniversary, we take a look at its history

Old War clashes, the chaos of colonial conflicts and existential fears about life in a nuclear age inspired the launch of a raft of transnational organisations in the 1950s. The World Federation of International Music Competitions (WFIMC) sprang to life in Geneva in 1957, 11 like-minded groups from both sides of the Iron Curtain converging to bring nations and individuals together through music.

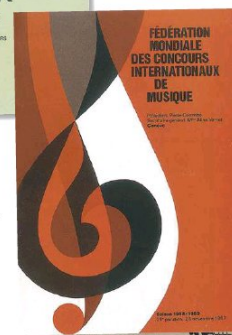
The Federation's founder members included the Geneva International Music Competition, the Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition in Brussels, Warsaw's International Chopin Piano Competition, the Prague Spring International Music Festival and the Budapest International Music Competition. Over the past 60 years, its constituency has followed the arc of globalisation to encompass competitions on six continents and in almost 40 countries.

Today's WFIMC supports, promotes and endorses the work of a total of 120 classical music and jazz competitions. Its mission, to

set and maintain the highest artistic standards, is driven by a desire to contribute to 'the vibrancy of the music world by representing leading international music competitions and supporting them with valuable services and guidelines'.

While most Federation competitions are based in Europe – with Germany, Italy and France collectively accounting for 36 members – the organisation extends its wide geographical reach to embrace competitions in Australia, the Americas, Asia and South Africa. Japan presently boasts ten member organisations, while China's five stands on par with Poland, Spain and Switzerland.

The WFIMC's members provide a wealth of opportunities for young pianists and string players, together with contests open to everyone from composers, conductors and singers to organists, harpists, percussionists and string quartets. Federation competitions cater for most orchestral instruments and just about the full range of musical disciplines. Above



all, they seek to promote excellence in performance and cultivate the diverse skills required to communicate with a wide audience

While the proliferation of music competitions in recent years has reduced the stock value of prize-winning status, laureates of WFIMC events inevitably attract the music profession's close attention. Many Federation members now offer competition winners career mentoring packages or coveted management deals. They are also striving to bridge the gap between the hothouse environment of music college and the increasingly tough demands of life as a professional musician.

The Federation, which continues to grow in scale and scope, is set to evolve under a new governance structure, comprising a seven-strong board elected from within and by the organisation's membership. It intends to develop the physical and online audience for classical music and jazz and tap into the genuine human interest in the competition process. And it is determined to bring forward the next generation of performers with care for their professional progress and consideration for their personal development. ■



## PATHS TO SUCCESS

How music competitions are essential milestones along any artist's road

Every summer, music colleges dispense a flood of graduates blessed with technical skills far superior to those common only a few generations back. Yet the old jobs equation – one of short supply and high demand – remains unchanged. Ambitious young musicians, no matter how good, are obliged to compete, whether by joining the queue for orchestral auditions, singing for casting directors or conductors, or sending demonstration recordings to concert managers and promoters. For a select few, music competitions offer a fast-track to fame; for many others, they provide experience and insights into life as a professional soloist.

'There are so many ways to think about music competitions,' comments Rob

'Competitions offer a tool for young musicians as they grow and develop'

Hilberink, Director of the International Franz Liszt Competition in the Netherlands. 'Some competitions believe that what they do is like a game for audience entertainment. But many nowadays see themselves as providing a crucial link in the chain that leads from music school to the stage.'

Competitions are about more than placing emerging talents on trial; they offer participants the chance to learn by doing, to discover what it takes to work as concerto soloist with a professional orchestra against the rehearsal-room clock, and communicate points of interpretation in clear and certain terms. 'These are things you can't learn from textbooks,' notes Hilberink. 'We provide guidance to our prize winners and help them grow and learn long after the competition is over. We enable them to make the next step.'

Idith Zvi, Artistic Director of the Tel Aviv-based Arthur Rubinstein International Music Society, suggests that a good music competition should amount to a celebration of young musicians. A glance at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition archives reveals a laureate list worth celebrating, with Emanuel Ax, Janina Fialkowska, Kirill Gerstein, Boris Giltburg and Daniil Trifonov among its alumni. 'We try to make it more of a festival than a competition,' Zvi comments. 'We want the streets around the competition to be festive.'

The triennial event's next outing, set to run from 25 April to 11 May, is sure to attract a loyal and knowledgeable following. 'Our audience contributes to our competitors' artistic development,' Zvi observes. She is certain that the experience of connecting with an audience over three weeks as recitalist, chamber musician and concerto soloist carries the highest value. 'It allows young musicians to judge whether they're capable of having a professional career. It tests their ability of accepting rejection or even success.'

Pierre van der Westhuizen, President and CEO of the Cleveland International Piano Competition, believes that competitions have grown more aware of their place within the wider music ecosystem. 'People used to win major competitions and were all set for a career,' he reflects. 'That's generally not the case now. The winners and the competitions need to figure that out. I don't think the goal of competitions should be like *American Idol* or *Britain's Got Talent*. As somebody who curates a piano competition, I believe we offer a tool for young musicians as they grow and develop. Yes, our \$75,000 first prize is wonderful. But it's what you do with it that really counts. Competitions are increasingly taking on a management role



Suyeon Kang wins the 2015 Michael Hill International Violin Competition in Auckland; (below) the Rolston String Quartet take first prize at the 2016 Banff International String Quartet Competition



Third prize winner Jiayan Sun with conductor Sir Mark Elder at the Leeds International Piano Competition in 2012







Kirill Gerstein, the 2001 winner of the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition

today. That's the key difference to how they were in the past.'

While the range of post-competition opportunities and support has never been broader, the process of selection stands as a constant of competition life. 'Some say that one musician should not be compared to another, but there is competition in whatever we do,' observes Rob Hilberink. 'Competition is a way of drawing attention to young performers. It's a starting point, like a job interview.' Young musicians, adds Pierre van der Westhuizen, are now encouraged to be entrepreneurs as part of their training. 'It's very rare to find someone making their living just from giving recitals.' Creating work by collaborating with others, seeking advice from established colleagues and converting fresh ideas into performance opportunities belong to their portfolio career mix. The same, he continues, applies to competitions. 'We have to think outside the box.'

Fresh thinking is set to shape the future of the Leeds International Piano Competition. Its competition's next edition, scheduled for September 2018, will be the first under the joint artistic direction of pianist Paul Lewis and arts administrator Adam Gatehouse. The latter explains that 'The Leeds' has invested in strengthening its prize package. 'We're building on the secure foundations left to us by Dame Fanny Waterman, the competition's founder. We strongly believe that any 21st-century competition needs to engage with the broadest possible audience

and with its competitors in the most personal and human way.'

Gatehouse is determined to widen his competition's international scope. 'We want the Leeds to be more outward facing.' It is a matter, he explains, of cultivating audiences and guiding winners into the profession. The competition's first rounds, to be held in Berlin, New York and Singapore in April 2018, will be recorded for subsequent streaming online.

## 'If you win the Van Cliburn, you'll be an artist on the world stage'

Its semi-finals and final, meanwhile, will be streamed live and broadcast on BBC Radio 3, with the final broadcast by BBC television. Leeds audiences will also be able to follow a series of masterclasses, discussions, films and education outreach sessions as the competition unfolds.

'Depending on where they come from, players are sometimes markedly unprepared for the harsh realities [of the music profession],' Gatehouse reflects. He notes how audiences love the cut and thrust of competitions, although both he and Paul Lewis harbour mixed feelings about pitching musicians into gladiatorial combat. 'On the other hand, competitions are a very good way to come into the limelight.' One of the three Leeds prize winners will receive

representation from leading artist agent Askonas Holt and engagements with, among others, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Hallé orchestras. Paul Lewis will provide post-competition mentoring to Leeds laureates.

The quadrennial Van Cliburn Competition, among the most coveted prizes in classical music, is set to run at its Fort Worth home during May and June. This year's edition attracted 145 pianists, judged during an extensive round of international screening auditions and reduced to the 30 destined to contest for one of six final places. 'The most important question today is how can we help our winners stay relevant and understand that winning a competition is only the first step,' notes Jacques Marquis, Cliburn President and CEO. The answers, he hopes, rest with the prestigious Texas competition's package of practical support, which offers its gold medallist a three-year mentoring deal with London-based Keynote Artist Management, and career support, professional advice and global media exposure to all its winners. 'Our goal is to help them. We're there to give them the tools to make progress. The Cliburn is well known for offering many concerts. We want these to lead to second, third and subsequent engagements and not be the last!'

An international advisory council, comprising artists, promoters and others, can offer Cliburn winners advice on everything from repertoire selection to schedule management. 'We're trying to improve all the time in the way we support people,' observes Marquis. 'If you win the Cliburn, you'll be an artist on the world stage within weeks. We have to be very serious about helping young musicians make that transition. That's why we stay close to them and why it's such a privilege to do this job.'



Van Cliburn Competition CEO Jacques Marquis



The Cliburn Shop staffed by volunteers; (left) Steinway piano technician Joel Britton

## SUPPORTING ACTS

It takes hundreds to ensure the smooth running of a competition

Healthy box-office returns and soaring online viewing figures confirm that audiences love the cut and thrust of music competitions. What happens onstage and in the jury room makes them compelling. But most people, competitors and judges included, know little of the enormous backstage efforts required to avoid countless competition pitfalls and potential calamities.

International competitions rely on the goodwill of volunteers, ready to host contestants or provide transport. Their staff, meanwhile, must field complaints from anxious young musicians and respond to them skilfully, without pandering to prima donnas or pushing fearful contestants into despair. The behind-the-scenes checklist covers every subject from transport to psychology, digital media to piano technology.

Jacques Marquis, president and CEO of the Van Cliburn Competition and treasurer of the World Federation of International Music Competitions, says that his competition could not function without its volunteer network. The Cliburn draws help from between 500 and 800 people. They meet and greet competition candidates at Fort Worth airport, serve as host families, staff the Cliburn gift shop, deliver food and drink to the jury room, and generally prime the pump of enthusiasm throughout the competition's two-week run.

'We have a strong volunteer base, which works with our staff, not just on the main competition but on our junior and amateur competitions,' notes Marquis. 'The more competitions you do, the better you get at it. We're like ducks: we can paddle fast beneath the water, but on the surface, we're cool.'

Piano competitions would be less cool, more stone dead, but for the backstage work of

## 'We can paddle fast beneath the water, but on the surface, we're cool'

keyboard technicians. Gerrit Glaner, head of the Concert and Artist Department at Steinway in Hamburg, travels the world to ensure his company's instruments are in top order. His job involves 18-hour days in pursuit of perfection, with meals and sleep snatched between performances and pianos regulated overnight and in the early morning. Small wonder he bristles when the technicians are missing from competition votes of thanks. 'They often forget to mention the hardest working people in the competition – the piano technicians!'

Glaner points out that a competition can continue if a jury member falls sick; an ailing piano technician, however, can bring

proceedings to a halt. A colleague, he recalls, was confined to bed after developing a high fever. 'The very good local technician helped but it took three days before we could fly our replacement in from London. This was dramatic, because the technician is responsible for keeping up the quality of the instrument and the faith of the pianists.'

Piano competitions face the challenge of providing pianists with an instrument that suits their touch. Gerrit Glaner says that, within reason, technicians always aim to respond to competitors' feedback. 'When you have one piano and up to 52 people to play on it, you have to be flexible.'

It is the work of volunteers, meanwhile, that help to make a competition very much part of its host city. 'It is important for a competition to be seen as a cultural event in the life of the city,' says Didier Schnorck, WFIMC President and the Secretary General of the Concours de Genève, 'and it is also important for the young competitors to be welcomed by the local people. In Geneva, every competitor is hosted in the house of a family. Those families then become the core of the audience – they come not just to every concert during the competition, but also to concerts given by past laureates when they return in later years. It creates a very strong link between a town and the musicians.'

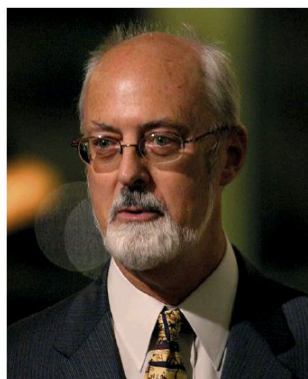


## JURY SERVICE

What is it like to serve on the judging panel of a world-class music competition?

Music competitions often fall into competition, one with another. Those mindful of their international status will seek to book a jury of outstanding performers and senior music industry figures, from managers and promoters to critics and record company executives. Compiling a top-flight judging panel is no easy task, however, given the weeks of commitment demanded by many competitions and the allure of lucrative summer festival dates. The World Federation of International Music Competitions' database of past jurors reveals how wide its members cast their nets to catch the best jury candidates.

Barry Douglas, winner of the 1986 International Tchaikovsky Competition, was invited back to Moscow to judge the



'You'd open up a two-kilo can of worms every time you spoke'

Tchaikovsky's quadrennial piano finals in 2011 and 2015. The event had been revamped, in part to replace the jury horse-trading of past decades with scrupulous fairness. Conversation between Moscow jurors, recalls Douglas, was discouraged on his first visit and accepted second time round. 'You'd open up a two-kilo can of worms every time you spoke,' he says. 'But that debate was healthy.'

The Moscow judging process delivered two exceptional winners in Daniil Trifonov and Dmitry Maslennikov. It also attracted harsh words from partisan audience members, outraged when competitors were eliminated before the finals. 'It was brilliant that they were so passionate about their favourites.' What do impartial competition judges look for? 'The first question is can they play the instrument,'

notes Douglas. 'Once you've chosen a group of people who can play the piano in all its glory, then it becomes tough. It's very subjective.'

Jury members, he continues, should remain aware of the communication between stage and audience. 'Players have to be able to move people. Competition performances should feel like a concert, but an extra-special concert.'

Violinist and conductor Jaime Laredo underlines the importance of preparing students for competitions. 'They must be well prepared in every way,' he notes. 'The important thing is that they should always be themselves. Don't listen to the other competitors; play your hearts out, as if you're giving a performance and not as if you're trying to be better than someone else.'

Competition experience, notes Laredo, can deepen a young artist's self-knowledge. He recalls the unforgettable month that led to his victory at the Queen Elisabeth

Competition in 1959. It was a career-defining moment, one marked by the presence of a jury comprising five great violinists. The shorter concert season then, over by the end of May, allowed outstanding musicians to populate competition juries during summer months. Yehudi Menuhin, David Oistrakh, Joseph Szigeti, Arthur Grumiaux and Zino Francescatti travelled to Brussels to judge Laredo and his fellow contestants.

'Quite frankly, it was frightening! And it was extraordinary to play for these people, meet them and get to know them a bit. There were very few competitions then and winning one of the big ones virtually guaranteed you a career. That rarely happens today, when there are so many competitions and winners.'

Gábor Takács-Nagy, in high demand as a competition judge, served as jury president at the Geneva String Quartet Competition last November. The violinist and conductor notes

that the job carries a heavy responsibility; it also highlights the subjective nature of judging performance. Playing music, he explains, owes a materialist side, which includes the physical business of turning written notes into sound. 'But it is mainly a spiritual thing. It's easy for a jury if there's one outstanding performer or if somebody is not very good – there is no argument. When things are less than astonishingly brilliant or bad, then it's hard to agree and everything becomes relative.'

Can a musician be objective about another's performance? It's difficult, says Takács-Nagy. Certain musical gestures and expressions, he notes, will resonate or clash with a judge's own taste. And then there is gut instinct. 'I have heard string quartets in competition that were always beautiful and challenging spiritually but which from the material point of view [made mistakes], and others that were spiritually empty but technically very

good.' A wise judge, he suggests, will tolerate blemished performances but not beige ones.

Charles Hamlen, artistic advisor to the Orchestra of St Luke's, is steeped in jury experience. He was a member of the second jury for the 2015 Honens Piano Competition and the 2016 Carl Nielsen International Violin Competition. The co-founder and former chairman of IMG Artists stresses the value of competitions to those who fall short in the final furlong. 'Of course, it's great if you win. But if you don't play well [on the day], you will still hold the jury's attention. And we talk about people whose playing we've enjoyed.'

Hamlen recalls a conversation with the mother of a 10-year-old musician who was entranced by the performance of one finalist, who 'really told a story'. 'That was so perceptive. There's no single way to reach an audience, but the process of communicating with the audience is so important.'



Charles Hamlen (left) takes to the stage with other jurors at Odense's 2016 Carl Nielsen International Competition for violinists

## JURORS' GEMS

Three judges offer up some words of wisdom



**GÁBOR TAKÁCS-NAGY**  
Violinist and conductor

I remember Kurtág's advice to the Takács

Quartet before we went to Evian for our first competition in 1977. He said, 'Boys, never forget that creativity starts where the comfort zone finishes. Please do not fall into this competition trap of being afraid. Dare to be creative.' We won because we dared to be courageous.

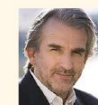
When we talk, we use emotions and colours in our voice. Musicians who play without creativity, who only focus on technique, sound like robots talking to an answering machine. I tell youngsters to go out and talk to people through music, not to think about how they're being judged.



**JAIME LAREDO**  
Violinist and conductor

Having sat on juries, as well as being on the other side as a competitor, I

am looking for someone special. They must play the instrument perfectly for a start. That's part of the job. You need integrity in whatever you do in life. And that applies to the way competition juries go about their business. I think any competition that allows a teacher on the jury to vote for their student cannot be taken seriously. It's as simple as that. It should not be allowed, period!



**BARRY DOUGLAS**  
Pianist and conductor

Music colleges should not push people into competitions for the glory of the college. It's

important that teachers place emphasis on building a wide repertoire and great preparation, in case one of their students wins. If you go into a competition with just two concertos and one recital programme to your name, you can't survive as a winner. Those who win a big competition will be so busy in the first few years that they won't have time to learn new works.

Competitions give a feel over three or four rounds of who might have what it takes to be a creative and original artist.

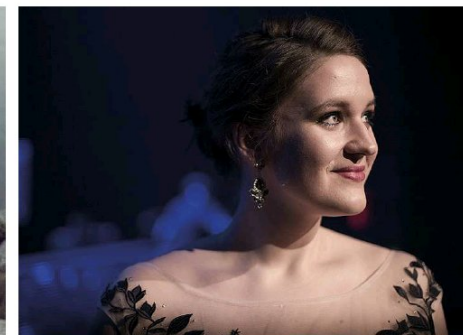




(clockwise from left)  
pianists Luca Buratto  
and Olga Kern; the  
Ebène Quartet



Clarinetist Martin Fröst;  
(right) flautist Emmanuel  
Pahud; (above right)  
soprano Lise Davidsen



## SOUND ADVICE

Six winners give their tips for aspiring competition laureates

### LUCA BURATTO *Pianist*

Winner, Honens Competition, Calgary (2015);  
Third Prize, International Robert Schumann  
Competition, Zwickau (2012)

'The most important thing is to find the right competition to fit you, as they are all different in terms of repertoire, format and so on – so, for instance, if you are not a Chopin specialist, it's really not worth entering the International Chopin Piano Competition. Then, the challenge is to work out the repertoire that really shows who you are as a performer – the most important thing when competing is to be sincere and then to communicate that.'

'You must also make sure you are strong in that repertoire too. What I found useful before Honens was that I took part in a summer music festival and got a chance to rehearse the repertoire. This was important for the chamber music part of the competition where you are playing with others – having just two hours to rehearse a difficult piece like the Hindemith Viola Sonata would never have been enough.'

### EBÈNE QUARTET *String Quartet*

Winner of the ARD International Music  
Competition, Munich (2004)

'When we won the ARD International Music Competition, we did our best to play as if we were in a concert' [says violinist Gabriel Le Magadure]. 'You have to show your personality. I don't understand it when people say that you have to play in a certain way in competitions – technically perfect and with not too much expression. If you're a judge, you surely want to see the light in a performer's eyes, the power in their heart and what they will do on stage in the future if you give them the first prize.'

'As a competitor, you have to make the competition the main focus of your attention at that particular time. When we first entered the ARD, I remember that we had a lot of concerts and Pierre [Colombet], the first violin, and I were not focusing on it as much as we should. Thankfully, my viola and cello colleagues told us that, if we wanted to win, we really had to concentrate on it.'

### OLGA KERN *Pianist*

Gold Medal, Van Cliburn International Music  
Competition, Fort Worth (2001)

'The most important advice would be to practise – when you come on stage it needs to be 200 per cent. You must be sure of your interpretation because competitions involve so much stress. For the Van Cliburn, I practised for almost 20 hours a day. This is why I won. But practice isn't just about the hands – it's about finding the right sound and the right interpretation.'

'I never played for the judges. I always performed for the audience – it was like a concert every time. There are so many different people in the jury and they all have different opinions. Music has so many ways of expression, so everyone feels differently. You need to be you.'

'It's also important which number you draw. It's luck, of course. Mostly it's better to be placed towards the end: people tend to remember you more, and psychologically you can rest a little longer and practise a little more. That always helps.'

### MARTIN FRÖST *Clarinetist*

First Prize, Geneva International Music  
Competition (1997)

'You should prepare very carefully as if you are playing the concert of your life. That was one of my secrets. When I won the Geneva Competition, I didn't think of it as anything except a series of concerts. I also isolated myself quite a lot – I did my thing and performed and rehearsed, and I was very focused. You should never compare yourself to others. We are much more unique than we think we are. Don't listen to other competitors and trust your instincts.'

'You also need to be sure of the story you want to tell with the music – today, young musicians have access to so much music and video online. They can try to imitate other performances, but still people don't know what story they want to tell themselves.'

'I'd also advise against doing too many competitions. After I won in Geneva, I didn't do a single one afterwards. Prepare for one you really want to win, and then win it. And then stop.'

### LISE DAVIDSEN *Soprano*

Winner of the Queen Sonja International Music  
Competition, Oslo (2015)

'When you are playing in a competition you experience entirely different kinds of nerves from performing a recital or being in an opera, so my main advice is to learn your repertoire inside out. It is so important, as you have to be able to sing it under any circumstances. The other important preparation – to deal with nerves – is mental. Try picturing the stage you are going to perform on, and imagine yourself there. That way, you'll get used to it before it actually happens.'

'Performing to a jury is a very different experience to singing in front of an audience. It can feel a bit unnatural – you know they are going to judge your performance when you are done. So, it's important not to think about it too much. You have to approach it like a normal performance and imagine that your competition entry is just a part of a concert. Judges want you to sing well. They want to hear something good.'

### EMMANUEL PAHUD *Flautist*

First Prize, Geneva International Music  
Competition (1992); Winner, Kobe  
International Flute Competition (1989)

'Whenever I entered competitions, I would prepare the programme that I was going to play in them by performing the pieces in concerts beforehand. Gaining experience that way is very important. That said, whether you're playing in a concert, a competition or an audition, putting yourself to be in a position to deliver your best should be a prerequisite – if you're good in a competition, it then depends on the jury if you win or not; if you're bad, it doesn't!'

'I know I am always being judged by others when I play. But in a concert you have nothing to lose. In a competition, in contrast, you can be eliminated for choosing this phrasing, or that style or whatever. So the goal is not necessarily to be the most impressive player, but to get the highest possible ranking from every jury member. Listening to their own recordings to see how they play the music can help.'



Below you'll find details of World Federation of International Music Competitions taking place over the next 12 months

## MARCH 2017

- 14-26  
**SEOUL** SOUTH KOREA  
Seoul International Music  
Competition • *Piano*  
Deadline passed
- 21-29  
**BELGRADE** SERBIA  
International Jeunes  
Musicales Competition  
• *Flute* Deadline passed
- 24 March – 2 April  
**EPINAL** FRANCE  
Epinal International  
Piano Competition • *Piano*  
Deadline passed
- 25 March – 7 April  
**BARCELONA** SPAIN  
Maria Canals International  
Music Competition Barcelona  
• *Piano*  
Deadline passed

## APRIL 2017

- 17-27  
**KIEV** UKRAINE  
International Competition for  
Young Pianists in Memory of  
Vladimir Horowitz • *Piano*  
Deadline passed
- 19-23  
**LYON** FRANCE  
Concours International de  
Musique de Chamber de Lyon  
• *Wind Instruments*  
Deadline passed
- 20-28  
**JAÉN** SPAIN  
International Piano  
Competition 'Premio 'Jaén'  
• *Piano*  
Apply by 8 March
- 24 April – 6 May  
**LICHTENBERG** GERMANY  
International Violin  
Competition Henri Marteau  
• *Violin*  
Deadline passed
- 25 April – 11 May  
**TEL AVIV** ISRAEL  
The Arthur Rubinstein  
International Piano Master  
Competition • *Piano*  
Deadline passed

## MAY 2017

- 1-12  
**MONTREAL** CANADA  
Concours Musical  
International de Montréal  
• *Piano* Deadline passed
- 4-13  
**MARKNEUKIRCHEN**  
GERMANY  
Markneukirchen International  
Instrumental Competition  
• *Double Bass and Viola*  
Deadline passed
- 7-15  
**PRAGUE** CZECH REPUBLIC  
Prague Spring International  
Music Competition  
• *Harpichord and Violin*  
Deadline passed
- 8 May – 3 June  
**BRUSSELS** BELGIUM  
Queen Elisabeth Competition  
• *Cello* Deadline passed

- 13-21  
**OSAKA** JAPAN  
Osaka International  
Chamber Music Competition  
• *Brass Quintet, Saxophone  
Quartet, String Quartet and  
Wind Quintet*  
Deadline passed
- 25 May – 4 June  
**KOBE** JAPAN  
Kobe International  
Flute Competition  
• *Flute* Deadline passed
- 25 May – 10 June  
**FORT WORTH** US  
Van Cliburn International  
Piano Competition  
• *Piano* Deadline passed
- 28 May – 8 June  
**VIENNA** AUSTRIA  
International Beethoven  
Piano Competition Vienna  
• *Piano* Deadline passed

## JUNE 2017

- 2-10  
**AUCKLAND**  
NEW ZEALAND  
Michael Hill International  
Violin Competition  
• *Violin* Deadline passed

- 4-11  
**REGGIO EMILIA** ITALY  
International String Quartet  
Competition 'Premio  
Paolo Boriani'  
• *String Quartet*  
Deadline passed
- 6-14  
**YEREVAN** ARMENIA  
Aram Khachaturian  
International Competition  
• *Voice* Apply by 25 April
- 11-23  
**SHENZHEN** CHINA  
China Shenzhen  
International Piano  
Concerto Competition  
• *Piano* Deadline passed
- 17-23  
**TROMSØ** NORWAY  
Top of the World  
International Piano  
Competition • *Piano*  
Deadline passed

## AUGUST 2017

- 8-16  
**JEJU** SOUTH KOREA  
Jeju International  
Brass Competition  
• *Brass Quintet, Horn,  
Trombone and Trumpet*  
Apply by 31 May
- 8-18  
**OSLO** NORWAY  
The Queen Sonja  
International Music  
Competition • *Voice*  
Apply by 1 April
- 16-19  
**BUCHAREST** ROMANIA  
The International Grand Prix  
of Romania 'Trophæum Artis  
Cantorum'  
• *Voice*  
Apply by 6 June
- 17-20  
**KATRINEHOLM** SWEDEN  
Swedish International  
Duo Competition  
• *Piano Duos*  
Apply by 16 June
- 17-25  
**VEVEY** SWITZERLAND  
Concours International de



Norway's Queen Sonja  
presents baritone Seung-Gi  
Jung with first prize; (right)  
the Palau de la Música  
Catalana, home of Barcelona's  
Maria Canals competition

Piano Clara Haskil • *Piano*  
Apply by 28 April

- 17-31  
**HELSINKI** FINLAND  
International Maj Lind Piano  
Competition  
• *Piano* Apply by 24 April

- 19-26  
**SAINT-MAURICE**  
SWITZERLAND  
Concours International  
pour Orgue Saint-Maurice  
d'Agaune • *Organ*  
Apply by 31 May

- 22-29  
**SION** SWITZERLAND  
Concours International de  
Violon 'Tibor Varga'  
• *Violin* Apply by 10 April

- 22 Aug – 1 Sept  
**BOLZANO** ITALY  
Ferruccio Busoni International  
Piano Competition  
• *Piano* Deadline passed

- 28 Aug – 15 Sept  
**MUNICH** GERMANY  
ARD International Music  
Competition • *Guitar, Oboe,  
Piano and Violin*  
Apply by 31 March

## SEPTEMBER 2017

- 1-10  
**GLASGOW** UK  
Scottish International  
Piano Competition • *Piano*  
Apply by 31 March

- 6-18  
**TOKYO** JAPAN  
International Organ  
Competition Musashino –  
Tokyo • *Organ*  
Deadline passed

- 7-16  
**'S-HERTOGENBOSCH**  
NETHERLANDS  
International  
Vocal Competition

'S-Hertogenbosch • *Voice*  
Apply by 12 April

- 10-17  
**ST PETERSBURG** RUSSIA  
Elena Obraztsova  
International Competition  
of Young Opera Singers  
• *Voice* Apply by 1 July

- 11-16  
**BESANÇON** FRANCE  
Concours International de  
Jeunes Chefs d'Orchestre  
• *Conducting* Deadline passed

- 12-17  
**DÜSSELDORF** GERMANY  
'Aeolus' International  
Competition for Wind  
Instruments • *Clarinet, Flute  
and Saxophone*  
Apply by 30 April

- 12-23  
**VALENCIA** SPAIN  
Valencia International  
Piano Competition

'Premio Iturbi'  
• *Piano* Apply by 15 June

- 18-23  
**BRATISLAVA** SLOVAKIA  
JN Hummel International  
Piano Competition  
• *Piano* Apply by 31 May

- 25-30  
**ALESSANDRIA** ITALY  
Michele Pittaluga  
International Guitar and  
Composition Competitions  
'Premio Città de Alessandria'  
• *Guitar* Apply by 31 August

- 26-30  
**TRONDHEIM** NORWAY  
Canadian International Organ  
Competition • *Organ*  
Deadline passed

## OCTOBER 2017

- 1-11  
**TBILISI** GEORGIA

Tbilisi International Piano  
Competition • *Piano*  
Apply by 1 May

- 2 Oct – 16 Dec  
**BUDAPEST** HUNGARY  
Solti International  
Conducting Competition •  
*Conducting*  
Apply by 1 May

- 8-21  
**UTRECHT** NETHERLANDS  
International Franz Liszt  
Piano Competition • *Piano*  
Deadline passed

- 10-21  
**MONTREAL** CANADA  
Concours de Genève  
Competition • *Organ*  
Apply by 31 May

- 12-21  
**VERCELLI** ITALY  
Concours International de  
Musique Gian Battista Viotti  
• *Piano*



Apply by 21 July

- 23-28  
**BONN** ITALY  
'Arturo Toscanini'  
International Conducting  
Competition • *Conducting*  
Deadline passed

- 28 Oct – 5 Nov  
**TONGYEONG**  
SOUTH KOREA  
International Isangyun  
Competition • *Violin*  
Apply by 12 August

- 30 Oct – 4 Nov  
**PORCIA** ITALY  
International Competition  
'Città di Porcia' • *Horn*  
Deadline tba

## NOVEMBER 2017

- 4-10  
**VIÑA DEL MAR** CHILE  
International Competition  
'Dr Luis Sigal' • *Guitar*  
Deadline tba

- 11-19  
**HAMAMATSU** JAPAN  
MT Fuji International Orga  
Competition of Shizuoka  
• *Voice* Apply by 1 May

- 17-26  
**KATOWICE** POLAND  
Gregorz Fitelberg  
International Competition  
for Conductors • *Conducting*  
Apply by 31 May

- 23-30  
**GENÈVE** SWITZERLAND  
Concours de Genève  
• *Composition*  
Apply by 4 May

- 27 Nov – 2 Dec  
**COLOGNE** GERMANY  
International Music  
Competitions Cologne  
• *Voice* Apply by 1 July

## DECEMBER 2017

- 1-9  
**BONN** GERMANY  
International Telekom  
Beethoven Competition Bonn  
• *Piano* Apply by 15 May

## JANUARY 2018

- 30 Jan – 10 Feb  
**WARSAW** POLAND  
Witold Lutosławski  
International Cello  
Competition  
• *Cello*  
Apply by 15 November 2017

## FEBRUARY 2018

- 2-15  
**SALZBURG** AUSTRIA  
International Mozart  
Competition  
• *String Quartet and Voice*  
Apply by 15 August 2017

- 10-18  
**LUXEMBOURG**  
Concours International de  
Percussion Luxembourg  
• *Percussion*  
Apply by 30 September 2017

- 18-28  
**GRAZ** AUSTRIA  
Franz Schubert and  
Modern Music  
• *Duo fo Voice and Piano,  
Piano Trio, String Quartet*  
Apply by 5 October 2017

- Date tba  
**PRETORIA**  
SOUTH AFRICA  
Unisa International Music  
Competitions  
• *Voice, Voice (Jazz)*  
Deadline date tba

For further details of all  
competitions, visit the  
World Federation website  
at [www.wfimc.org](http://www.wfimc.org)





**SYMPHONY CYCLE:**  
Haydn rides a Boris Bike in  
London; (below) at Johann  
Peter Salomon's epitaph  
at Westminster Abbey

# A CAPITAL FELLOW

When Austrian composer Joseph Haydn made London his temporary home in the 1790s, he enjoyed both great fame and ample fortune. **Rick Jones** basks in a little of the composer's limelight by dressing up as the great man himself and visiting some of his old haunts

In the last decades of the 18th century, London tried repeatedly to attract Franz Josef 'Papa' Haydn to the city. Letters of invitation from counts and earls went unanswered, and it was eventually down to the entreaties of Johann Peter Salomon, a London-based German violinist, that Haydn was persuaded to cross the English Channel – an achievement that is celebrated in Salomon's epitaph in Westminster Abbey.

Arriving on 2 January 1791, Haydn was acclaimed everywhere he went. Oxford University conferred an honour on him and,

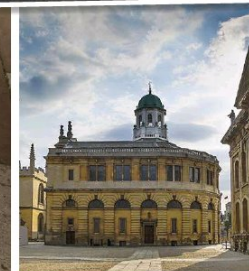


thanks to his considerable charm, women fell at his feet. He stayed 18 months, returning to Vienna in July 1792, then headed back to the English capital in February 1794. He wrote 12 symphonies for Georgian London, six on each visit.

In the summer of last year Rick Jones enjoyed a week-long impersonation of the Viennese composer, conducting free tours of the London that Doctor Haydn, Master of Symphonies, knew. Here, in full Haydn garb, he presents the diary that the composer himself might just have kept. Well, possibly.



**LUNCHTIME SURPRISE:**  
Haydn plays the  
flirtatious Viennese;  
(above right) a quick  
visit to the Theatre Royal



**OXFORD DOC:** the Sheldonian Theatre

## 2 January 1791

I arrive in London with my new friend Johann Peter Salomon, who appeared unannounced in Vienna before Christmas to fetch me. How could I refuse? I am free of the wife and the mistress and can play the flirtatious Viennese. Salomon has reserved for me a room at his newly built lodging in Great Pulteney Street, Soho. It was all fields round here once, he says. He has made his home among the English and urges me to consider the same. Opposite is the Broadwood piano shop where a desk is available, and I start by arranging anonymous local folksongs like 'The German Musician', a bawdy ballad advising Georgian husbands not to neglect their wives when the piano teacher calls.

## 20 January 1791

London is cosmopolitan. The landlord is Italian and so is the cook. Soho is full of French and Swiss clockmakers fleeing the French beheadings. King George is German, but mad as a hatter. Salomon accompanies me to the Palace of St James where his eccentric Majesty's son, The Prince of Wales, ignores the formalities and says 'Ach Herr Haydn!' before I have been presented. In Vienna I was merely a count's musician, but here I am a celebrity, mobbed by crowds. The Queen says I should stay and be the new Handel. The King says he will send for my wife, but I tell him she wouldn't even cross the Danube.

## 15 May 1791

I pass the windmill in Great Windmill Street and the house of Mrs John Hunter who sings my songs while her surgeon husband exhibits his excisions. I am en route to His Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket. It is Salomon's idea to produce an Italian opera in the same place as Handel's *Rinaldo* 80 years ago. Mine is *L'anima del filosofo*, the story of Orpheus who loved his wife as I, alas, do not. Misfortune scuppers the show. The burned out theatre is not ready and though we move to the Theatre Royal opposite, a dispute between the King and the heir denies us a licence and we cancel. Handel had the same problem, though his Georges were I and II, where mine are III and IV. The backers lose money, so Salomon suggests some symphonies. A dozen, say? Two sets. This is no problem as I have already written 92. I agree but will study the taste of the English before committing notes to paper.

## 8 July 1791

To Oxford for the Encaenia, a Latin ceremony conferring honorary doctorates on individuals. I am addressed as 'Summe symphoniorum magister', highest master of symphonies. I wear the costume until the hire charge expires. The university orchestra performs the Symphony No. 92, which I wrote for Paris but is henceforth known as 'The Oxford'. The English, also henceforth, call me 'Doctor'.

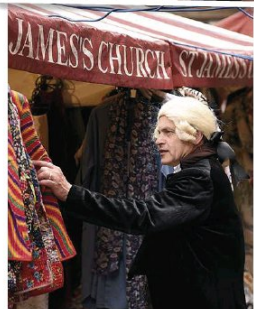
## 23 March 1792

Salomon solicits for piano pupils, and the widow Rebecca Schroeter sends a calling card on a silver tray. We correspond, study piano, dine and attend concerts as I replace her late German composer husband. I bring flowers. Frau Schroeter likes surprises and in Symphony No. 94 I write a big one, a sudden *fortissimo* following the simplest *andante* melody. It is a week before my 60th birthday and I am in party mood. I conduct from the



**CENTRAL STROLL:**  
a march through  
Hanover Square





**GREAT SOUNDS:**  
Haydn tries the organ at  
St James's Church, Piccadilly;  
(left) a post-performance  
browse in the market



**SOLDIERING ON:**  
a brief encounter  
with the marching  
Grenadier Guards

keyboard and tell the timpanist to terrify the ladies and wake the post-prandial snoozers. A flautist calls it 'The Surprise' and it is a big hit – literally! – back in Vienna where it is called after the kettledrum, *Paukenschlag*. It is the talk of London, and the Hanover Square Rooms have not been so popular since concerts began ten years ago under Christian 'London' Bach, son of the late Cantor of Leipzig.

### 30 June 1792

The concerts contain works by other composers as well as yours truly, though a new symphony, or 'Grand Overture', always begins either half and is much reported on in the press. I complete a set of six symphonies which appear mostly in my second spring before I return to Vienna for the anniversary. The second set will come on my reappearance in London...

### 5 February 1794

And here I am, back in London. The earlier excitement is replaced by deferential familiarity. 'Dr Haydn' resides no longer in

Soho but now in St James's – Bury Street to be precise – with the courtiers, diplomats and visiting nobs. From either abode it is a half-mile stroll to the concert hall at Four Hanover Square. From Bury Street, I pass St James's Church where I am witness at the wedding of one of my piano pupils. Half a mile further is St George's where Handel was organist. In church one might remove one's wig – a great relief. Strange that so contrived a look clothes the period known as 'The Enlightenment'.

### 3 March 1794

One is never late: clocks are everywhere, thanks to the horologists. There is a prominent one on the Blewcoat School by Frau Schroeter's in Buckingham Gate. The relationship cools a little on my return. One hears the ticking of the clock more. I give this effect to the bassoon in No. 101's *Andante* with a wistful melody above. It is encoded and everyone knows it as 'The Clock' thereafter. Nicknames are evidence of popularity. My No. 100 is called 'The Military' for its



**JUST THE TICKET:**  
at the box office of *The Phantom of the Opera*;  
(below) outside the  
Blewcoat School



with such an effect. The sound is in the air and a refugee street musician transfixes a crowd with it. My drumroll proceeds with no triumph, however, but sorrow in a murky bassline melody. It repeats at the end of the movement, haunting the dreams of the squeamish. No. 96 will become called 'The Miracle' after a chandelier comes down during the interval and no one is hurt. Except that the historians will have got the wrong symphony. A chandelier does fall down during a performance, but it is in March 1795 and not 1791, the Symphony is No. 102 and not No. 96, and the venue is His Majesty's. Strangely, though, that theatre will one day have an almost permanent resident in a work called *The Phantom of the Opera* in which a chandelier nightly plummets to the ground.

### 4 May 1795

With Napoleon setting fire to Europe, it is tempting to stay in London. Salomon hands me an anonymous poem, *The Creation of the World*, which Handel had considered setting as an oratorio and encourages me to do the same. I think I could have fun setting the worm and the music begins to grow in me. In the meantime, I compose my last symphony, No. 104, which has a country dance finale over a hurdy-gurdy drone. To some the tune is a fishmonger's street cry. The concert is my last in London and brings in 4,000 guilder. I could be rich if I stayed, but Napoleon is knocking at the gates of Vienna and I have yet to compose the national anthem. I bow to responsibility as I take my leave of Salomon. After all, I am a married man. ■

*This month's cover CD features Haydn's Symphony No. 100, one of the works the composer wrote for his second stay in London*

'Turkish March' second movement with bells and bugle, and is published in London, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Vienna and Augsburg. No symphony was ever so widely known. I fed an appetite as there are soldiers everywhere and I like to march in step with the Duke of York's 10,000 men up and down The Mall. However, it is the melody at the heart of the first movement which people sing in the streets. The Viennese bandleader Johann Strauss will grow up with it – it will become his *Radetzky March* and will be the hit of the Vienna Congress sorting post-Napoleon Europe out when I am gone.

### 2 March 1795

France has developed a taste for blood with its decapitation machine. A drumroll precedes the guillotine's chop and I begin No. 103



# A TOUCH OF CLASS

When Dinu Lipatti died at just 33, the world lost a pianist at the height of his powers. *Roger Nichols* recalls the Romanian's extraordinary musicianship

‘Those whom the gods love,’ wrote the Ancient Greek playwright Menander, ‘die young.’ Whether or not his gods passed that habit on to those operating in the Christian era, who knows? But many musicians at least do seem to reserve a special place in their hearts for composers who left us before their time – Purcell, Schubert, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Mozart of course, all dead in their thirties. Performers may find it harder to make a lasting mark so young, but I can name two exceptions: Yehudi Menuhin, for whom an early death might have left his legacy more secure; and Dinu Lipatti, who was born on 19 March 1917 and died on 2 December 1950.

Heavenly powers smiled on Lipatti's boyhood. His father Theodor was a violinist who had studied with Carl Flesch in Bucharest and then with Sarasate in Paris, his mother Anna was an accomplished pianist, and his godfather was violinist and composer George Enescu. At an early age Dinu clapped rhythms and imitated sounds to the delight of all, and even played on the piano a representation of a parental argument. He also composed. But his health had always been delicate and his parents waited until he was eight before letting him have piano lessons with Mihail Jora. Three years later he entered the Bucharest Royal Academy of Music to study under

Florica Musicescu to whom he remained devoted until his death. From here on, progress was swift. In each of the three years 1931–33 he performed a concerto: the Grieg, the Chopin E minor, the Liszt E flat, all of which he would later record. In 1934 he entered the Vienna International Piano Competition and was placed second – to the disgust of juror Alfred Cortot who promptly resigned.

Offers of concerts flooded in, but were mostly refused. Instead Anna harboured the idea that Dinu should go to Paris. She sold their Bucharest house without Theodor's knowledge and bought a Paris apartment. So to Paris they went and Lipatti entered the Ecole Normale de Musique, which Cortot had founded and where he taught. Paul Dukas gave Lipatti composition lessons and had a high opinion of his abilities and, when Dukas died in 1935 and his funeral coincided with a Lipatti recital, the pianist as a tribute opened with Myra Hess's transcription of *Jesu, Joy* which was to become a talismanic piece for him. For Cortot, the 18-year-old Lipatti was now no longer a student and he duly enrolled him on the school's jury for its Diploma of Virtuosity.



**A TALENT CUT SHORT:** Lipatti performs his last recital, in 1950, in Besançon; (left) as a young boy in Bucharest

Another teacher at the Ecole Normale who became a close friend was Nadia Boulanger. With his concert work now growing apace, in 1938 he recorded with her a selection of the Brahms Waltzes for piano duet. In July 1939, with war threatening, the family moved back to Bucharest, but Lipatti toured widely during the war and played in a number of German cities without, apparently, incurring blame either then or afterwards. Lovers of Ravel can only drool inwardly on reading that in a performance of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* the Toccata was 'splendidly rendered by Lipatti's prodigious technique, and a crystal-clear and incisive playing with fine tonal range

and full of brio'. Not everyone was thrilled by his interpretations. A Stockholm critic in 1943 reviled him as having 'nothing of the thinker, no refinement of nuances nor any of the mysterious subtleties of musical expression' and, in Chopin's B minor Sonata, of 'hurling himself at the keyboard and playing with the fury of a machine-gun salvo.' But then said critic was a Vladimir Horowitz fan (of whom, more below). More positive were Lipatti's relations with the pianist Edwin Fischer, whose playing of Schubert reduced him to tears.

The heavenly powers, however, had a terrible and, as it turned out, fatal blow in store for Lipatti. At the end of 1943, shortly after he

moved to Geneva, he ran a fever, but the tests showed nothing abnormal. Concerts had to be postponed or cancelled and money was low. Then in April 1944 he was appointed as professor of the 'Virtuosity Course' at the Geneva Conservatoire, a post he held for five years. This gave his life stability, but Swiss musical politics (Lipatti refers in inverted commas to his 'dear colleagues') did their best to scupper things until the post was finalised.

The last six years of Lipatti's life saw a battle against what was finally diagnosed as Hodgkin lymphoma, with his doctors' warnings against over-exertion on one side, and Lipatti's duty to his audiences on the other. Clearly, the

anticipated US tour was no longer a possibility, but at least Lipatti had the good fortune to make a friend of Arturo Toscanini. The conductor let it be known that for him Enescu was 'Europe's greatest musician', and then went on to allow Lipatti the unique privilege of sitting in on his rehearsals; even if the last of these was, in Lipatti's words, 'a stormy one with scores thrown about, shouts, insults, threats, until we didn't know where to hide ourselves', he admitted to learning a great deal.

For us today, the most wonderful and exciting products of these years were his recordings, notably those made with producer Walter Legge. But even these were often stressful, his 1947 recording of the Chopin B minor Sonata being stretched over two whole days. His last recordings, made in the months before his death in Geneva, are a testament to his unflinching honesty and determination to serve the music he played. Nor, for him, was death the end. His beloved Madeleine, whom he could marry only as late as 1949 when her husband, who had refused a divorce, finally

## On the technical front, Lipatti was a perfectionist

died, recorded his last words: 'If we suffer here below, it is to prepare for ourselves a better life.'

But what of his playing? Legge pronounced two illuminating truths about Lipatti: that he was 'the "cleanest" player I have ever worked with'; and that he was 'unable, in showing a pupil how *not* to phrase, even of imitating bad taste'. If these two judgements risk making Lipatti sound antiseptic, nothing could be further from the truth. Certainly the Stockholm critic was in a minority of perhaps one in accusing him of being a machine gunner. But bland he was not – a verdict backed up by talking to a number of today's leading players. 'When I want access to fresh ideas,' says Matthew Schellhorn, 'or be reminded of why I love a certain piece, I go to Lipatti's playing'; and Stephen Hough confirms that 'apart from the sheer polish of Lipatti's playing (all the perfectly-sewn seams hidden under the cloth), I love the way he is able to combine elegance with passion, and humility with a deep individuality.'

On the technical front, Lipatti was a perfectionist. Asked how he learnt the fiendish Chopin Etude in thirds, he replied, 'Practising it an hour every day for six months'. He was not hindered by the fact that he could stretch a 12th and, when his health allowed, his



## LIPATTI'S LEGACY

## Five recommended recordings



**Chopin Waltzes**  
Dinu Lipatti (piano)  
Alto ALC 1056  
Lipatti sent his Waltzes recording to Nadia Boulanger who, in all 14, could only question the accentuation of one note.



**Schumann Piano Concerto etc**  
Dinu Lipatti (piano); L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande/Ernest Ansermet  
Decca 480 0078  
Although the Concerto is only one work on this Schumann disc, it's worth hearing just for the piano's melting response to the orchestra's opening phrase.



**Liszt Petrarca Sonnet 104**  
Dinu Lipatti (piano); Philharmonia Orchestra, Lucerne Festival Orchestra/Herbert von Karajan  
Praga DSD350088  
In the Schubert, what Charles Owen calls Lipatti's 'translucent and polished tone' is allied to phrasing that sings with life. The Ravel *Alborada* is quite simply to die for.



**Immortal Dinu Lipatti Works by JS Bach, Chopin, Mozart, Ravel and Schubert**  
Dinu Lipatti (piano)  
Warner Classics 9029586789  
Hear Lipatti's last recital, recorded in Besançon in 1950, including the two Schubert Impromptus, and a second recording of 13 of the 14 Waltzes – he was too ill to play No. 2.



**Dinu Lipatti: The Master Pianist Works by JS Bach, Bartók, Brahms, Chopin, Enescu, Grieg, Liszt, Mozart, Ravel et al**  
EMI 207 3182 (7 discs)  
This set adds two Scarlatti Sonatas, a prize-winning performance of Chopin's B minor Sonata, and Bartók's Third Piano Concerto to the above discs, among other pieces.



IN GOOD COMPANY:  
Dinu Lipatti with soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and producer Walter Legge

octave playing evinced absolute command. On a narrower level, too, his repeated notes in Ravel's 'Alborada del gracioso' are breathtaking. But much of the power and grace of his playing came from deep thinking. Steven Osborne admires his 'remarkable way of bringing meaning to the smallest detail of the music while never losing sight of the bigger picture'. In his recording of Busoni's arrangement of Bach's chorale prelude *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, not only does each of the three strands have its own shape, but so does the piece as a whole, while, as Charles Owen says, he 'allows the listener to relish all the voices without any intrusive point making'. He also makes a perfect shape of Liszt's *Petrarch Sonnet 104* and likewise makes a strong musical statement out of the Grieg Concerto. Indeed, he was widely felt to have rescued from the shadows this piece, of which he said, 'Only those players who have a superficial grasp of the work are in danger of slipping into cheap dilettantism, and to belittle it is proof of their lack of understanding.'

For Charles Owen, one of the qualities that strikes him in Lipatti's Chopin 'is how very "modern" he sounds. By this, I mean a real simplicity – in the best sense of the word – of style with a sound so translucent and polished with judicious, minimal rubato and a complete absence of desynchronisation between the hands... Surely Michelangelo and Pollini would not have sounded as they do without the influence of Lipatti?' One aspect of this modernism, in the sense of a total respect for the composer's text, came out in what a

colleague remembered as 'his holy rages against bunglers, blockheads and narcissists'. Without actually accusing Horowitz of being any of those things, he did note in a review how, in Chopin's E major Scherzo, the pianist happily 'forgot he was Horowitz and returned to being a simple musician'. Angela Brownridge touches on this: 'It's the poetical element that I love in his playing. He was never out to prove anything, no ego to distort the music he so obviously loved... a sublime pianist I never tire of listening to'.

It's not entirely surprising that his collaborations with Herbert von Karajan had their awkward moments. Although their recording of the Schumann

Concerto is admired, Lipatti complained in a letter to Floria Musicescu of the 'remarkable but superclassical conductor who, instead of helping my timid romantic *élan*, put a brake on my good intentions'. As for their recording of Mozart's Concerto, K467, there is little 'refinement of nuances', though perhaps his ill health should take some of the blame. He, however, would make no such excuses. In an attitude that takes us back to the Ancient Greeks, who knew the concept of *pathei mathos* (learning through suffering), he said his illness had taught him to play better.

The Chopin *Barcarolle*, two recordings of the Waltzes, *Jesu, Joy*, Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 3 and... Not enough really for a man whom Steven Osborne calls 'one of the supreme musicians among pianists'. But let's be grateful for what we have, and savour Jean-Efflam Bavouzet's heartfelt exclamation: 'Mon Dieu, qu'il jouait bien!' ■

## Lipatti's last recordings are a testament to his unflinching honesty

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5★ review, BBC Music Magazine, October 2016.

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#### 4. When Harry met Kiri (1982)

In 1982, Kiri hosted her own BBC television programme. *Call me Kiri* had an all-star cast of her friends, including tenor Plácido Domingo and comedian Harry Secombe (pictured). 'What a brilliant photo!' she says. 'I just adored Harry. He was very kind, very sweet to me.'

#### 5. Bernstein's story (1984)

'This was the first time Leonard Bernstein had conducted *West Side Story*,' says Kiri. 'We were nervous about it as it was the first time opera singers had sung it.' Recording was in New York, the international cast – including tenor José Carreras (pictured) as Tony – was flown in from around the world. This photo was almost binned, Kiri recalls, as the fence obscured her face 'but I wasn't bothered about that.'

#### 6. Puccini with Pav (1976)

Kiri's first performance alongside tenor Luciano Pavarotti was as Mimi in Puccini's *La bohème* at the Royal Opera House. 'Because he knew the role so well he only came to the dress rehearsal! It was unnerving, but he was lovely and I just loved his voice.'

#### 1. Early steps (1950)

Kiri Te Kanawa was on stage from an early age, but not as a singer. 'This is a picture of when I was in a tap-dancing show,' she says. 'I was five or six years old, and they couldn't find any shoes to fit me so I had to wear socks to make those ones fit! I was so embarrassed.'

#### 2. A Verdi fine start (1974)

Kiri shot to fame after her appearance as Desdemona in Verdi's *Othello* at New York's Metropolitan Opera was broadcast live across the US. But, remembers the soprano, it was an odd twist of fate that saw her on stage that day. 'It was a very last-minute thing – the other singer called in ill that morning. I thought they were just bringing me in to be cautious, but instead I had a call at 11 o'clock in the morning saying "You're on at 2pm". I rushed in to do it, they threw a costume on me and said "Right, off you go!" So I did.'

It was the first time she'd worked with tenor Jon Vickers – her Othello, and a living legend at the time. 'He was a magnificent person, but it was quite a frightening situation. I went from just hearing about him and having him up on this pedestal to singing opposite him!'

#### 3. Rehearsing *Rosenkavalier* (1984)

'This production at the Royal Opera House (of Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*) was a big learning curve for all of us,' says Kiri, 'including John Schlesinger, the director.' This rehearsal picture with Barbara Bonney and Agnes Baltsa captures the mood. 'It is quite an intense picture! I'd love to know what John was doing.'

ALAMY, GETTY, THE METROPOLITAN OPERA ARCHIVES, REX, CLIVE BARKER/ARND BRONKHORST



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# KIRI *on* CAMERA



This month, a BBC Four programme celebrates Kiri Te Kanawa's illustrious career.

Aided by *Elinor Cooper*, the soprano looks back at life in front of the lens





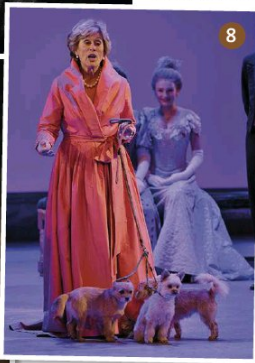
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### 7. Singing with Solti (1992)

'It's very naughty what I'm doing to him there!' says Kiri. 'Georg Solti (centre) always liked me; he was a darling, very kind. We always had a good relationship, and worked together many times in performances, concerts and operas.' A singer's relationship with a conductor is of utmost importance, she reflects. 'Georg was always such a support – there was never a moment where he took his eye off the ball and said he didn't care.' Kiri also sang regularly for tenor Plácido Domingo (left) when he made the transition from singing to conducting.

### 8. Puppy love (2015)

'This was a performance by some of my students!' Kiri remembers. 'I decided to go in and sing, and to take my dogs. I had to have a licence for them to perform! There was someone backstage with a pooper-scooper waiting, but I said to them: "my dogs won't be doing that." They were very well behaved.' All three of Kiri's Yorkie-Pomeranians were born at Glyndebourne. 'I waited a long time to get dogs,' she says. 'I couldn't have them because I travelled for work. Now they go just about everywhere I do.'



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### 9. Fast friends (2006)

'This is Flicka [Frederica von Stade] and I singing together at a gala concert at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. We've been singing together since 1969! She's my best friend. When you perform with your best friend, you always want each other to do well.'



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### 10. A royal occasion (2015)

In 2015, Kiri received a doctorate from the Royal College of Music. 'Prince Charles presented it to me, and the RCM commissioned that painting of me, which now hangs in the Britten Theatre. I have known the royal family for a very long time. I actually met them before I got to Covent Garden, almost before I left for England! I was going to sing for them, so I was invited on board to have lunch with the Queen and Prince Philip. It was an amazing situation. To then sing at Prince Charles's wedding, and for him to award me my damehood, was such an honour.'

Kiri at the BBC will be broadcast on BBC Four on 5 March at 8pm. See p105 for further details.



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# SPRING MUSIC HOLIDAYS FOR DISCERNING TRAVELLERS



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FIVE NIGHT HOLIDAYS | 3 APRIL & 30 APRIL 2017

The legacy of Jean Sibelius is such that Finland boasts an enviable music scene, with choirs, orchestras, festivals and concerts throughout the country.

Our new holiday to Helsinki will include a selection of performances from opera and ballet to piano concertos by Mozart and Ravel and Sibelius' tone poems. We will attend a performance at the Sibelius Hall in Lahti, enjoy a private piano recital of Finlandia at the Sibelius Academy and visit a number of sites associated with the late composer, including his birthplace at Hämeenlinna and the lakeside country house where he died.

Price from £2,094 per person for five nights including flights, accommodation with breakfast, three lunches, two dinners, tickets for three concerts, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.



## THE EASTER FESTTAGE IN BERLIN

A SIX NIGHT HOLIDAY | 10 APRIL 2017

For the past twenty years, Daniel Barenboim has directed a series of concerts and operas over Easter in a musical tour de force which sees him conducting most of the performances himself. In 2017 he will be joined by Zubin Mehta who will conduct one of two operas.

Staying at the 5\* Ritz-Carlton, we are just two minutes' walk from the Berliner Philharmonie where we shall attend three concerts, featuring the Staatskapelle Berlin, pianists Radu Lupu and Martha Argerich, and violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter. At the Schiller Theatre we will enjoy two operas: Die Frau ohne Schatten by Richard Strauss, conducted by Zubin Mehta; and Parsifal by Wagner, conducted by Daniel Barenboim. During our stay in Berlin we will also explore the city's fascinating museums and galleries and make a day trip to the shores of the nearby Wannsee.

Price from £2,289 per person including flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast, three dinners, tickets for 3 concerts and 2 operas, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.



## EASTER FESTIVAL, BADEN-BADEN

A FIVE NIGHT HOLIDAY | 6 APRIL 2017

Sir Simon Rattle's Berlin Philharmonic return to Germany's most stylish spa town for their annual Easter Festival in April.

We shall attend performances of symphonies by Mozart, Tchaikovsky and Mahler as well as Puccini's Tosca featuring Kristine Opolais in the title role. Based at the 4\* Radisson Blu Badischer Hof, just moments from the Festspielhaus, we shall also visit the house in which Johannes Brahms spent his summer holidays and spend a day travelling through the Black Forest to the Baroque palace at Ludwigsburg.



Price from £2,498 per person for five nights including flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast, three dinners, second category tickets for each performance, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.

## LA SCALA, MILAN

A FOUR NIGHT HOLIDAY | 19 APRIL 2017

La Scala, Milan opened in 1778 with an opera by Salieri and since then many of the greatest Italian operas have received their first performance on its hallowed stage.

During our April holiday we shall enjoy a performance of Donizetti's Anna Bolena, and there will be an opportunity to attend an optional performance of Rossini's La gazza ladra (price available on request). Also included in our tour to Milan are visits to the city's Duomo, Leonardo's 'The Last Supper' at Santa Maria delle Grazie, and the wonderful La Scala Museum. We will also see the Basilica Sant' Ambrogio, the Castello Sforzesco and Casa Verdi.



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MUSICAL DESTINATIONS

# HEADING OUT ON THE RANCH

## Tippet Rise: US

*Jeremy Pound* flies to Montana, where the Beartooth Mountains provide the backdrop to a new arts centre that aims to bring music and art together in perfect harmony

Covering an area of 147,000 square miles, around three times the size of England, Montana is vast. It is also one of the least populous of all the US states: just over one million people, all told. If you were looking for somewhere to build a concert hall that sits in glorious isolation, I'd suggest this would be just the place to do it.

And that is exactly what Peter and Cathy Halstead did. When, in 2010, a 10,000-acre sheep and cattle ranch came up for sale on the rolling hills just north of the Yellowstone National Park, the Halsteads – he is a pianist and photographer, she an artist, businesswoman and, significantly, heir to a drinks business fortune – saw the chance

of realising a long-held ambition: to create a large sculpture-cum-music park, in which visual and aural artforms combine. Artists were promptly commissioned and Alban Bassuet, a leading acoustic designer and engineer, brought on board as director and all-round good ideas man. In summer 2016, Tippet Rise Art Center was ready to open its gates for its inaugural season.

Tippet Rise is theoretically 'in' the small town of Fishtail, but the long, long drive along a windy track tells a different story: this place is miles from anywhere. And when

**'Our programming is about music that interacts with the art'**

we do eventually get there, the ranch itself stretches out as far as the eye can see – scan the distant horizon, and you can just about pick out a sculpture here, a sculpture there.

Immediately in front of us, though, is the Olivier Music Barn. Built out of local timber and meticulously planned by Bassuet and his acoustics team, this 150-seat concert hall also boasts spectacular views, as directly behind the stage is a large window looking out onto the Beartooth Mountains. The hall is also equipped with an impressive range of Steinway pianos – when Stephen Hough plays a recital later this evening, he takes the controls of a 1940 New York model for Schubert and Franck in the first half, then switches over to a modern Hamburg one for Liszt and his own Sonata in the second.



ARTS AND CRAFTS: Stephen Hough performs in the Olivier Music Barn; (below) a pre-concert tippie in front of Sandy Calder's *Two Discs* sculpture



But music at Tippet Rise doesn't begin and end at the Olivier Barn. Head around the ranch – either by car or on a bike, avoiding errant sheep as you go – and you come across various large art installations, each positioned to make the most of the surrounding landscape. These can be admired in their own right but also provide a stage for performances. During my visit, for instance, the sound of John Luther Adams's multiple-percussion work *Inuksuit* fills the natural amphitheatre surrounding the web of wooden beams that is Stephen Talasnik's *Satellite No. 5: Pioneer*; on other occasions, Ensemble Studio's megalithic *Domo* provides the backdrop. At both installations, the clarity of sound is exceptional.

'*Inuksuit* is going to have an impact on other performances of that type that we may do here,' Tippet Rise's music director Christopher O'Riley tells me soon after the

performance. 'I think it's really important to have such a thread – namely, that our programming here is not just about availability of performers; it's about music that really interacts with the landscape, and interacts with the art.'

O'Riley may take responsibility for the programming, but you can take it as read that Peter Halstead (left) has a major say. This is, after all, someone for whom the phrase 'hands on' might have been invented. As each concert begins, it is Halstead who, in trademark floppy hat, stands up to introduce the performers; the engaging programme notes in the season's booklet are almost entirely his work; and, as we all mingle afterwards and admire the setting sun, he and Cathy can be seen chatting away and enthusing with performers and concert-goers alike. Tippet Rise itself may be remote, but its gregarious founders are anything but. ■

ENR: PETER EISEN, PETER FORCINE

PLAYING OUTDOORS: (clockwise from left) Ensemble Studio's *Beartooth Portal*; performances at Ensemble Studio's *Domo* and Stephen Talasnik's *Satellite No. 5: Pioneer*



### TIPPET RISE 4 MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS

#### Yevgeny Sudbin

Very popular in Tippet Rise's first season, the Russian pianist returns for two Olivier Music Barn concerts in 2017: in solo recital on Friday 7 July, and in the company of cellist Alexander Chaushian the following evening.

#### Caroline Goulding and friends

The US violinist teams up with pianist Danae Dörken and cellist Joshua Roman for concerts inside and out: at the Olivier Music Barn on 14 July and beside the *Domo* sculpture the next afternoon. She then returns to the Barn for one final concert, this time with Dörken alone.

#### Natasha Paremski and friends

The Russian pianist also has three concerts in two days. At the Olivier Barn, she plays in solo recital on 18 August and with cellist Zuill Bailey the next evening. In between is an afternoon concert at *Domo* with violinist Paul Huang and the Escher Quartet.



#### John Luther Adams

Following 2016's success, 2017 will see more al fresco John Luther Adams, this time in front of the *Beethoven's Quartet* (above) or *Proverb* sculptures. Pianist Vicky Chow and an array of percussionists will be playing the US composer's *Four Thousand Holes* and *Strange and Sacred* (16 September). [tippetrise.org/events](http://tippetrise.org/events)



## COMPOSER OF THE MONTH

# AMY BEACH

## America's thwarted great

Amy Beach left a legacy of hugely accomplished works, but, asks **Anthony Burton**, did the social conventions of the era in which she was living stifle her true potential?

Amy Beach was recognised in her lifetime as the leading American woman composer of her day. This could have been faint praise at a time when women were widely considered intellectually incapable of creating anything more ambitious than piano salon pieces and songs. But although she wrote her fair share of those, Beach won success and respect with large-scale works such as a Mass, a symphony and a piano concerto. All the same, her career raises the question of whether society's expectations and prejudices might have held her back from becoming not just a very good composer, but one of the greats.

Amy Marcy Cheney was born in rural New Hampshire in September 1867, with apparently innate musical gifts. From a very early age, she took a keen interest in her mother Clara's piano playing and singing. By the age of one, she could already hum tunes accurately, always in the key in which she had first heard them; by two, she could improvise a second part to Clara's singing.

But Clara, not wanting her daughter to become a spoiled prodigy, resisted all of Amy's entreaties to learn the piano. It was only when the girl was four that a visiting aunt allowed her access to the keyboard – whereupon she immediately picked out tunes and accompaniments as she had seen and heard her mother play them. Not long afterwards, she was playing waltzes that she had made up in her head. By this time, the family was living in the suburbs of Boston; and after her mother had finally agreed to teach her, Amy gave her first public performances, including some of her own compositions, in a church and a private house at the age of seven.

In 1875, not long before Amy's eighth birthday, the Cheneys moved into the centre of Boston. The city had a thriving musical life and the girl soon had the chance to



### BEACH'S STYLE

#### Romantic

Beach wrote in the Romantic tradition of composers she had encountered as a performer and listener: Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, Wagner. She was a staunchly conservative

opponent of 20th-century musical modernism and the influence of jazz. But she did admit stylistic traces of Debussy and the young Richard Strauss (above) into some of her later works.

#### Piano

A concert pianist with a virtuoso technique, Beach wrote for her instrument in numerous solo pieces, several chamber works and a concerto. The Concerto is an outstanding example of her command of piano texture, sonority and bravura figuration – not least in its dazzling cadenzas.

#### Song

Beach chose songs as the vehicle for some of her most personal statements, choosing texts with care and setting them with sympathy for their scansion, meaning and atmosphere. She frequently used her own songs as the basis for the themes of larger abstract works.

#### Folk music

Beach followed the examples of Dvořák and Boston composer Arthur Farwell by working with native American themes; these included Inuit melodies, which permeate her String Quartet. But she also borrowed from other folk traditions, as in the *Gaelic Symphony*, based on Irish melodies, and the piano *Variations on Balkan Themes*.

attend concerts and recitals, stocking up her remarkable musical memory. She was taken to play to respected senior musicians, whose advice was that she should study the piano in Europe; but the family rejected that and signed her up with local teachers – one of whom, Carl Baermann, was a pupil of Liszt and the grandson of Weber's favourite clarinettist. At 16 she made her concerto debut – soon to be followed by the first of many appearances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra – and also had her first song published. But when her family consulted the conductor of the Boston Symphony, Wilhelm Gericke, about obtaining composition tuition, his advice was that she should make her own study of the great masters.

In 1885, the 18-year-old Amy married a 42-year-old widower, Dr Henry Beach, a respected Boston surgeon and Harvard University lecturer who was also a music-lover and an amateur singer. The couple went to live in an elegant house on fashionable Commonwealth Avenue. To conform with the tenets of upper-crust Bostonian society, Henry persuaded (or instructed) Amy not to teach the piano, and to curtail her performing career, restricting her public appearances to a handful of concerts a year, including an annual recital in Boston, and donating all her fees to charity. He did at least encourage her to pursue her vocation as a composer, though henceforward all her works were to be performed and published under her married name of Mrs HHA Beach.

Beach at first continued her long period of study, translating the orchestration tutors of Gevaert and Berlioz and memorising entire movements of symphonies in full score. Meanwhile, she was still writing songs, which won her a supportive Boston publisher – the genre was to prove a useful source of income over the years. Her first large-scale work



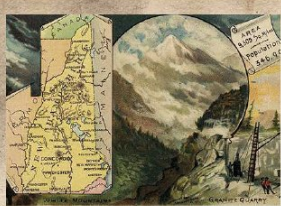
ILLUSTRATION: RUSKO



## LIFE&amp;TIMES

A quick guide to the main events in the life of Amy Beach

## THE LIFE 1867 THE TIMES



1867

Amy Marcy Cheney is born on 5 September in NEW HAMPSHIRE. Her father is a paper manufacturer and importer, her mother a keen singer and pianist.



1885

Two years after making her public debut as a pianist, she curtails performances following her marriage to HENRY BEACH, a physician.

1896

Her GAELIC SYMPHONY, the first symphony written by a female American composer, enjoys great acclaim at its debut in Boston.

1912

On a tour of Europe after the deaths of her husband and mother, she impresses critics and audiences in Germany both as a composer and as a pianist.



1916

Returning to the US due to the outbreak of World War I, she eventually settles in Hillsborough, New Hampshire, where she lives with her aunt Franc and cousin Ethel.

1930

She rents an apartment for the winter months in New York, where her involvement at St Bartholomew's Episcopal Church involves writing music for services.

1944

Four years after retiring due to heart disease, she dies in New York, aged 77.

1867

Fearing that the territory might be captured by force, Alexander II of Russia sells Alaska to the US for the sum of \$7.2m (\$123m today).

1885

Invented by pharmacist Charles Alderton in Waco, Texas, the drink DR PEPPER is sold for the first time, preceding Coca-Cola by a few months.



1896

New England culinary expert FANNIE FARMER publishes the *Boston Cooking-School Cook Book*, introducing the idea of standardised cup and spoon measures.



1912

On the campaign trail in Milwaukee for the 1912 US election, former president Theodore

Roosevelt survives an assassination attempt by John Flammang Schrank, a disaffected loner from New York.

1916

Following its attack on the SS *Sussex* in the English Channel, Germany signs the Sussex Pledge to appease the US, making a promise not to torpedo any more passenger or merchant ships.

1930

As the US is held in the grip of the Great Depression, President HERBERT HOOVER introduces the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act to raise tariffs on imports and so boost American-made goods.

1944

Launched on 6 June (D-Day), Operation Overlord sees Allied forces, numbering over 150,000 troops, begin a concerted assault on the coast of Normandy.



was a setting of the Mass for soloists, chorus and orchestra, first performed by Boston's venerable Handel and Haydn Society in 1892. This was followed by a *Festival Jubilate* for the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition – the first of a number of pieces for similar national events. She then concentrated on her largest orchestral work, the *Gaelic Symphony*, premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1896. Rapidly repeated in several other cities, it was a success with the public and most of the critics, and established her as a major figure in the so-called 'Second New England School'. In a much-quoted letter, a leading member of that school, the Boston composer George Whitefield Chadwick, praised the Symphony as 'full of fine things ... and mighty well built besides', and told her that she could now be counted as 'one of the boys'.

Now in the heyday of her composing career, but still constrained as a pianist by her agreement with her husband, Beach took care to write works which would give her opportunities to perform. She wrote a

Beach was told that she could now be counted as 'one of the boys'

Sonata for violin and piano in 1896, her most substantial solo piano piece, the *Variations on Balkan Themes*, in 1904, and a Piano Quintet in 1907. Most importantly, she composed a four-movement Piano Concerto, in which she took the virtuoso solo part at the premiere with the Boston Symphony and Wilhelm Gericke in 1900 and on many subsequent occasions.

Dr Henry Beach died of complications following a fall in 1910 (and Beach's other protective mentor, her mother, died the next year). After a period of grieving, Amy set out for Europe, where she made Munich her base. She combined tourism with gaining endorsement in Germany as a performer and a composer: she was especially gratified by the success of her Symphony and Concerto in Hamburg, where a critic praised her as 'a possessor of musical gifts of the highest kind, a musical nature touched with genius'. She extended her visit several times, but was eventually forced by the outbreak of the First World War to sail back to the US.

On her return, she resumed her career as a pianist, making extensive concert tours of the eastern seaboard, the Mid-West and California. She continued to compose: a substantial set of *Variations* for flute and string quartet was premiered in San Francisco



SHALL I PURR?: Amy Beach (right) takes tea with soprano Marcella Craft (and cat), 1913

in 1916. And meanwhile, there were revivals of some of her major works, including the Symphony, which Leopold Stokowski conducted twice in Philadelphia. After initially retaining her base in Boston, she moved in 1916 to a new home in her native New Hampshire. But from 1921 she spent several weeks each summer at the MacDowell Colony, a retreat in the woodlands for creative artists. There she concentrated on composing, writing among other things a pair of piano pieces based on transcriptions of the singing of the hermit thrush and a harmonically adventurous String Quartet.

In 1930, she moved her winter base to New York, where she rented a studio at the American Women's Association and became a worshipper at St Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, regularly composing music for its choir. She spent much of each summer at the MacDowell Colony and at an isolated country cottage that she had once shared with her husband. During her later years, she was revered as the dean of American women composers, held titles in several national musical organisations and was the object of celebrations everywhere up to and including the White House; but privately she was also a friendly 'Aunt Amy' to a generation of young women musicians. She continued to compose a variety of works, including a chamber opera, *Cabildo*, in 1932 and a Piano Trio in 1938. Illness slowed her up only slightly in the years before her death in 1944.

Beach's musical legacy, neglected in the years after her death but largely revived in recent decades through reprints, recordings

and a biography by Adrienne Fried Block (*Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian*), was substantial, comprising over 150 opus numbers. There are numerous piano pieces and songs, much church music, other choral works, some with orchestra (though it's not clear whether the orchestrations survive), the chamber opera and a handful of chamber and orchestral works. The reasons for the length of this list are clear. Beach wrote with impressive fluency: she said

Beach was revered as the dean of American women composers

that she could produce a song in a day. And, unlike many women composers, she was unencumbered by motherhood or by domestic duties: she was cared for all her life by family, servants (during her marriage) and later a small army of friends and relations.

Nevertheless, some questions arise. Was she too preoccupied by her concert-giving, and later by her social obligations (both private and public), to follow up on the success of her major works? Where are the further symphonies, concertos and chamber works – not to mention the piano sonatas – that might have won her a place among the great composers? Instead of her years of self-teaching, would composition lessons with a good tutor have helped her find a personal style and develop more securely as a professional composer?

A fundamental question underlies these: how much was any failure to build on her

extraordinary talent the result of society's view that greatness, or ambition, or even professionalism, was not something that should be expected from a woman composer? Beach herself, at the end of her life, dismissed all such considerations, saying: 'My work has always been judged from the beginning by work as such, not according to sex. The question has rarely ever been raised. I have always tried to do the best possible in my creative work, and devote the same attention to the small as well as the large work.'

So perhaps we would do better to give up hypothetical questions, and simply celebrate the outstanding achievement of a remarkable musician. ■

We review Danny Driver's recording of *Beach's Piano Concerto* on the Hyperion label on p74

BBC RADIO

3

Presented by Donald Macleod, *Composer of the Week* is broadcast on Radio 3 at

12pm, Monday to Friday, repeated at 6.30pm.

Upcoming programmes are:

27 February – 3 March *Beethoven*

6-10 March *Court of Ferrara*

13-17 March *Peter Maxwell Davies*

20-24 March *Ravel*

27-31 March *Rachmaninov*

## AMY BEACH

## RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS



**Gaelic Symphony, Piano Concerto**  
Alan Feinberg (piano); Nashville SO/Kenneth Schermerhorn  
Naxos 8.559139

Beach's two major orchestral works, in good performances, on one disc.



**Piano Quintet etc**  
The Ambache  
Chandos CHAN 9752  
Committed performances of three representative chamber works.



**Songs**  
Katherine Kelton (mezzo-soprano), Catherine Bringerud (piano)  
Naxos 8.559191

A varied selection from Beach's prolific output of songs.



**Variations on Balkan Themes etc**  
Kirsten Johnson (piano)  
Guild GMCD 7329  
Beach's major keyboard work, on the second of four discs of her complete piano music.



## BUILDING A LIBRARY

# TARAS BULBA

## Leoš Janáček

As the grim fate of a Cossack father and his sons are portrayed in one of Janáček's most graphic orchestral scores, **Terry Blain** selects the most powerful recordings

A father kills his own son, and watches his other son being executed. He himself is then burnt alive, yelling defiantly at his Polish captors. Such is the scenario of Leoš Janáček's 'rhapsody for orchestra' *Taras Bulba*, adapted from a novel by the 19th-century Russian writer Nikolai Gogol. The moments of savagery in the score – there are battle scenes and a death in all three movements – undoubtedly reflect the brutal military conditions in wartime Europe as Janáček composed *Taras*, from 1915–18. But the subject matter inspired him too: in *Taras*, the Ukrainian Cossack warrior, he saw a symbol of resistance to the German forces threatening his homeland of Moravia, and he dedicated the work to 'our army, the armed protector of our nation'. The work's strongly patriotic, pro-Slavic sentiments and moments of shriekingly expressionistic scoring make *Taras Bulba* one of the most potent examples of Janáček's orchestral writing.



**BBC RADIO 3** Building a Library is broadcast on BBC Radio 3 at 9.30am each Saturday as part of Record Review. A highlights podcast is available at [www.bbc.co.uk/r/radio3](http://www.bbc.co.uk/r/radio3)

finest-sounding available, stunning in the breadth and depth of its spatial perspectives. Artistically it also ranks highly: Serebrier coaxes playing of slinky sensuality from the players of the excellent Brno orchestra in the love music of 'The Death of Andrii'; and he is especially good at knitting together the successive episodes of the tricky structured finale. Nobody quite touches the special sense of sustained intensity found in Karel Ančerl's classic interpretation. But Serebrier's is a resplendent recording which reveals the inner workings of Janáček's orchestration like no other; and the sound quality is superb.



**Antoni Wit (conductor)**  
Warsaw Philharmonic  
Orchestra (2010)  
Naxos 8.572695

Antoni Wit was music director of the Warsaw Philharmonic when this recording of *Taras Bulba* was made, and together they conjure a sound splendidly suited to Janáček. The snorting trombones and resiny string playing as Poles and Cossacks clash in the 'The Death of Andrii' have weightiness and crackle, and are richly caught in Naxos's excellently balanced recording. While lacking some of the urgency of both Ančerl and Kubelík, Wit finds nobility in the burgeoning brass and organ chorales heralding *Taras's* prophecy in the concluding movement, with full-blooded, confident playing throughout the orchestra. With characterful accounts of the Lachian and Moravian Dances as coupling, Wit is undoubtedly a *Taras Bulba* to be reckoned with, and it heads the field of budget discs.

**music CHOICE**

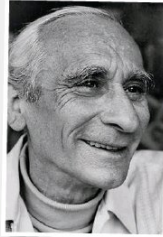


**Karel Ančerl (conductor)**  
Czech Philharmonic  
Orchestra (1961)  
Supraphon SU36672

THE BEST RECORDING **KAREL ANČERL**

IS THERE ANYTHING particularly special about Czech performers playing a Czech composer's music? There certainly can be, if Karel Ančerl's (right) wonderful account of *Taras Bulba* with the Czech Phil is anything to go by. The distinctiveness kicks in early, with the uniquely plangent wind playing at the opening of 'The Death of Andrii'. Both cor anglais and oboe soloists use more vibrato than might be expected, but it's beautifully inflected, and suits the keening quality of the music.

Ančerl's native understanding of Janáček's spiky, rebarbative idiom is another crucial element. He is one of the few conductors to stop the brassy battle sequence in 'The Death of Andrii' from becoming a



blaring free-for-all. Rhythms are sharply etched, accents cleanly pointed, and a sense of balance struck between the orchestra's different sections without sacrificing excitement. That rhythmic acerbity is evident again in the slicing violin motifs which launch 'The Death of Ostap', and the lean, hungry string sound Ančerl elicits from the Czech Philharmonic adds an extra edge and febrility to the agitated march music as Ostap is ushered to his execution.

The recorded sound is on the dry side, and in the grand peroration of *Taras's* prophecy becomes a touch strident. But it's not enough to knock Ančerl's riveting recording of *Taras Bulba* from its position as the finest currently available.

## THREE MORE GREAT RECORDINGS



**Rafael Kubelík (conductor)**  
Bavarian Radio Symphony  
Orchestra (1971)  
Eloquence ELQ4800643

Rafael Kubelík's recording of *Taras Bulba* was made a decade after Ančerl's, and reflects improvements in recording technology, with a warmer, more naturally balanced sound. Interpretively, Kubelík pushes Ančerl close. No other conductor catches quite as he does the sense of doom surrounding Andrii's love for the Polish girl in the opening movement; the reprise of their music has a tragic poignancy. The fierce, frenetic savagery he summons for Bulba's death by fire in the finale is also unequalled,

and the visionary epilogue is incandescent. If Ančerl's coupling (the *Glagolitic Mass*) is unsuitable, then Kubelík's disc – which includes the *Sinfonietta* and *Concertino* – comes strongly into the picture. It's a darker, more ferocious view of *Taras Bulba* than even Ančerl's, and runs it close for top position.



**Jos Serebrier (conductor)**  
Czech State Philharmonic,  
Brno (1995)  
Reference Recordings RR2103

Jos Serebrier's *Taras Bulba*, on a two-disc collection of Janáček's orchestral music for the audiophile Reference Recordings label, is by a clear distance the

## AND ONE TO AVOID...



Václav Talich knew Janáček personally, and conducted *Taras Bulba's* Prague premiere. The composer praised his 'exemplary interpretation', and you can still sense Talich's empathy for the music in the recording he made with the Czech Philharmonic 30 years later. But the sound is dry, constricted mono, and it seems perverse to prefer it when so many modern versions offer greater amplitude and visceral insight into Janáček's pungent orchestration.

If you enjoy Janáček's *Taras Bulba* and would like to try out similar works, see overleaf...



SO, WHERE NEXT...?

We suggest works to explore after Janáček's *Taras Bulba*

Janáček The Fiddler's Child

*The Fiddler's Child* was composed two years before *Taras Bulba*, and the two works share noticeable similarities – not least the tender-yet-mournful melodies played by the oboe, and urgent, forceful interjections from the strings, seemingly hell-bent on interrupting the serene flow of the music to warn us that all is not well. And what a dark tale this ten-minute 'Ballad' for solo violin and orchestra does indeed tell us. The destitute fiddler of the title plays fondly to his ill child, conjuring up images of a happier life. But both fiddler and, then, his child die, while a sinister four-note motif, repeated throughout, depicts the evils of the world around them.

**Recommended recording:** BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Ilan Volkov Hyperion CDA67517

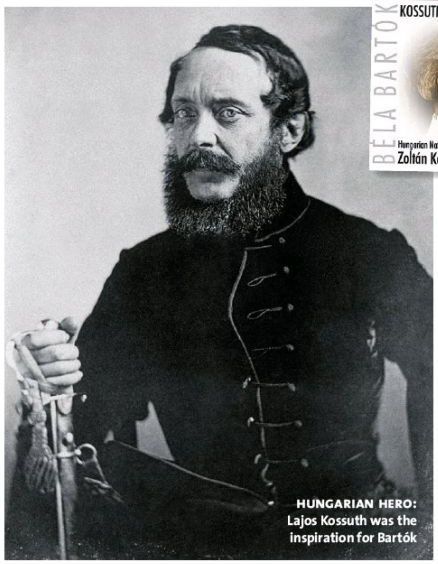
Richard Strauss

Till Eulenspiegel

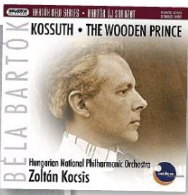
If Janáček's *Taras Bulba* presents a sense of doom from the outset, Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* – to give it its full title – is a tale of jolly japes that comes to a horribly sticky end. Composed in 1895, *Till Eulenspiegel* depicts the antics of the title character as he hares around the countryside winding people up. Alas, the victims of his japerly lose their patience, and Till is hanged for blasphemy. The clarinet is the key instrument here. As well as introducing the running motif that signifies Till's pranks, it also squeals excruciatingly at his execution – Janáček would later use exactly the same device to portray the death of Ostap in *Taras Bulba*. **Recommended recording:** Berlin Philharmonic/Herbert von Karajan Deutsche Grammophon 447 4412

Foerster Cyrano de Bergerac

Premiered in Prague in 1905, this symphonic poem is the Czech composer JB Foerster's take on Edmond Rostand's famous story of a self-deprecating writer who helps his friend to woo the woman he himself loves. Foerster shows us the story from the point of view of Cyrano, from his first interaction with the sweet and beautiful Roxanne – portrayed by a hopeful theme played by the flutes – to a bitter central scherzo in which he mocks



HUNGARIAN HERO: Lajos Kossuth was the inspiration for Bartók



Bartók Kossuth

Like Janáček's *Taras Bulba*, Bartók's *Kossuth* (1903) is an orchestral portrait of a nationalist historical figure.

The Hungarian composer chose to focus on a real-life politician from his country's history, the freedom fighter Lajos Kossuth, a key player in the 1848 revolution to win independence from Austria. No surprise, then, that a parody of the Austrian national anthem is woven throughout the piece's ten interconnected movements. Unlike Janáček's blazing, bold idiom, there's a sense that Bartók is still finding his own voice in this early work, and other composers loom large. Just a year before, he had attended the premiere of Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*, while the funeral march movement, the composer noted, borrows from Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2.

**Recommended recording:** Hungarian National PO/Zoltán Kocsis Hungaroton HSACD32502

Lysenko *Taras Bulba*

Ukrainian composer Mykola Lysenko's opera, which he laboured over for ten years, lay unpublished until after his death in 1912, as Ukrainian opera houses were too ill-equipped to handle the ambitious subject matter. Admired by Tchaikovsky, this *Taras Bulba* has a deep patriotic seam running through it – although based largely on Gogol's tale, Lysenko takes liberties with the ending, leading the Cossack and his elder son to glorious victory rather than to their humiliating deaths. The music pays homage to Rimsky-Korsakov, who taught Lysenko orchestration, although much of the opera was reorchestrated in the 1930s, which has coated it in something of a cinematic sheen.

**Recommended recording:** Andrey Kykot et al; Ukrainian National Opera/Simeonov Melodiya (available to stream online)

Next month: Mendelssohn's *Elijah*

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REVIEW MUSIC REVIEWS

110 CDs, Books & DVDs rated by expert critics



Recording of the Month

Frank Peter Zimmermann is the coruscating soloist in Shostakovich's two violin concertos, recorded live in Hamburg with the NDR Elbphilharmonie and Alan Gilbert, p68



LEADING LIGHT: violinist Frank Peter Zimmermann

From darkness to hope



Two albums this issue turn the spotlight on composers whose lives and art were restricted and policed by the Soviet Union. Shostakovich wrote his First Violin Concerto in 1948, the year of his second denunciation by the authorities; this remarkable piece couldn't be premiered until 1955, after Stalin's death. By Concerto No. 2 a decade later, his sense of hope had died, feels Frank Peter Zimmermann, the great soloist on our Recording of the Month (p68). Yet Shostakovich still inspired hope in others. When Sofia Gubaidulina (p81) met him, he praised her music. '[He] gave me the courage to follow my own path,' she later said. 'I am grateful my whole life for those wonderful words.' Rebecca Franks Reviews Editor

Our Recording of the Month features in one of our BBC Music Magazine podcasts downloadable free from iTunes or from our website [www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com)



## RECORDING OF THE MONTH



**MUSIC CHOICE**

**'SHEER FIREPOWER':**  
Frank Peter Zimmermann  
is on electrifying form

## FURTHER LISTENING

**Frank Peter Zimmermann**

## DEAN

*The Lost Art of Letter Writing* etc  
Frank Peter Zimmermann (violin);  
Sydney Symphony/Jonathan Nott  
BIS BIS-2016 86:22 mins



'The first movement of Dean's Violin Concerto is inspired by Brahms's desperate love-letter to Clara Schumann. It ends poignantly with the soloist (the excellent Zimmermann) winding anguished lines around quizzical comments by Brahms's clarinets.' *February 2014*

## HINDEMITH

*Violin Concerto; Violin Sonatas*  
Frank Peter Zimmermann (violin),  
Enrico Pace (piano); Frankfurt Radio  
Symphony Orchestra/Paavo Järvi  
BIS BIS-2024 68:18 mins



'Few performers reach the level attained here. Virtuosity is not so much the music's aim as expressivity, yet Zimmermann plays with brilliance throughout.' *October 2013*

## SZYMANOWSKI • BRITTEN

*Violin Concertos*  
Zimmermann (violin); Warsaw PO/  
Antoni Wit; \*Swedish RSO/Honeck  
Sony 88697439992 76:22 mins



'Competition in the Britten is stiff, but Zimmermann is responsive to the music's changing moods, and expresses them with an enormously varied tonal palette.' *October 2009*

minutes off the duration of the classic Oistrakh/Mravinsky recording. At first such an approach seems startling since it divests the movement of its familiar numbing stillness. At the same time, restlessness and unease bubble to the surface, especially in the few climactic moments in the movement. It is no less unsettling. Even more controversial is the forward-moving Passacaglia where Zimmermann and Gilbert steadfastly avoid the sense of monumentality that is normally encountered. But few

could take issue with Zimmermann's stunning negotiation of the cadenza as it moves inexorably from morbid introspection to one of the most visceral outpourings of anger and aggression in violin literature. The sheer firepower Zimmermann draws from his 1711 Stradivarius is electrifying both in the klezmer-inflected grotesque dance of the *Scherzo* and the breathless race to the finishing line in the Burleske.

Zimmermann also makes a strong case for the undeservedly underrated Second Concerto. Deploying the widest possible range of colour, dynamics and articulation, he brings a surprisingly varied degree of emotions to music that can often

sound unremittingly dour and suffocating. Zimmermann and Gilbert adopt slightly faster speeds for all three movements than a number of their rivals, but are much more adept at handling the tricky change of tempo in the middle of the opening *Moderato*, ratcheting up the tension to the maximum as the violin engages in an increasingly bitter onslaught with the orchestra.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



**ON THE PODCAST**  
Hear excerpts and a discussion of this recording on the **BBC Music Magazine** podcast, available free on iTunes or at [www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com)

## Q&A

### FRANK PETER ZIMMERMANN

REBECCA FRANKS talks to the German violinist about the unexpected secrets of Shostakovich's autograph score



**Why did you record the concertos on two different violins?**  
Back in 1998 EMI wanted me to record these concertos but for financial reasons the project was put on ice. I only returned to the First Concerto in 2012, and then came the idea to record it with Alan Gilbert. But we couldn't find a date to do the Second until three years later. In February 2015 I had to give back my beloved 'Lady Inchiquin' 1711 Stradivarius [the bank that owned it failed]. That year I played ten different violins. It made me crazy, but that particular week I had the 'ex Rodewalt' Stradivarius, which suited the gloomy, kind of rough sound for Concerto No. 2.

#### How did your view of the First Concerto change over the years?

I was a bit scared to release this recording. I had a microfilm of the autograph score and I found so many new things that were different from the famous David Oistrakh published edition. I'm his greatest fan, and I grew up with his recording. But there's not this biting, dark, angry, fearful death-dance feeling that the symphonies or quartets have; he's a great, very romantic violinist. In certain moments that's not so fitting, especially in the cadenza and Passacaglia. Other players who played it afterwards were probably afraid of changing what he did. But with this new view you feel the incredible pressure, as Shostakovich knew that if this piece was found he would have gone to the gulag or prison.

#### How does the Second Concerto compare to the First?

You cannot compare as the First is a towering masterpiece and one of the best pieces Shostakovich ever wrote. Even the cadenza is a masterpiece. Yet the Second is still a great concerto and it has some incredible singing, lyrical things. It's late Shostakovich and it's a different atmosphere. In the First Concerto there's hope and fear, in the Second there's no hope. It's gone forever. He's already dead.

## Formidable Shostakovich

Erik Levi applauds Frank Peter Zimmermann's searing interpretations



## SHOSTAKOVICH

## Violin Concertos Nos 1 &amp; 2

Frank Peter Zimmermann (violin); NDR  
Elbphilharmonie Orchestra/Alan Gilbert  
BIS BIS-2247 (hybrid CD/SACD) 61:41 mins

KLAS BUDOUKH, GETTY

Devotees of the Shostakovich violin concertos are spoilt for choice when it comes to fine recordings of these masterpieces. Even so, Frank Peter Zimmermann's vividly recorded performances, drawn from concerts in Hamburg in 2012 and 2015, stand

out as formidable achievements. They match technical mastery at the highest level with profound insight. No less impressive is the compelling interaction between Zimmermann and the excellent NDR

Elbphilharmonie under Alan Gilbert, a crucial component in music that is so symphonic in design. The

orchestra's contributions to the dialogue are always carefully shaped and fully responsive to the subtle nuances in the soloist's phrasing.

Like his German counterpart Christian Tetzlaff, Zimmermann

eschews the consistently full-bodied vibrato sound and propensity for rubato commonly associated with the works' dedicatee, David Oistrakh. More striking, however, is his decision to base his interpretation

### Zimmermann matches technical mastery with profound insight

of the First Concerto on Shostakovich's autograph manuscript, presenting somewhat

different metronome marks and bowing instructions to the familiar published version edited by Oistrakh. So, in the opening Nocturne, Zimmermann adopts a much faster flowing tempo, lopping a good two

## THIS MONTH'S CRITICS

Our critics number many of the top music specialists whose knowledge and enthusiasm are second to none



**Kate Bolton-Porciatti** lecturer, The British Institute; *L'istituto Lorenzo de' Medici*  
Kate is a lecturer in Baroque and Classical music, and Cultural History. Prior to that, she was a senior producer at BBC Radio 3 and artistic director of the Lufthansa Festival of Baroque music. She has published as an academic, journalist and critic.

<b>John Allison</b> editor, <i>Opera</i> ; critic, <i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	<b>Hannah French</b> musicologist, broadcaster	<b>Bayan Northcott</b> writer, composer
<b>Nicholas Anderson</b> Baroque specialist	<b>George Hall</b> writer, editor	<b>Anna Picard</b> writer, critic
<b>Terry Blain</b> writer, critic	<b>Malcolm Hayes</b> composer, critic	<b>Steph Power</b> critic, <i>The Independent</i> , <i>The i</i> ; editor, <i>Wales</i>
<b>Garry Booth</b> jazz writer & critic	<b>Julian Haylock</b> writer, editor	<b>Art Review</b>
<b>Geoff Brown</b> critic, <i>The Times</i>	<b>Claire Jackson</b> writer, journalist	<b>Anthony Pryer</b> lecturer, Goldsmiths, University of London
<b>Anthony Burton</b> writer, editor	<b>Daniel Jaffé</b> writer, critic	<b>Paul Riley</b> journalist, critic
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<b>Misha Donat</b> producer, writer	<b>Andrew McGregor</b> presenter, <i>Radio 3's Record Review</i>	<b>Kate Wakeling</b> writer, researcher
<b>David Nice</b> writer, biographer	<b>David Nice</b> writer, researcher	<b>Helen Wallace</b> writer, critic
<b>Jessica Duchén</b> critic, novelist	<b>Roger Nichols</b> French music specialist	<b>Barry Witherden</b> writer, critic
<b>Rebecca Franks</b> critic, writer		

Key to symbols Star ratings are provided for both the performance itself and either the recording's sound quality or a DVD's presentation

Outstanding ..... ★★★★★  
Excellent ..... ★★★★★  
Good ..... ★★★  
Disappointing ..... ★★  
Poor ..... ★

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# ORCHESTRAL

Jean-Yves Thibaudet brings flair to Bernstein's *The Age of Anxiety*; Gustavo Dudamel and the Vienna Philharmonic give a characterful account of Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*; and Manfred Honeck demonstrates the *Pittsburgh Symphony's* lushness in Richard Strauss

## MUSIC ORCHESTRAL CHOICE

### Bruckner's visionary Third

Stephen Johnson applauds Yannick Nézet-Séguin's insightful account



#### BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 3 (1873 version)  
Staatskapelle Dresden/  
Yannick Nézet-Séguin  
Profil Hänssler PH12011 72:01 mins

Whichever version of the score you choose, Bruckner's Third Symphony remains a transition work, with all the fascinations and frustrations that term implies. There are moments when it sounds like the kind of thing a gifted but awkward teenager might write while still in the first ecstasies of love for Beethoven and Wagner. At others it seems to stand, awestruck, on the threshold of a new musical

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin 'gets' this huge score better than anyone else**

universe. Bruckner may have refined the style and eased some of the transitions in his later revisions, but in doing so he seems to have lost sight, at least partially, of the vision that originally inspired him. To listen to the original 1873 score directed by a conductor who really understands it is to realise just how much was lost.

And Yannick Nézet-Séguin has got this huge, seemingly sprawling score better than anyone else I've heard – better even than the perceptive Georg Tintner on Naxos. The opening long crescendo (significantly longer than in any of the revised versions)



**A FIRM GRASP:**  
Nézet-Séguin reveals  
the original score's glory

is thrilling – but then comes the opening out at the climax, and that sense of stepping into an immense, mysterious space. The almost medieval scale and purity of conception Tintner finds is strongly present here as well, but Nézet-Séguin hasn't forgotten that this is the work Bruckner proudly presented to the world as his 'Wagner' Symphony. Somehow lush Wagnerian ardour and a much older kind of mystical austerity don't just cohabit, they even fuse.

It was the Dresden Staatskapelle who gave the 1873 score its very belated premiere in 1946, and now they bring a feeling for the special sound world of this version that beats all rivals.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

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#### BERNSTEIN

Symphonies: No. 1 (Jeremiah) & No. 2 (The Age of Anxiety)  
Jennifer Johnson Cano (mezzo-soprano); Jean-Yves Thibaudet (piano); Baltimore Symphony Orchestra/Marin Alsop  
Naxos 8.559790 59:32 mins

Marin Alsop, protégée and admirer of Leonard Bernstein, has been working her way backwards for Naxos through the series of works in which Bernstein portrayed the struggle for faith in the 20th century, and in his own mind. After the *Mass* and the Third Symphony, *Kaddish*, she's now arrived, with her Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, at the first two symphonies. No. 1, from 1942, is named after the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, and ends with a setting for mezzo-soprano of verses from his *Lamentations*; No. 2, from 1949, co-opts a solo piano into its commentary on WH Auden's long poem about a spiritual crisis, *The Age of Anxiety*.

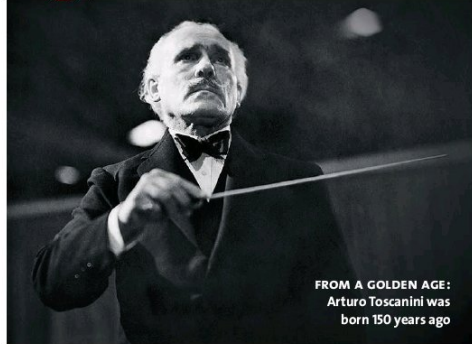
The performances are predictably excellent. In No. 1, the imposing first movement is presented with fervour, and the Copland-like central *scherzo* with lightness and precision; Jennifer Johnson Cano brings sustained intensity to the finale. In No. 2, the orchestra and Jean-Yves Thibaudet negotiate the two opening chains of variations with wide-ranging characterisation; Thibaudet plays the central 'Dirge' with powerful weight and Romantic expression, and the jazzy 'Masque' with immaculate technique and immense flair, before a convincingly rhetorical 'Epilogue'.

There's keen competition in these works, including Bernstein's own authoritative reading with the Israel Philharmonic (DG), and Leonard Slatkin's vivid account (exceptionally well recorded) with the BBC SO (Chandos); and there's an outstanding recording of *Age of Anxiety* by Dmitri Sitkovetsky and



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## 3 REISSUES SPECIAL



FROM A GOLDEN AGE:  
Arturo Toscanini was  
born 150 years ago

## A thoroughly modern maestro

Record Review's **Andrew McGregor** explores RCA's box of essential recordings by the great Arturo Toscanini



Toscanini was for many the first modern maestro, with his piercing glare, superstar status and formidable reputation for uncompromising standards and fiery rehearsals. Right from the earliest Victor recordings in 1920 with his La Scala players on tour in America, you can hear a surprisingly contemporary orchestral sound, so it's a pity none of those first documents appear in this anniversary compilation (RCA 88985376042).

The earliest things here are from Toscanini's 1929 sessions with the New York Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall, when he was already 62 years old, and with a more natural balance than some of his later studio sessions. Even through the hiss and clicks, Haydn's *Clock* Symphony is full of life, Mozart's *Haffner* full-blooded and exuberant. His Beethoven is vivid and muscular.

Toscanini's relationship with the Philadelphia Orchestra begins with their recording sessions in 1941 and a magnificently stern reading of Schubert's Ninth Symphony, as well as one of the great recordings of Respighi's

*Roman Festivals*. Toscanini conducted the premiere in 1929, and the colour, energy and authority are impressive.

Toscanini the opera conductor is well served by the set. His personal connection with Verdi is properly made, with the last act of *Rigoletto* from a 1944 Red Cross Concert. It's brilliantly cast, beautifully controlled and delivering a sense of intense despair that's rarely been equalled. Then there's *Otello*: Toscanini was a cellist at the La Scala premiere in 1887, and

60 years on conducts a white-hot reading that's very special.

Toscanini

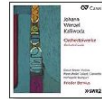
conducted the premiere of Puccini's *La bohème* in 1896, and the NBC broadcast 50 years later is wonderfully brisk, fresh and clear-eyed. The complete Gluck *Orfeo* from 1952 is less compelling, but the Wagner excerpts are essential.

I still want the rest of Respighi's Roman trilogy, more of the 1939 Beethoven cycle and Toscanini's concerto recordings with Heifetz and Rubinstein. Some of the best transfers and radio recordings are elsewhere: Guild, Naxos and Pristine should be next on your list. But as an anniversary starter set, this will do very nicely indeed.

the Ulster Orchestra (Hyperion), with the mercurially brilliant Marc-André Hamelin. But Alsop and her colleagues are reliable guides to Bernstein the emerging, unconventional symphonist.

Anthony Burton  
PERFORMANCE  
RECORDING

★★★★  
★★★★



## KALLIWODA

**Symphony No. 1; Violin Concerto No. 1; Introduction and Variations for clarinet and orchestra, Op. 128**

Daniel Sepec (violin), Pierre-André Taillard (clarinet); Hofkapelle Stuttgart/Frieder Bernius  
Carus 89.289 57:10 mins

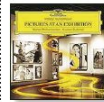
The exodus of talented Czech musicians to all parts of Europe in the 18th century owing to a lack of gainful employment at home is a familiar story. Less celebrated is their fate in the 19th century: Smetana fled Prague's cultural doldrums in the late 1850s, and many others sought employment in Germany, among them Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda (1801-66) (or, as he was christened, Jan Křtěl Václav Kaliwoda). Born in Prague, Kalliwoda was hugely prolific as a composer, and was also a talented conductor and solo violinist. His music blends Classical poise with early Romantic energy, and is often reminiscent of Weber under whom he performed as a teenager in Prague.

The opening of his Violin Concertino – like Beethoven's Violin Concerto it opens with solo drum beats – has a somewhat military cut and is throughout unfailingly agreeable yet has original harmonic touches. Daniel Sepec's elegant solo playing is a delight and the horn section and wind players, in a warm recording, deliver rich tone. Nevertheless, it is unlikely to become a concert favourite.

There is rather more excitement on offer in the Introduction and Variations for clarinet and orchestra, a work that could grace any virtuoso clarinetist's repertoire, but the work that stands out is Kalliwoda's First Symphony. The opening movement has real intensity and if the slow movement develops a little too comfortably, its opening aspires to Beethovenian nobility. The captivating Menuetto and powerful finale, replete with muscular counterpoint, clearly influenced Schumann. This is a work that

deserves to be heard more frequently. If not always flawless, these performances bring real conviction to unfamiliar repertoire. *Jan Smaczny*  
PERFORMANCE  
RECORDING

★★★  
★★★



## MUSORGSKY • TCHAIKOVSKY

**Musorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Ravel); A Night on Bare Mountain (arr. Rimsky-Korsakov); Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake – Waltz**

Vienna Philharmonic/Gustavo Dudamel  
DG 479 6297 50:51 mins

Eight years after he conducted a blistering rendition of *Pictures at an Exhibition* with the Simon Bolivar Orchestra, recorded live on DVD at the Salzburg Festival, Gustavo Dudamel conjures up an equally fine performance of this orchestral showpiece from the Vienna Philharmonic. Whereas in Salzburg, Dudamel goes for broke with his youthful players, for example cajoling them to play 'The Market at Limoges' at an astonishingly breakneck speed, this Vienna performance seems more measured, taking full account of the Vienna Philharmonic's rich wind and brass timbres, captured here with splendid immediacy in the Musikverein.

Dudamel's interpretation is relatively straightforward. As one might expect, he is particularly effective at establishing the appropriate character and atmosphere for each of the individual movements, from the weary tread of the 'Bydlo' and the introverted melancholy of 'The Old Castle' to the grotesquerie of 'The Gnome' and 'Baba-Yaga' and playfulness of the 'Ball of the Unhatched Chicks'. The orchestra responds incisively to his demands, the only noticeable problem coming in the first bars of 'The Great Gate of Kiev' where the upper trumpet melodic line is momentarily obscured.

Following on from *Pictures*, Dudamel presents a suitably volatile account of *Night on a Bare Mountain* in the Rimsky-Korsakov arrangement, and the orchestra brings a delightful Viennese lilt to the Waltz from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. At just under 51 minutes duration, however, this release offers relatively short measure and is perhaps only a must for Dudamel's many devotees. If an outstanding account of *Pictures* is your main

priority, I would opt for the 1994 Berlin Philharmonic performance under Dudamel's mentor Claudio Abbado, also on DG, which presents a much more interesting programme of Musorgsky rarities, including the original and much more daring version of *A Night on Bare Mountain*. *Erik Levi*  
PERFORMANCE  
RECORDING

★★★★  
★★★★



## R STRAUSS

**Elektra – Suite (arr. Noeck & Ille); Der Rosenkavalier – Suite (arr. Rodzinski)**  
Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra/  
Manfred Honeck  
Reference Recordings FR-722 (hybrid CD/  
SACD) 58:33 mins

A predictable grumble first. 'What's the point of bleeding chunks from operas without the voices? We listen to Stokowski's 'symphonic syntheses' of Wagner now more for the Philadelphia sound than anything else. And that might be said, too, for what Manfred Honeck has achieved with his Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. At least there's enough sheen and fine texturing to make you forget the proper context. The *Elektra* suite assembled by Honeck and 'realised by Tomás Ille' has plenty of balance between tension and repose, even if that means re-ordering the opera's action; two phases of the great Recognition Scene between the heroine and long lost brother Orestes are interrupted by earlier music, plus a jump forward to the matricide. I miss, too, the scariest music in the opera, Clytemnestra's waking nightmare, and the Viennese-waltz irony of Elektra lighting stepfather Aegisthus to his death.

Yet it's all magnificently played, the slow-burn approach paying off when the Dionysiac release of Elektra's death-dance finally bursts out of a leisurely peroration. Rodzinski's familiar *Rosenkavalier* Suite means enduring music minus one in a filleted Presentation of the Rose and minus three in the great trio, though that's superbly paced, the waltzes grandly lilt and the opening Prelude is the most erotic on disc after Bernstein's with the Vienna Philharmonic.

Great, terraced sound, too: a fine achievement on its own terms if rather short measure – Salome's Dance or even, for complete contrast, the Prelude to Strauss's first opera

*Guntram* would have been welcome as interlude. *David Nice*  
PERFORMANCE  
RECORDING

★★★★  
★★★★



## CONCERTOS FOR ORCHESTRA

**Zhou: Concerto for Orchestra; Escaich: Psalmos; Currier: FLEX**  
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra/  
Louis Langrée  
Fanfare Cincinnati FC-010  
96 mins (2 discs)

It's 12 years since the Cincinnati Symphony, under its then music director, Paavo Järvi, triumphantly paired the Bartók and Lutosławski Concertos for Orchestra on disc (Telarc, 2005). Succeeding Järvi in 2013, Louis Langrée determined to build on the legacy of that recording as part of an ongoing initiative to facilitate contemporary orchestral writing, and to showcase anew the prowess and sonic character of the Cincinnati. Three diverse composers were duly commissioned for the 2015/16 season and each world premiere recorded live.

Composers Zhou Tian, Thierry Escaich and Sebastian Currier offer complementary yet distinctive takes on this most extrovert of orchestral genres, with varying success. Least convincing, with its directionless inner movements, is Escaich's *Psalmos*, *sinfonia concertante pour orchestre*, named for his use of Bach chorales within a supposedly symphonic arc – and perhaps also to avoid confusion with the Concerto for Orchestra he composed for the 2015 opening of the Philharmonie de Paris.

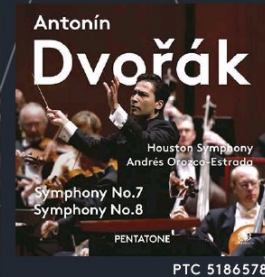
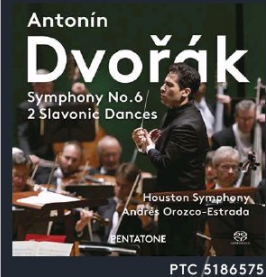
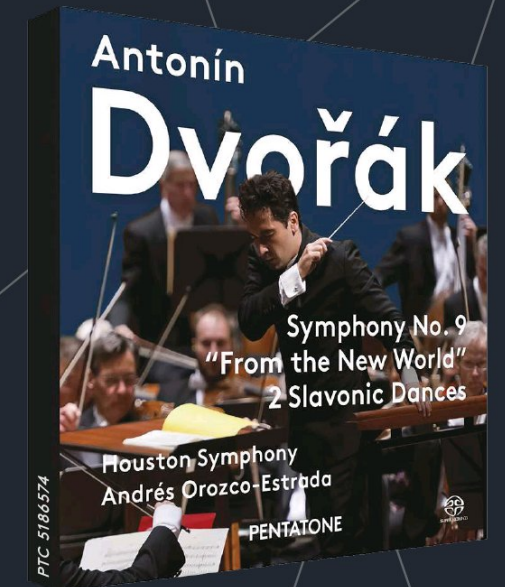
The Cincinnati attacks each work with virtuoso relish, however, delivering edge-of-the-seat rides in which scrappy moments are impressively few. Where Zhou exploits a vast, Romantic – unashamedly self-indulgent – colourscape in his Concerto for Orchestra, it is Currier's *FLEX* that provides brilliant sharpness. Herein lies the meat of the project, couched in quirkily compressed forms and dazzling harmonic and melodic-rhythmic swirls. Crucially, there is deeper purpose to this rigorous, expressive work, which explores the psychology of group dynamics.

Steph Power  
PERFORMANCE  
RECORDING

★★★★  
★★★★

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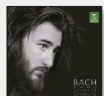
# CONCERTO

Pianist *Katrine Gislinge* performs Bent Sørensen's *Mignon* with clarity and beauty; and recorder-player *Maurice Steger* brings 'pure, vocal tone' on a voyage exploring unfamiliar Baroque repertoire

## MUSIC CONCERTO CHOICE

### At home with Bach

Nicholas Anderson enjoys Jean Rondeau's spirited playing



#### DYNASTIE

Concertos by JS Bach, JC Bach, WF Bach and CPE Bach

Jean Rondeau (harpichord); Sophie Gent, Louis Creach'h (violin), Fanny Paccoud (viola), Antoine Touche (cello), Thomas de Pierrefeu (bass), Evolène Kiener (bassoon)  
Erato 9029488846 76:19 mins

This spirited and eloquently ornamented playing serves the music of JS Bach and three of his sons uncommonly well. The programme is framed by two of the most ambitious harpsichord concertos of the first half of the 18th century. JS Bach's D minor Concerto for harpsichord and strings survives in an autograph manuscript of the late

#### Jean Rondeau brings infectious energy to JS Bach's Concerto

1730s, though its original version, almost certainly for violin, may be one of his earliest concertos. Its outer movements possess immense energy requiring virtuosic gestures from the soloist. Jean Rondeau's performance faithfully realises both while bringing a contrasting lyricism to the generously proportioned *Adagio*.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's Concerto in D minor, similarly scored to his father's concerto, was written in 1748 while he was serving as court harpsichordist to Frederick the Great in Berlin. The piece is redolent of Bach's idiosyncratic and exploratory style, thematically



**BOLDLY EXPRESSIVE:**  
Jean Rondeau is a  
characterful soloist

challenging and boldly expressive. We can understand readily enough why Beethoven found so much to admire in this composer's music. Rondeau and his excellent string players enliven at every turn Bach's distinctive idiom.

Within this powerful framework are three pieces of varying scale, of which JS Bach's F minor Concerto for harpsichord and strings is far the best known. Two of its movements may have originated as concertos for oboe – Bach used the lyrical *Largo* with oboe to preface his Epiphany cantata, BWV 156. A 'Lamento' by Bach's eldest son Wilhelm

Friedemann is an arrangement by Rondeau of a sonata movement, while a fine F minor concerto with a darkly coloured *Andante* is attributed in one of its surviving sources to Bach's youngest son Johann Christian. It sounds to me more the style of one of his two eldest brothers, but we cannot know for sure.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

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#### BEACH • CHAMINADE • HOWELL

Beach: Piano Concerto, Op. 45; Chaminade: Concertstück; Howell: Piano Concerto in D minor  
Danny Driver (piano); BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Rebecca Miller  
Hyperion CDA 68130 69:32 mins

Hyperion's 'Romantic Piano Concerto' series usually structures programmes by nationality or period; but volume 70 is selected by gender, consisting of works by three female pianist-composers. Pick of the bunch is the Concerto by Amy Beach (see 'Composer of the Month', page 60), which she premiered with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1900. It's a big, ambitious piece in four movements, with a perpetual-movement *scherzo* before the deeply felt slow movement. It handles its Dvořák-like idiom with confidence and individuality, and the virtuoso piano writing is tremendously effective. Danny Driver is a highly accomplished soloist, if occasionally lacking in Romantic flexibility; the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Rebecca Miller makes a telling contribution, though recorded a little distantly at the cost of some detail.

The other two, single-movement works suffer from a discrepancy between their scale and their principal material. Cécile Chaminade's 1888 *Concertstück* sets out with dramatic tremolando strings and a heroic horn call, recalling Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*; while this theme returns frequently, it doesn't sit easily in the work alongside pianistic glitter, sentimental melodies and balletic dances. The 1923 Concerto by the Birmingham-born Dorothy Howell similarly fails to live up to its opening bold brass statement; but there's some fine solo writing and a lovely, languishing slow episode. It would be well worth an occasional concert-hall hearing. But it's the Beach that really

deserves a place in the repertoire: how about a Proms performance, for a start? *Anthony Burton*  
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



#### MOZART

Piano Concertos Nos 1-4  
Ronald Brautigam (forte piano); Die Kölner Akademie/  
Michael Alexander Willens  
BIS BIS-2094 (hybrid CD/SACD) 58:34 mins  
Mozart's first four piano concertos aren't strictly speaking by him at all, but were compiled by the 11-year-old Mozart, with some help from his father, out of sonata movements by such successful composers of the day as Hermann Friedrich Raupach and Leontzi Honauer. Only in one instance – the slow movement of the first concerto of the series – do Mozart and his father seem to have composed an original piece.

In the remainder they added their own tutti passages, and provided accompaniments to the original keyboard parts, though several of the pieces betray their origin in sonatas by being cast in two sections which are repeated. All the same, the music is skilfully put together, and the replacing of oboes by flutes in the last concerto of the series makes for a refreshing change of palette.

#### BACKGROUND TO...



#### Bent Sørensen (b1958)

The Danish composer first studied composition under Ib

Norholm at Copenhagen's Royal Academy of Music, then under Per Nørgård at Aarhus. Sørensen was first noted for a series of string quartets, starting with *Alman* (1983-84), so-named as he had a copy of the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* on his desk as he began composing it, calling it after that ancient dance. For a while his music reflected his preoccupation with medieval and Renaissance music. Increasingly he has written works for larger ensembles in which he explores microtonality.

Ronald Brautigam and Michael Alexander Willens offer characteristically lively performances, though they're perhaps a bit short on imaginative touches. It's true that there are no great depths to be plumbed in this music, but a piece such as the *Andante* of K39 could do with greater warmth and sensuousness. It's based on an attractive sonata movement by Johann Schobert, and its hypnotically repeated triplets (a similar idea appears in the famous slow movement of Mozart's Concerto K467) to which Mozart added pizzicato strings, sound rather prosaic here. *Misha Donat*  
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



#### SØRENSEN

*Mignon*; *Serenissima*; *Sinful Songs*; *The Lady of Shalott*; *Ständchen*; *The Weeping White Room*  
Katrine Gislinge (pno); Lapland Chamber Orchestra/John Storgårds (violin)  
Dacapo 8.226134 76:06 mins

'White' appears often in Danish composer Bent Sørensen's titles. There is the accordion concerto *It is pain flowing down slowly on a white wall*, the site-specific vocal work *The White Forest* and, on this disc, *The Weeping White Room*, a mesmeric piece for wind, strings and solo piano. The idea of white – its restraint, its mystery, its hint of the unbidden – is central to Sørensen's music and duly pervades this exquisite collection of works for piano, violin and chamber orchestra.

At the heart of the disc is *Mignon* (2013-14), a captivating concerto for piano and strings. The score is at once dreamy yet precise, neo-Romantic yet crisply modern, complex yet rich in space and silence. There is an almost unbearable, icy tenderness to the music (the excellent sleeve notes aptly describe Sørensen's harmonies as 'like smoke: forming suddenly only to disintegrate') and the intricate score is performed with great clarity and beauty by pianist Katrine Gislinge and the Lapland Chamber Orchestra.

Where *Mignon* carries echoes of Romanticism, *Ständchen* (2006) is underpinned by a certain wild, fragmented classicism. Scored for the same forces as Schubert's Octet but with the idiosyncratic addition of claves (a pair of sticks) for each performer, the work is matched in its winning strangeness by *Sinful Songs* (1997-98) where, as with many of Sørensen's works, the ensemble is

spread across the performance area to create intriguing acoustic 'space' for the listener. Two spellbinding works for solo violin *The Lady of Shalott* (1987; 1992) and *Serenissima* (2014) complete this beautifully-produced disc. *Kate Wakeling*  
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



#### SOUVENIRS D'ITALIE: Mr Harrah's Musical Diaries

Concertos and Sonatas by Sammartini, Caldara, Vinci, Hasse, Piani and Fenzia

Maurice Steger (recorder and music director); various musicians  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902253 72:22 mins  
During six years' service in Naples, 18th-century Austrian diplomat Count Aloys von Harrach collected works by the cream of local wind composers – perfect souvenirs for his musical family. Maurice Steger's recital draws on these remarkable manuscripts. Charting some unfamiliar territory in the flautino concertos of Sammartini and Montanari or the recorder sonatas of Fidenza and Piani, Steger's pure, vocal tone captures the jauntiness and lilt of lively moments, while slow movements are imbued with lyricism and the florid ornamentation we have come to expect in his performances.

The contemporary French critics might have dismissed Johann Adolph Hasse's operatic melodies as 'castrato gurgling' but their dazzling virtuosity would allegedly turn music lovers 'giddy with excitement'. Steger certainly conjures this through eycopping articulation and suave showmanship, notably present in Hasse's *Cantata per flauto* in B flat major. Not all the works are as memorable, but throughout the Neapolitan flavours are captured in abundance thanks to the verve of his accompanying musicians – varying the large continuo team from keyboards and bassoon, to the shimmering salterio and lute (beautiful in Fidenza's Sonata per flauto in A Minor), or the full sound of his Orchestra of Friends (shown to full effect in Leonardo Vinci's Overture from *Elpidia*). With spot-on intonation, Steger draws every ounce of suspension and bite of chromaticism from these compositions, particularly in Lelio Colisa's Sinfonia a 3. *Hannah French*  
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## REISSUES

Reviewed by Michael Church

#### BARTÓK • MOZART

Mozart: Piano Concertos Nos 12 & 27; Bartók: Piano Concerto No. 1  
Rudolf Serkin (piano); Philadelphia Orchestra/Orrmandy; Marlboro Festival/Schneider; Columbia 50/Szell  
Praga Digital PRD 250 350/922 79:50 mins



This Bohemian-born pianist, guru to countless young pianists in America, delivers these Mozart concertos with relaxed grace and a total lack of vanity; his Bartók bristles with energy.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

#### MOZART

Piano Concertos Nos 8, 23 & 24  
Wilhelm Kempff (piano); Bamberg Symphony Orchestra & Berlin Philharmonic/Ferdinand Leitner  
Alto ALC 193 (1961-62) 77:15 mins



Nobody today plays Mozart with such understated yet riveting expressiveness; No. 8, composed for the harpsichord, weaves a charming spell.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

#### MOZART

Piano Concertos Nos 8 & 24; Piano Sonata No. 11; Fantasia in D minor  
Wilhelm Kempff (piano); Bamberg Symphony Orchestra; Berlin Philharmonic/Ferdinand Leitner  
Praga Digital PRD 250 359 - 292P (1950-62) 79:57 mins



The interest here lies in the solo works: the *Alla Turca*'s first movement is smooth and sweet, the finale, in Mozart's phrase, flows like oil; the little Fantasy has arresting grandeur.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

#### MOZART

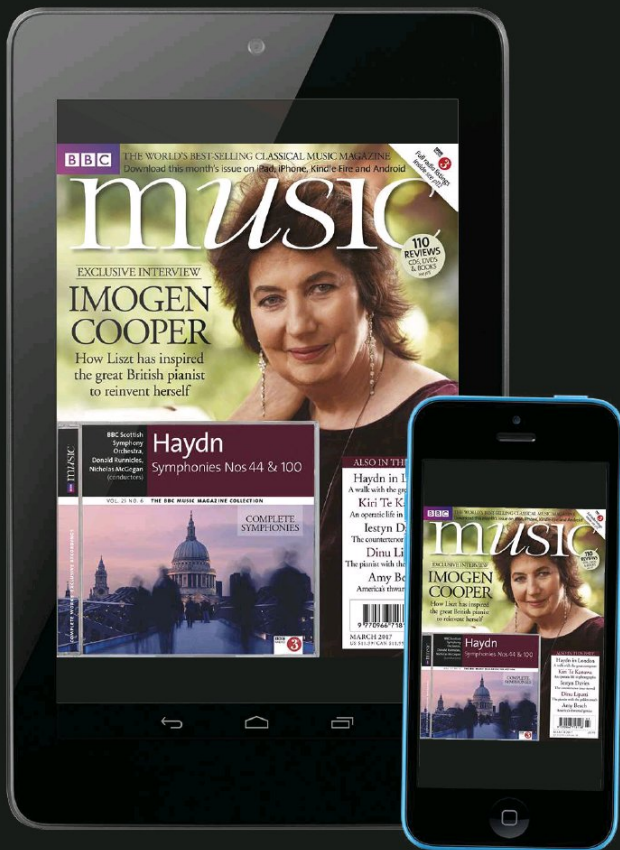
Piano Concertos Nos 13, 19 & 29  
Clara Haskil (piano); Berlin Phil, RIAS Sinfonie-Orchester Berlin/Frisays  
Praga Digital PRD 250 347 - 292P (1953-55) 82:57 mins



Who knew Haskil had, as the liner-note observes, outside hands? Her Mozart here is many-faceted, with short but extraordinary cadenzas, an exquisite *Romanza*, and an *Allegro* going like the wind, but with immaculate precision.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★





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# OPERA

*Anna Netrebko* brings 'voluptuous' and 'volatile' qualities to Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*; and *Lawrence Brownlee* shines in *bel canto* arias



## BERG

### Wozzeck

Roman Trekel, Anne Schwanewilms, Marc Molomot, Nathan Berg, Gordon Gietz, Robert McPherson, Katherine Ciesinski, Calvin Griffin, Samuel Schultz, Brenton Ryan; Members of Houston Grand Opera Children's Chorus; Chorus of Students and Alumni, Shepherd School of Music, Rice University; Houston Symphony Orchestra/Hans Graf  
Naxos 8.660390-91 97:34 mins (2 discs)

There are more corpses in Berg's epoch-making opera, *Wozzeck* (1914-22), than the two literal ones of its devastating final scenes. Underpinning the harrowing tale of a tormented soldier and the girlfriend he brutally murders is a searing, apocalyptic vision of a society so inhumane as to signal the death – as Berg witnessed, during and after World War One – of any illusion of a just or genteel modern civilisation. *Wozzeck* is mocked by his superior officers and tortured in the name of medical science, as both he and Marie are oppressed by a system which they barely survive day-to-day.

This live, 2013 concert performance by the Houston Symphony, under their then outgoing musical director Hans Graf, benefits from a stellar cast. Yet, while singing with laudable clarity and commitment, principals Roman Trekel and Anne Schwanewilms lack desperation sufficient to paint the score blood red. Graf appears to choose as a model late-Romantic Mahler rather than expressionist Schoenberg: both are vital, but without the latter it is difficult to achieve the grotesque savagery at the heart of the piece.

Ideally, the nightmares that tip *Wozzeck* over the edge would be as viscerally real as they are imagined. Nathan Berg's chilling Doktor certainly gives pause, but Marc Molomot, and especially Gordon Gietz – respectively the Captain and the Drum major – feel dramatically underpowered.

However, while the performance overall is short on disturbing inevitability, it exudes textural fascination: much attention is paid to orchestral detail, and Berg's complex rhythmic polyphony in particular is lucidly rendered. *Steph Power*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★

## MUSIC OPERA CHOICE

# A consummate Farinelli

Ann Hallenberg has both the voice and the artistry, says *Berta Joncus*



**HIGH DRAMA:**  
Ann Hallenberg with  
Christophe Rousset



## FARINELLI:

### A Portrait (Live in Bergen)

Arias by Broschi, Glacomelli, Porpora, Hasse, Leo, Handel and Porpora

Ann Hallenberg (mezzo-soprano); Les Talens Lyriques/Christophe Rousset  
Aparté AP 117 79:33 mins

In 1994 Christophe Rousset and his band recorded the music for the film *Farinelli*. Not only did the soundtrack sell over a million recordings, but it sparked numerous other Farinelli-themed CDs and DVDs. In 2011, Rousset reclaimed the 18th-century castrato's music, creating a new Farinelli-

centric programme sung by Ann Hallenberg, with which they toured. This recording is their performance at the Bergen International Festival. It far surpasses the soundtrack. Hallenberg is a force of nature, in stark contrast to the synthetic singing of the film, for which

## The crackling tension of live performance fills every phrase

sound engineers fused a mezzo with a male alto voice. Hallenberg's voice is unmistakably her own, and the crackling tension of live performance fills every phrase. Her swaggering fireworks culminate in a final aria of almost ludicrous velocity. Her lyricism is equally powerful, thanks partly to Rousset. Creating hushed silences or soft

tremolos, he subtly makes space for her vocal entries and colours. Aiding her further is Rousset's programme: he has replaced about half the film soundtrack arias, improving the balance between bravura and pathos. The two arias recorded for the first time, by Leo and Glacomelli, are gems. Although a live recording, its sound quality is warm and clean.

Rousset uses his vision – as artist, scholar and impresario – to re-imagine music which had become faddish. Do replace any impressions from the film with this CD.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★

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## REISSUES

Reviewed by Michael Scott Rohan

## FRITZ WUNDERLICH

Arias by Müller, Lortzing, Niclai, Lehar, Strauss, Fall, Künneke, etc. Bavarian Radio Chorus; Munich Radio Orchestra/various conductors BR Klassik 900314 (1959-66) 57-45 mins



Wunderlich delivers these operetta and light opera arias, recorded not long before his tragic death, with the same ardour and elegance that made him his generation's leading Mozart tenor.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## THE VOICE OF CESARE SIEPI

Arias by Mozart, Verdi, Gómes, Meyerbeer, Halévy, Ponchielli & Boito Vienna Philharmonic/EKleiber, Krips etc. Eloquence 482 0113 (1955) 71-39 mins



The greatest Italian basso cantante of the 1950s and 1960s here displays richly muscular tone and dramatic power to eclipse most modern rivals.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## SYLVIA SASS:

Anniversary Edition

Strauss: Four Last Songs; Wagner: Wesendonck-Lieder; plus works by Mozart, Verdi, Catalani, Mascagniet Gabor Bohus (violin), András Schiff (piano); various orchs and conductors Hungaroton HCD 32788-89 (1975-86) 145-59 mins (2 discs)



This sample of a great Hungarian soprano's 25-year career displays her burnished tone and occasional Callas-like tension between passionate expression and higher-range insecurity.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## HALEVEY

La Juvé Tucker et al; Ambrosian Opera Chorus, New Philharmonia Orchestra/Almeida RCA 889 85397782 (1974) 49 mins



Highlights of this archetypal French grand opera, a tragedy of anti-semitic persecution. It's robustly sung in French and rather ponderously conducted, but preserving Richard Tucker's signature role of Eléazar.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



## BOITO

## DVD Mefistofele

René Pape, Joseph Calleja, Kristine Opolais, Karine Babajanyan, Heike Grötzing, Andrea Borghini, Rachael Wilson, Joshua Owen Mills; Bavarian State Orchestra/Omer Meir Wellber; dir. Roland Schwab (Munich, 2015) C Major DVD: 739208; Blu-ray: 739304 140 mins

Boito's opera is not only one of the most ambitious produced by any 19th-century Italian composer, but also one of the most impressive attempts ever made to set Goethe's *Faust* to music. Yet with its vast scope and range it's inevitably somewhat diffuse, and certainly a tough nut to crack in the theatre on those rare occasions when a company is prepared to commit to the substantial project of staging it.

This new version, in which the clarity of the visuals on the DVD are surpassed by those on the Blu-ray version, was recorded in Munich in November 2015 and perpetuates what was then a production by the German opera director Roland Schwab. His approach is likely to dismay traditionalists but nevertheless possesses an integrity and power commensurate with the piece. Piero Vinciguerra's monolithic set and René Listerdal's costumes present a largely bleak and occasionally confused vision, or as Karina Saligmann – the writer of the liner notes – suggests, a dim and apocalyptic atmosphere, replete with sinister pleasure-seekers in an S&M club and threatening mobs. It also has its fair share of directorial clichés, and there's a sense that the principals have been slotted into a concept rather than even semi-independently exploring their roles.

The cast, nevertheless, is about as good as one could come up with. René Pape revels in the grotesque vocal grandeur of his suited and booted Mefistofele, with Joseph Calleja offering a thoughtful, sweet-toned Faust, painfully aware of the wrong turns he takes on his road to eventual salvation. Kristine Opolais is a powerful Margherita, if dressed far too opulently for the libretto's simple village maiden. Karine Babajanyan makes an alternately suave and haunted Helen of Troy, while the Munich chorus and orchestra perform with enthusiasm

and to considerable effect under the focused baton of Omer Meir Wellber.

George Hall

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**PICTURE & SOUND** ★★★★★



## HOLST

## At the Boar's Head

## VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

## Riders to the Sea\*

Jonathan Lemalu, Eric Barry, Pawel Kolodziej, Krzysztof Szumanski, Kathleen Reveille, Adam Zdunikowski, Gary Griffiths, Nicole Percifield, Mateusz Stachura, Evanna Chiew, Anna Fijałkowska; Warsaw Philharmonic Women's Chamber Choir; Warsaw Chamber Opera Sinfonietta/Lukasz Borowicz Dux DUX 1307-1308 93-40 mins (2 discs)

Two operas, both written in the early 1920s by composers who were close friends, yet utterly different in character: one is Holst's lively setting of Shakespeare involving Falstaff and his drinking companions, using English folksong in the manner of Stravinsky; the other is Vaughan Williams's pithy setting of most of Synge's play about bereavement, set on the Aran islands off the west coast of Ireland. Neither opera is well-known even in their native Britain, so Warsaw's Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival was particularly enterprising in programming them as a double bill last year. In these live recordings, made in a single concert, conductor Lukasz Borowicz sets the scene with vivid and atmospheric orchestral playing.

Both works have previously been recorded with excellent British casts, which particularly benefits Holst's word-driven *At the Boar's Head*. This new account, involving a mix of mostly American-trained and Polish singers, has the added interest of being the first to offer the opera uncut, giving Falstaff and Prince Hal's conversation in full, and more of the booze-fuelled singing of ditties. Yet despite characterful performances from Samoan bass-baritone Jonathan Lemalu as Falstaff and especially Welsh baritone Gary Griffiths as his rowdy friend Pistol, much of Shakespeare's quick-witted and salty dialogue fails to register as vividly as in the earlier all-British EMI recording (now on Warner), in which Felicity Palmer in particular conveys more of Doll's sharp tongue and her sentimentality than does Kathleen Reveille.

Yet Reveille proves her quality in *Riders to the Sea*. Her dignified portrayal of the bereaved mother is well complemented by soprano Nicole Percifield and Evanna Chiew (described as a mezzo but light-voiced enough for the role of younger sister) as her daughters and Griffiths as her last surviving son. *Daniel Jaffe*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



## HUMPERDINCK

## DVD Hansel und Gretel

Adrian Eröd, Janina Baechele, Daniela Sindram, Ileana Tonca, Michaela Schuster, Annika Gerhards; Vienna State Opera/Christian Thielemann; dir. Adrian Noble (Vienna, 2015) EuroArts DVD: 2072988; Blu-ray: 2072984 113 mins

Astonishingly this performance, from 2015, was one of the first runs of this masterpiece ever to be given at the Staatsoper. That means that the Vienna Philharmonic, which is also the Staatsoper's orchestra, had never played it before, and when the camera lights (not very often) on the orchestra, you can see how much they are enjoying themselves. A good thing, since I wasn't getting much pleasure at all, though this is a work I adore and have never previously been bored by. Christian Thielemann, while he periodically wreathes his face in smiles, conducts a performance which stagnates during its opening minutes and never recovers pace. Humperdinck's score is redolent of *Mefistofele* and even of *Parifal* throughout, but that doesn't mean that its tempos need apex those of Wagner's broader passages.

If what was happening onstage were more enjoyable it might be possible to enjoy the languorous tempos more, but Adrian Noble's production, though traditional at least by the standards of contemporary stagings from the German-speaking world, is annoying. The lovely Overture provides the accompaniment to a mime in which a Victorian family assemble for a slide show organised by Father – mercifully they don't reappear – and then we see the opera itself, many of the settings two-dimensional, thanks to the magic lantern. Too much of the production is filmed in close-up, which means that the Hansel, played by Daniela Sindram, looks neither

masculine nor young. Ileana Tonca is naturally more plausible as Gretel, but has a mediocre voice. The only singer of distinction is Adrian Eröd as Peter, the father, and his is a small role. Michaela Schuster is an unterrifying witch – that stretch of the opera should be alarming – and Annika Gerhards, doubling as the Sandman and the Dewman, lacks silvery tones, though the scenery at that stage is pretty. Any other video version is preferable to this. *Michael Tanner*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**PICTURE & SOUND** ★★★★★



## PUCCINI

## Manon Lescaut

Anna Netrebko, Yusif Eyvazov, Armando Piña, Carlos Chausson, Benjamin Bernheim, Erik Anstine, Patrick Vogel, Szilvia Vörös, Simon Shibambu, Daliborka Miteva; Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsoperchor; Munich Radio Orchestra/Marco Armiliato DG 479 6828 127-50 mins (2 discs)

It's a problem common to several verismo soprano roles: how to sound young enough to be plausibly innocent yet produce a tone sufficiently rich to ride the most opulent and savagely expressive orchestration. Time was when Anna Netrebko's Manon meant Massenet's giddy, girlish, gavotting Manon, a woman so insecure and materialistic that she will seduce and ruin a priest. Now, with a darker, more voluptuous and more volatile edge to her voice, it means Puccini's Manon Lescaut: the heroine – or anti-heroine – of Puccini's version of the good-time-girl-gone-bad of 18th-century French literature.

In this live recording from the 2016 Salzburg Festival, Netrebko's Manon soars over the rest of the cast, framed attentively, eloquently and imaginatively by Marco Armiliato and the Munich Radio Orchestra. It's a riveting, sometimes wayward performance that fails to sound remotely girlish in Act I but captures perfectly the greed, impetuosity, self-destructiveness and lust for life in Acts II and III, with a full-throated, full-hearted account of 'Sola, perduta, abbandonata'.

When Netrebko sings 'Non voglio morire!', you believe it. And she can still spin a *pianissimo* top note. The producer and engineer have been less careful of Yusif Eyvazov's Des Grieux, Armando Piña's Lescaut and Carlos Chausson's excellent Geronte. Eyvazov tenses up

unattractively in the arias and duets, singing more freely in the passages that never feature in highlights compilations. There's lovely singing from the Madrigalisti (Daliborka Miteva, Martina Reder, Cornelia Sonnleithner, Arina Holecek) and the Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsoperchor, but this is very much a one-woman show. *Anna Picard*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



## ALLEGRO IO SON:

## Bel canto arias

Lawrence Brownlee (tenor); Kaunas State Choir; Kaunas City Symphony/Constantine Orbelian Delos DE 3515 62-15 mins

Lawrence Brownlee is the real thing; a genuine *bel canto* tenor whose new recording amply fulfils the promise of his earlier Rossini recital. Indeed, you may feel that the fearsome sustained top note that ends 'Ah! Mes amis, quel jour de fête' from Donizetti's *La fille du régiment* is all the proof you need, and the single best reason for adding this disc to your collection.

But there is much else besides: admirable diction in a pair of Donizetti rarities from *Rita* and *Dom Sébastien*, even if there's a tad too much vibrato in the middle register. Then there's a sinuous legato that would surely have brought Donizetti to his feet. And Bellini too. Brownlee has sung the role of Arturo in *I Puritani*, and he claims both 'A te, o cara' and 'Son salvo' as his own. He clearly inhabits a role that he's created on stage with a more exact sense of vocal character than in music that has been prepared for the recording studio. So his Nemorino in 'Una furva lagrima' celebrates as well as laments, and the crescendo on the phrase 'm'ama' is thrilling.

For the most part the Kaunas City Symphony conducted by Constantine Orbelian is supportive, although the woodwinds seem flustered at the beginning of 'Quanto e bella' and there's some strident brass in Ernesto's 'C'hero l'ontana Terra' from *Don Pasquale*. But these are modest blemishes. *Christopher Cook*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

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# CHORAL & SONG

Mark Elder and the *Hallé* revive atmospheric rarities from Elgar's First World War years; baritone *Michael Nagy* gives a 'powerful, sonorous' account of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; and *Vladimir Jurowski* conducts an electric account of Prokofiev's seismic *Seven, They are Seven*

## MUSIC CHORAL & SONG CHOICE

### Martinů's natural world

David Nice is refreshed by the Czech's folk wisdom in his late cantatas



#### MARTINŮ

The Legend of the Smoke from Potato Tops; The Opening of the Springs; Romance of the Dandelions; Mikeš of the Mountains

Pavla Vykopalová (soprano), Ludmila Kromková (contralto), Martin Slavík (tenor), Jiří Brückler, Petr Svoboda (baritone), Daniel Havel (recorder), Jan Pařík (clarinet), Jan Voboril (horn), Josef Hřebík (accordion), Ivo Kahánek (piano); Prague Philharmonic Choir/ Lukáš Vaselek  
Supraphon SU 4198-2 68:13 mins

Three consecutive years have brought with them CD revelations about the greatest 20th-century composer who is yet to be widely celebrated as such. In 2015, Maxim Rysanov shone a light upon Martinů's works featuring solo viola

Martinů's cantatas provide valuable messages for our time

and now, following Supraphon's essential 2016 recordings of the last (mini) opera *Ariane* and the complete piano trios, comes a cumulatively stunning presentation of four late cantatas. All based on the mixture of folk wisdom and sophisticated poetic conceits in the writing of Milošlav Bureš, they celebrate the natural world and its regenerative powers in the face of human loss, disaster and failure.

Each begins arrestingly – the first sounds we hear are of recorder



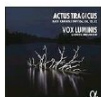
A NEW DIRECTION: Lukáš Vaselek champions lesser-known Martinů

and clarinet – and acquires emotional weight as it goes. The unpromisingly-titled *Legend of the Smoke from Potato Tops* builds on the fresh-air brilliance of Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* as the Virgin and her Son leave a dark church for the Bohemian outdoors. *The Opening of the Springs*, superficially the simplest of the four, celebrates the ritualistic late-May clearance of struggling fresh-water sources and ends with Martinů's answer to the old-age wisdom of *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Baritone Jiří Brückler is superb here, and the top-quality professional Prague Philharmonic Choir master the most harmonically rich cantata

of the four, a tale of a girl who doesn't recognise her long-lost love returning from the wars. *Mikeš of the Mountains* is the perfect summing-up: the embellished tale of a wise shepherd guiding his flock through the worst that nature can throw at them. Valuable messages for our or indeed any time, and superlatively performed. Unmissable.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★

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#### J.S. BACH

Cantatas: Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit, BWV 106 (Actus Tragicus); Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich, BWV 150; Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir, BWV 131; Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen, BWV 12  
Vox Luminis/Lionel Meunier  
Alpha Classics ALPHA 258 84:55 mins

There are many beautiful moments in this programme of four early cantatas by Bach. The mood is one of rapt solemnity as we progress from *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit* (BWV 106), better known by its Buxtehudean sobriquet, *Actus Tragicus*, to the lesser known *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich* (BWV 150), the sombre *Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir* (BWV 131), and the fractured lamentations of *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen* (BWV 12), model for the Crucifixus in the B minor Mass.

The seriousness with which Lionel Meunier and Vox Luminis approach this work is evident, and the forces are ideal: single voices amplified with a further quartet of singers as required; pale, chaste recorders and mellow violas da gamba; single strings; sweet oboe and slide trumpet; a fruity bassoon. But the articulation of the German text is too often smudged, and the organ of Onze-Lieve-Vrouw en Sint-Leodegariuskirke in Bornem, built by Dominik Thomas in 2013 after Gottfried Silbermann, dominates.

It's a gorgeous instrument and may well be more authentic to Bach's own performing experience than the chamber organs we have grown accustomed to hearing in ensembles of this size. The more animated vocalists can match its vibrancy – soprano Kristen Witmer gives a bright and spirited 'Doch bin und bleibe ich vergnügt' in BWV 150, bass Tomáš Král an agile 'Bestelle dein Haus' in BWV 106 – but both tenor soloists are overwhelmed and

the transparency of Bach's writing for recorder and gamba is obscured.  
Anna Picard  
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★



#### BAX • ELGAR

Bax: In Memoriam; Elgar: The Spirit of England; Une voix dans le désert; Grania and Diarmid  
Rachel Nicholls, Jennifer France (soprano), Madeleine Shaw (mezzo-soprano), Joshua Elliott (narrator); Hallé Choir; Hallé/Mark Elder  
Hallé CDHLL7544 67:15 mins

Laurence Binyon's texts of *The Spirit of England* have the kind of war-memorial sensibility that divides opinion today. It was a sensibility that appealed deeply to Elgar himself, as to millions of his compatriots; and it drew from him some vintage musical material, particularly in 'To Women', the second of the three sections. The one deficiency in an otherwise memorable Hallé live performance relates to the work's only soloist: Rachel Nicholls's soprano voice, for all its beautiful tone and line, sounds uncertain when expanding above mid-volume.

Also featured here are two genuine Elgar rarities. *A Voice in the Wilderness*, setting a translation of the Belgian poet Émile Cammaerts, portrays a bleak wartime scene, where a passing soldier hears a peasant girl singing from within her family's ruined cottage. Elgar's beautifully imagined score is graced with two very fine performances, from Joshua Elliott's narrator (his delivery and accent are pitched exactly right), and from soprano Jennifer France, whose touch with the girl's song is an object-lesson in how to be affecting without affectation. The three items of incidental music written in 1901 for Yeats's play *Grania and Diarmid*, while outwardly slight, nonetheless conjure a sense of atmosphere that rivals Sibelius's peerless mastery of the genre, with mezzo-soprano Madeleine Shaw excellent in the druidess's song.

Bax's orchestral *In Memoriam* (An Irish Elegy), commemorating those who died in the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, was the thought-provoking counterweight to *The Spirit of England* in the Hallé's 2014 concert; it too is finely performed.

Malcolm Haynes  
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★



WITH GLEAMING TONE: The Temple Church Boys' Choir sing Rutter's *Visions*



#### GUBAIDULINA

Jauchzt vor Gott; Hell und Dunkel; Sonnengesang  
Ivan Monighetti (cello); North German Radio Choir; Elbtal Percussion/Philipp Ahmann; Christian Schmitt (organ)  
BIS BIS-2276 (hybrid CD/SACD) 61:50 mins

Though religiously inspired, none of Gubaidulina's strange yet evocative music has been written for liturgical use. Yet the works on this CD, written for choir and/or organ, may all benefit from the atmosphere and spacious acoustic of a church; indeed both works involving organ here are recorded in churches. The opening piece, *Jauchzt vor Gott* (Make a Joyful Noise unto God) – new to disc though composed as far back as 1989 – was recorded in Hamburg's Hauptkirche St Nikolai. Starting with an ever-circling plainchant-like idea, all the voices of the excellent NDR Chor soon pool into a sonorous cloud out of which solo voices spin, punctuated with baleful comments from the organ – a particularly impressive-sounding instrument in SACD sound. Any expectation this raises for the following solo organ work, *Hell und Dunkel* (Light and Darkness), is sadly disappointed: recorded at St John's Church, Alkono, Christian Schmitt's performance might be described as cool-headed and thoughtful, but frankly sounds – even on its own terms – over-deliberate and dull, certainly no competitor against Kevin Bowyer's lithe and compelling account on Nimbus.

*Sonnengesang* (Canticle of the Sun), recorded live in concert at the Rolf-Liebermann-Studio in Hamburg and

at 40 minutes the longest and most substantial work, is more engaging, though too often the solo cellist, Ivan Monighetti, sounds cautious, even tentative. On the rival Chandos recording, by contrast, David Geringas is extrovert and purposeful in his dramatic swoops, and creates genuinely eerie sounds when he temporarily turns percussionist on his instrument; most importantly, unlike Monighetti, he is fully coordinated with his choir, directly stirring the singers into action rather than merely coinciding with them. *Daniel Jaffé*  
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★



#### MENDELSSOHN

*Elijah*  
Genia Kühmeier (soprano), Ann Hallenberg (alto), Lothar Odinius (tenor), Michael Nagy (baritone); Balthasar-Neumann Choir & Soloists; Balthasar-Neumann Ensemble/Thomas Henglebrock  
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 88985362562 119:43 mins

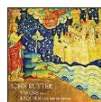
There's a lot that's excellent in this recording of what is, I think, a live performance in the Dortmund Konzerthaus, to judge from a few 'getting-ready' noises between items. It is in every way a big, dramatic interpretation, and as such absolutely in keeping with Mendelssohn's ideal, as opposed to polite performances he had to endure of other people's oratorios in which the disengagement of performers left him fuming.

Michael Nagy is a powerful, sonorous Elijah, not merely a man of God but an out-and-out demagogue,

fully justifying Ahab's complaints about him causing trouble among the citizenry. Both soprano and alto soloists sing with pure tone, and in a live performance one can excuse the soprano's distinct sharpening of a couple of high notes. As for the tenor, I confess that age has not wearied me of Richard Lewis's peerless 1947 interpretation of the two wonderful arias: Lothar Odinius is good but... in my head I always hear Lewis's golden tone on the word 'shine'.

The whole interpretation is splendidly dramatic, with wide dynamic variations and silences given full value (though it's naughty to ignore the 'attacca subito' after 'Herr Gott Abrahams'), and my only real reservation is over a lack of clarity in the louder, fuller passages. Mendelssohn's elegant inner orchestral parts tend to get swamped here, as do alto and tenor choral lines. If this is the price of dramatic interpretation, perhaps it has to be paid. But for me it's just a touch too high. *Roger Nichols*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★  
RECORDING ★★★★★



#### ROUTER

*Visions; Requiem*  
Kerson Leong (violin), 'Alice Halstead' (soprano); The Temple Church Boys' Choir; The Cambridge Singers; Aurora Orchestra/John Rutter  
Collegium COLCD 139 57:40 mins

A violin concerto to which a choir in it? John Rutter's *Visions* probably isn't quite a concerto – he doesn't call it that – but the solo part is certainly extensive, often recalling Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* in shape and atmosphere. It is outstandingly played in this premiere recording by the young Canadian violinist Kerson Leong.

His largely rhapsodic contributions are intertwined and juxtaposed with those of The Temple Church Boys' Choir, who sing biblical texts related to Jerusalem, mainly in unison and with gleaming tonal quality. The tone of *Visions* is often lingeringly elegiac, and may well surprise those who associate Rutter primarily with facile tunefulness and chirpy carols.

The coupling is a new recording of the Requiem Rutter first took into the studio 30 years ago. Although his timings for individual movements haven't altered a jot across the decades, the new version is preferable



# REISSUES

Reviewed by Kate Bolton-Porciatti

## JS BACH

**Cantatas, BWV 35, 169 & 170**  
Fink; Freiburg Baroque Orch/Mülleijans  
Harmonia Mundi HMG 502 016 (2009)  
76:20 mins



Bernarda Fink's full-bodied, expressive mezzo is rather at odds with the clean, light-textured instrumental sound, but these performances nonetheless convey the music's pathos and yearning.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## CAMPRA

**Arion; La dispute de l'Amour et de l'Hymen; Les Femmes; Enée et Didon**  
Feldman, Visse, Gardel; Les Arts Florissants/William Christie  
Harmonia Mundi HAF 8901238 (1986)  
75:08 mins



CampRA combines the delicate and languorous French idiom with the livelier Italian style. With the youthful voices of Feldman and Visse, these performances still sound delightfully fresh.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## MONTECLAIR

**La mort de Didon; Il dispetto in amore; Le triumphe de l'Amour; Morte di Lucretia; Pyrame et Thisbe**  
Soloists: Les Arts Florissants/Christie  
Harmonia Mundi HAF 8901238 (1988)  
75:36 mins



Though the instrumental playing here lacks the pliancy and freedom of Christie's later recordings, this features a dream-team of soloists (including Agnes Mellon, Gérard Lesne, Jean-Paul Fouchécourt) and some ravishing and varied music.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## CAMILLA DE ROSSI

**Sant'Alessio**  
Pushee, Dominguez, Kowalczyk, Lombardi; Musica Fiorita/Dodi  
Pan Classics PC10347 (2001) 64:47 mins



The tug-of-war between human and divine love drives this oratorio, whose music veers from meditative to passionate. Pushee and Dominguez are sensitive soloists; the direction is stylish, if a little polite.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

— the recording has greater clarity and amplitude, and both the singing and playing have a touch more incisiveness and assurance.

In Alice Halstead Rutter continues to favour a soprano with the timbre of a boy treble, and her solos have an innocent fragility which is touching. The sensually expressive choral singing in the 'Lux aeterna' caps an authoritative interpretation.

Terry Blain

**PERFORMANCE**

**RECORDING**

★★★★★  
★★★★★



## DISTANT LIGHT

**Barber: Knoxville: Summer of 1915; Hillborg: The Strand Settings; Björk (arr. Ek): Virus; Jóna; All is Full of Love**  
Renée Fleming (soprano); Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra/Sakari Oramo  
Decca 483 0415 47:56 mins

This short disc's triumph? Clearly it is Anders Hillborg's *The Strand Settings*, four atmospheric settings of plain-worded poems of love, loneliness and loss by the Canadian poet Mark Strand, composed for the creamy soprano of Renée Fleming. Premiered in 2013, the piece already seems a classic with its declaratory vocal aour, orchestral finesse, and communicative confluence of styles, from tinkling minimalism to a snatch of mock Handel. As she soars upwards on words like 'stars' and 'freedom' – Hillborg's not afraid of the obvious – Fleming's top register seems as golden as ever, even if touches of tamish show below.

Unhappily, vices predominate in her account of Barber's poetic masterpiece *Knoxville*. Never a queen of precise diction, Fleming smudges too many of James Agee's evocative words. The built-in vibrato plays its part, robbing her voice of the intimate domestic tone required for these musings on childhood. Oramo and his Stockholm musicians couldn't be more loving; that apart, Fleming's version offers no competition for the historic glories of Eleanor Steber, Eileen Farrell and Leontyne Price or, more recently, Dawn Upshaw.

Fleming appears equally misplaced as classical music's conduit for songs by the Icelandic sprite Björk, respectfully orchestrated here by Hans Ek. *Virus*, bubbling like the original with gamelan-like sonorities, offers the most fun. But pleasures

then shrink; texts turn monotonous (*Jóna* repeats 'emergency' 13 times). And Fleming's emotings, delivered mostly in her lower register, push into absurdity material that seemed much more sensible when delivered in Björk's unique voice, so bleached and otherworldly. *Geoff Brown*

**PERFORMANCE**

**RECORDING**

★★★  
★★★



## GODS & MONSTERS

**Songs by Beethoven, Brahms, Mahler, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Wolf**  
Nicholas Phan (tenor), Myra Huang (piano)  
Avie AV 2368 64:27 mins

From creepy Grimm-style fairytales to the idyll of Ancient Greece; American lyric tenor Nicholas Phan's fourth solo disc sees his first venture into the German ballad repertoire. This recital – inspired by Phan's recent work with children – is dedicated to storytelling.

The programme is in four parts. It opens with 'Mount Olympus', four of Schubert's Greek myth songs. Then follows 'Knights and Kings', an unusual set of Schubert, Brahms, Mahler and Beethoven. The third section, 'Things that Go Bump in the Night', treats supernatural topics. Finally, 'Fairytales' includes Schumann's delightful *Der Sandmann* and three characteristically witty songs by Wolf. Brahms's *Sandmännchen*, a tender lullaby arranged for Robert Schumann's children, lulls us at the close.

In this repertoire, the devil is in the detail. Phan has a beautifully sweet tone, but his vibrato can be distractingly unruly, and there are various slips in his German. More importantly, though, both artists handle songs like Schubert's terrifying *Der Zuerger* or Wolf's *Feuerreiter* too tamely. These forays into the sinister side of this repertoire need more bite in the sound, risk with the text, and flexibility with the score.

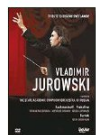
Still, it is good to hear a male singer perform Brahms's *Es war ein Markgraf überm Rhein* and Mendelssohn's *Hexenlied*, and Huang's fleet fingers make light of some fearsomely virtuosic accompaniments. At his best, Phan offers some exquisitely calibrated soft singing supported by a rich acoustic and crystal-clear sound.

Natasha Loges

**PERFORMANCE**

**RECORDING**

★★★★★  
★★★★★



## TRIBUTE TO EVGENY SVETLANOV

**DVD Rachmaninov: The Bells; Bartók: Piano Concerto No. 3; Prokofiev: Two Poems for Female Chorus & Orchestra, Op. 7; Seven, They Are Seven**

Tatiana Pavlovskaya (soprano), Vsevolod Grivnov (tenor), Sergei Leiferkus (baritone), Yefim Bronfman (piano); Yurlov State Academic Chorus; State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Russia/Vladimir Jurowski  
Bel Air BAC107 84 mins

Apart from its virtues as a brilliant piece of programming – a Bartók American green salad between two slices of rich black Russian bread – this concert should be snapped up by Prokofiev lovers. It's been a long time since we've had an electric performance of his seismic 1917 invocation *Seven, they are Seven*, and there's no contemporary recording to my knowledge of the Op. 7 *Poems* for female chorus and orchestra. Their silver age gleaming here pleads better concert-hall acquaintance. As a serene glide before the eruption of the cantata, they work superbly. And here we have the best of Russian ensembles, the Yurlov State Academic Chorus, a reminder of vintage Soviet-era quality.

How they spit and crackle in the 'Alarm Bells' movement of Rachmaninov's *The Bells* (oddly used as apocalyptic background to speeded up film of Moscow at night in the opening credits). Evgeny Svetlanov, to whom the concert is dedicated, conducted the work two weeks before he died, and Jurowski's approach with Svetlanov's old orchestra, way past its glory days, is fleet, less deeply sensuous. The male soloists lack nuance, but Vsevolod Grivnov has tenorial lungs of iron for the Prokofiev cantata. Jurowski knows all the words; one can see him reflect every emotion even through the choppy camerawork, and watch his superb stick technique in claustrophobic close-up.

Presentation is poor: no booklet, and why wise words from Jurowski only on the Rachmaninov? Never mind; there are riches here, and the Bartók Third Piano Concerto with Yefim Bronfman, master shade of the chameleonic style, would be worth the cost of the DVD alone. *David Nice*

**PERFORMANCE**

**PICTURE & SOUND**

★★★★★  
★★

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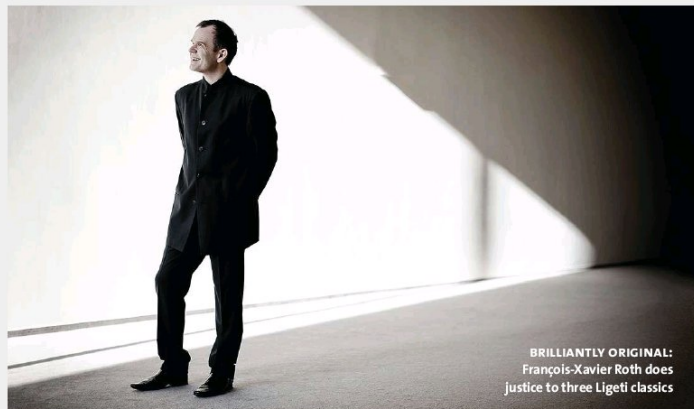
# CHAMBER

The *Cypress Quartet* say farewell with Brahms; *Spectrum Concerts Berlin* explores the jagged and jazzy world of Schulhoff; *Daniel Röhn* plays Kreisler with subtlety; and *Maureen Lipman* joins violinist *Matthew Trusler* and pianist *Ashley Wass* to present a trove of *Alice*-inspired works

## MUSIC CHAMBER CHOICE

### Wonderful Ligeti

Misha Donat admires François-Xavier Roth's outstanding ensemble



BRILLIANTLY ORIGINAL:  
François-Xavier Roth does  
justice to three Ligeti classics



#### BRAHMS

**String Sextets Nos 1 & 2**  
Cypress Quartet; Barry Shiffman (viola),  
Zuill Bailey (cello)  
Avie AV 2294 76:50 mins

San Francisco's Cypress Quartet gave their final concert last June after 20 years together. This, their valedictory recording, was made two months beforehand, live in front of a studio audience. They chose to go out on disc not with a quartet programme but with the two Brahms Sextets, joined by violist Barry Shiffman and cellist Zuill Bailey – perhaps a surprising decision; still, the geniality, fleeting melancholy and sense of nostalgia inherent in these works certainly make them apt for a farewell.

The players have the balance well worked out – even with the extra weight in the lower sonorities, the music sounds clear and rarely bottom-heavy, which is some achievement. The first movement of the B flat major Sextet, Op. 18, has a nice sense of sweep, and the extreme glassiness of the music-box variation in the slow movement comes as a pleasing surprise. But the first violin throws in too many murky shifts between notes, and there's a high, fortissimo moment at the first movement's climax that could usefully have been patched.

The G major Sextet, Op. 36, is the work of an older and wiser Brahms, one in which he says goodbye to his first love, Agathe von Siebold. Again, the phrasing can turn clunky when Brahms is at his most insistent, but the slow movement has a rapt intensity, and throughout, the players keep the textures spacious and take care with the long-term shaping. Together the two works make for a sign-off that is both joyful and poignant. *Eriq Jeal*  
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★

**ON THE WEBSITE**  
Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website  
[www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com)

written in the early 1950s. The *Ten Pieces*, composed nearly two decades later, display the *Alice* in *Wonderland* side of Ligeti, and carry such evocative movement-headings as *Prestissimo minaccioso e burlesco* and *Presto bizzarro*. The latter has a prominent part for bassoon, and

#### Ligeti's Chamber Concerto ends with an insanely virtuosic Presto

its last isolated note is followed in the score by a quotation: "...but" – There was a long pause. "Is that all?" Alice timidly asked. "That's all," said Humpy Dumpty. "Good-bye."



**LIGETI**  
**Six Bagatelles; Chamber Concerto; Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet**  
Marion Ralincourt (flute), Hélène Mourat (oboe), Pierre Rougerie (cor anglais), Christian Laborie (clarinet), Michaël Rolland (bassoon); Les Siècles/  
François-Xavier Roth

*Musicales Actes Sud* ASM26 44:01 mins  
These brilliantly original works are among Ligeti's most familiar and approachable, and the *Six Bagatelles* and *Ten Pieces* are now cornerstones of the wind quintet repertoire – even though the Bagatelles are actually highly skilful transcriptions of piano pieces from *Musica ricercata*,



#### HAYDN

**String Quartets Opp. 54 & 55**  
The London Haydn Quartet  
Hyperion CDA 68160 153:16 mins (2 discs)

Listening to these half-dozen masterpieces – the first half of the series Haydn composed for the violinist and venture capitalist Johann Tost – is to be struck by the music's wonderful originality and inventiveness. There's not a single movement here that isn't stamped with Haydn's genius – from the smouldering gypsy-style improvisations of the last two Op. 54 quartets, to the energetic fugal episodes in Op. 55 Nos 1 and 2, and the astonishing valedictory last movement of Op. 54 No. 2.

The London Haydn Quartet are perhaps at their best in the *presto* finales, where their unflagging energy is exhilarating. Their deeply-felt account of the *Largo* from the E major last quartet in the Op. 54 triptych is also impressive, as is the way they make the aching dissonances of the minuet's trio in Op. 54 No. 2 sound like cries of despair. But their general reluctance to offer really incisive playing, or any genuine staccatos, sometimes makes for less lively results than is ideal. The assertive fanfare-like beginning of the C major Quartet Op. 54 No. 2, for instance, really needs to be more forthright and more strictly in tempo, and the same is true of the start of Op. 54 No. 3. And while violinist Catherine Manson handles the C major quartet's gypsy passages with admirable freedom, they teeter on the edge of sounding like café music. *Misha Donat*

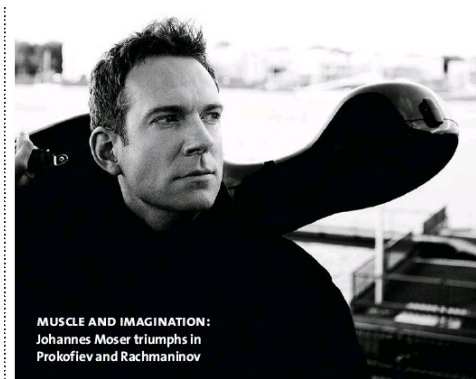
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★



#### PROKOFIEV • SCRIBIN RACHMANINOV

**Prokofiev: Cello Sonata; Cinderella – Adagio; Rachmaninov: Cello Sonata; Vocalise; Scriabin: Romance**  
Johannes Moser (cello),  
Andrei Korobeinikov (piano)  
*Pentatone SPC 586594 (hybrid CD/SACD)*  
72:07 mins

Johannes Moser and Andrei Korobeinikov bring both muscle



MUSCLE AND IMAGINATION:  
Johannes Moser triumphs in  
Prokofiev and Rachmaninov

and imagination to these two epic Russian sonatas. The danger with both is of surfeit: of volume, density, sheer length and repetitiousness of material. In the Prokofiev players must be prepared – as these are – to throw themselves into the circus ring, as well as indulge in the marvellously profound resonance of its C major lyricism. In the Rachmaninov, again, subtlety of articulation and elasticity are essential in its broad narrative sweep.

In both performances there are moments of unexpected revelation: amid the manic gaiety of Prokofiev's *Allegro finale* comes a strange, reflective episode. It conjures themes from *Romeo and Juliet*, but as if in a distorted mirror. It can seem like a longueur before the party re-starts, or be treated as a heart-on-sleeve romance. Here, the players submit themselves absolutely to its quietude. In the midst of a rollicking surge, something deeply introverted grows. They go on to build an overwhelming ending, carillons of bell-like figures given thunderous momentum by Korobeinikov.

Similarly, in Rachmaninov's finale, which sometimes struggles to keep airborne, there's an episode recalling themes. They choose again to relax into a dream-like tempo; colours bleed, edges blur, memories flood in. It's exaggerated, but achieves a memorable magic, and gives the return to the *allegro* a tremendous head-rush. The *scherzo* is brutally driven, the poetic *largo* realised to its utmost.

While the piano occasionally sounds congested, Korobeinikov, exuding personality, is a great match for Moser. *Helen Wallace*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★



**SCHULHOFF**  
**String Sextet; Violin Sonata No. 2; Duo for violin and cello; Cinq études de jazz**  
Spectrum Concerts Berlin  
Naxos 8.573525 68:16 mins

Like many young creative artists in the 1920s, the Prague-born composer Erwin Schulhoff was attracted to an astonishingly wide array of musical styles. This fascinating release demonstrates the breadth of his interests in four strikingly contrasted works composed between 1924 and 1927. In the earliest of these, the String Sextet, Schulhoff explores a tough almost atonal language, which in its sharp juxtapositions of mood veers very much towards expressionism. Perhaps the most intriguing of its four movements is the second, a ghostly and brooding nocturne, which is projected here with a wonderful sense of mystery.

The Duo for Violin and Cello (1925), dedicated to Janáček, has an obviously Eastern European character, particularly in the irresistible and virtuosic 'Zingaresca' movement, whereas the Violin Sonata No. 2 (1927) leans more towards neo-Classicism in its outer movements, though Bartók's influence is noticeable throughout. In complete contrast, the *Cinq études de jazz* is a set of brilliant showpieces for piano that respond with individuality and humour to the popular dance rhythms of the era.

Enthusiasts for these works are somewhat spoilt for choice with high-

voltage alternative version of the Duo from Julia Fischer and Daniel Müller-Schott (Orfeo) and the slightly better balanced recording of the Violin Sonata from Tanja Becker-Bender and Markus Becker (Hyperion). But the stellar soloists featured here certainly play the music with great conviction and the CD offers a good introduction to a prodigiously talented composer. *Erik Levi*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★



#### STOTT

**Vanishing Barriers: String Quartets Nos 2 & 3; Fugue in Bulgarian Rhythm; Straw Bubbles II; Moto Perpetuo; Six Ragtime Arrangements; Cailén ó chois tSéure mé**  
Callino Quartet  
*Omnibus Classics CCS011* 60:24 mins

This collection of string quartet works by Rachel Stott is somewhat baffling. Titled *Vanishing Barriers*, the CD promises to cross the boundaries enclosing Western art music, and features Stott's works inspired by other musical cultures, from Eastern European folk traditions to American Ragtime, alongside compositions for children and works sparked by scientific discovery. Yet in its quest for breadth, the disc feels more like a confusing potpourri than a compelling argument against musical pigeon-holing.

Stott's second string quartet, *The Enchanted Lyre*, is the richest, most satisfying work on the disc. Sparked by her encounter with an early precursor of the telegraph machine, the piece trembles and hums to invoke vibrations passing along a wire, and is performed with poise and an aptly pure tone by the excellent Callino Quartet. Other works include the accomplished but relentlessly buoyant *Fugue in Bulgarian Rhythm*, six rather straight 'Ragtime arrangements', and *Moto Perpetuo*, a work for children to participate in scored for string quartet and boomwhackers (plastic tubes which when struck against a surface produce a pitched 'boom') – except this recording inexplicably includes no boomwhackers, just the rather twee quartet accompaniment. The Callino Quartet offer stylish, characterful performances throughout but cannot retrieve this rather muddled miscellany. *Kate Wakeling*  
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★





# AMERICAN MOMENTS

Piano trios by Korngold, Bernstein and Foote  
Neave Trio  
Chandos CHAN 10924 68:34 mins

Interesting to start an American disc with Korngold's Op. 1: the little Korngold, who was all of 12 when he began this startlingly full-blooded and sophisticated piece, was still utterly Viennese and would never have dreamed he'd end up in Hollywood. Its musical flavour is lyrical, typically bittersweet, springing audibly from the world of Mahler, Strauss and Viennese *schwing*.

While the youthful composer was hard at work on that piece in 1909, Arthur Foote's Piano Trio No. 2 was published in the US and it proves the highlight of the CD. Beautifully constructed and slightly Fauré-esque, with a nod or several towards Brahms, it makes a fine impression and leaves one wanting to know more about its under-recognised Bostonian composer. Bernstein's trio is a much later creation and shifts with engaging flexibility between rigour, ruggedness and humour.

If the Neave Piano Trio does not make all they might out of the contrasts between the composers, they do perhaps show their similarities. They don't always deal convincingly with the young Korngold's slight tendency to ramble and complicate his writing, and violinist Anna Williams's continual portamentos can sometimes seem exaggerated. Eri Nakamura's clear-toned pianism is very classically indeed, rough, and enlivens throughout. The trio offers a strong sense of partnership, with the Bernstein bounding along in fine spirit. The Foote shines wonderfully and is well worth discovering. *Jessica Duchen*

PERFORMANCE ★★  
RECORDING ★★



# LABYRINTH

Works by Mozart, Ligeti and JS Bach  
Dudok Quartet Amsterdam  
Resonus RES10180 55:24 mins

The 'Labyrinth' title of this enterprising disc was suggested by



VERSATILE VIOLINIST:  
Matthew Trusler takes  
us down the rabbit hole

the music's intricate counterpoint – from the brilliant fusion of sonata form and fugal writing in the finale of Mozart's G major Quartet K387, to the micropolyphony of Ligeti's Quartet No. 2 and the puzzle-canon (some of them incomplete) written as exercises by Bach. For these last pieces the Dudok Quartet of Amsterdam is joined by a group of colleagues.

Ligeti's Second Quartet, one of his major compositions of the 1960s, is permeated with the type of polyrhythms that were one of his abiding preoccupations at the time. It runs the whole gamut of the various musical characters to which he habitually gave voice – from the central movement's out-of-phase pizzicato repeated notes that sound like a mechanical instrument gone wrong, to the mad outbursts of the *Presto furioso, brutale, tumultuoso* and the fluid, dissolving textures of the outer movements. The Dudok Quartet responds brilliantly to all these facets of Ligeti's persona, and their performance can fully stand comparison with the Arditti Quartet's 1994 recording, which was supervised by the composer. In the work's haunting ending, with its flickering violin tremolos underpinned by delicate sustained octaves from the two lower players, I find this new version if anything superior.

In the Mozart, the Dudok players are perhaps not quite energetic enough to convey the first movement's unusually lively *Allegro vivace assai* marking, but it's a likeable performance nevertheless. Both this and the contrapuntal web of the Bach canons make fascinating companion-pieces to the Ligeti. *Misha Donat*

PERFORMANCE ★★  
RECORDING ★★



# THE KREISLER STORY

Works by Kreisler, plus  
arrangements of Paganini,  
Wieniawski, Tartini, Falla, Poldini,  
Schubert and JS Bach  
Daniel Rohn (violin), Paul Rivinius (piano)  
Berlin Classics 0300784BC 74:02 mins

It is surprising how few violinists have devoted albums exclusively to Kreisler's indelible miniatures. Most notable are Henryk Szeryng (Mercury/Philips), Itzhak Perlman (EMI/Warner), Rodney Friend (EMI/Warner) and Schlomo Mintz (DG), all of whom combine old-world interpretative charm and technical insouciance to captivating effect.

Daniel Rohn may not be a big personality player in the manner of the aforementioned, yet his silvery tonal purity and exquisite subtlety of phrasing (where others are inclined to lay on *cantabile* luxuriance with a musical trowel) has one listening to these radiant gems with fresh ears. If old-school players in the post-Romantic tradition rarely descend below a healthy *mezzo-forte*, Rohn draws upon a full dynamic range just as surely as if he was playing Ravel or Prokofiev. The effect is especially beguiling in such light-as-air sweetmeats as Poldini's *Dancing Doll* and Paganini's *Moto perpetuo*, which float by effortlessly where others are inclined to dig deep in order to extract the maximum amount of tonal depth.

Just occasionally, as in the Falla *Spanish Dance*, one might wish for a touch more flamboyance, although

it is difficult to imagine a more beguiling performance of Bach's E major Partita (a premiere recording) with Kreisler's Rachmaninovian harmonies indulged to perfection by Paul Rivinius. *Julian Haylock*

PERFORMANCE ★★  
RECORDING ★★



# WONDERLAND

Suite by Beamish, R Panufnik,  
Ruders, Turnage, MacRae, H Blake,  
Hough, C Davis, Dubugnon,  
C Matthews, Simcock, Gringolts  
& Read Thomas  
Maureen Lipman (narrator), Matthew  
Trusler (violin), Ashley Wass (piano),  
Elise Smith (triangle)  
Orchid Classics ORC100060 64:12 mins

What an admirable project: all the distinguished contributors – 13 composers, three performers (plus guest triangle), an artist and a famous author – gave their services to help fund a music therapy course at Helen House Children's Hospice. And the important thing here is that it's absolutely fascinating, too. The first musical streak is sometimes a bit opaque, muddy-melancholy being appropriate only at points, and 'All in the Golden Afternoon' was never the most child-friendly part of Carroll's original concept; Louis de Bernières's homage is even more for adults. But I like his mock-moralising commentary on the original book, and soon the musical selection opens up to rich variety.

The ones you'd probably extract if you wanted music to go with a reading of the original would be Carl Davis's Dvořákian humoresque for 'Pig and Pepper', Stephen Hough's parodies of 'Tea for Two' and the Brahms Lullaby for 'A Mad Tea-Party'. Crazy illustrative, too, as punctuated by Maureen Lipman's lively speech, are Paul Ruders's illustration to 'The Rabbit sends in a Little Bill' and Ilya Gringolts's woolly 'Mock Turtle Soup'. Best for depth, with terrific opportunities for tireless pianist Ashley Wass as much as violinist of infinite variety Matthew Trusler, as well as fidelity to Carroll's chameleonic essence is Gwilym Simcock's denouement for 'Who Stole the Tarts?' But it's not a competition – all win prizes, and the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. The two players' introduction in the booklet is eloquently moving, too. *David Nice*

PERFORMANCE ★★  
RECORDING ★★



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2017

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JAPAN





# INSTRUMENTAL

*Natalie Clein* reveals the charm of Ligeti; harpist *Lavinia Meijer* celebrates Philip Glass's 80th anniversary; and *Daniel Grimwood* masters the challenges of Henselt to reveal a great composer

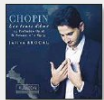
## MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL CHOICE

### Spellbinding Chopin

John Allison enjoys the insightful playing of Julien Brocal



UNFORCED NOVELTY:  
Julien Brocal's Chopin  
is refreshingly natural



**CHOPIN**  
24 Preludes, Op. 28; Piano Sonata  
No. 2, Op. 35 (Marche funèbre)  
Julien Brocal (piano)  
Rubicon RCD1001 64:45 mins

This double debut – Julien Brocal's first CD and the launch of a new label devoted mainly to young artists – proves that even in a very crowded field there are new things to say. Even more to the point is the fact that this young French pianist says them with complete naturalness, for there is nothing contrived or attention-seeking about his approach to such well-known repertoire. His traversal of the 24 Preludes is spellbinding,

and for all the right reasons. Where many dive headlong into the opening C major piece, Brocal is more measured, though he delivers plenty of virtuosity as the cycle unfolds. Despite initial appearances, he is not one for slow tempos, and the famous *Raindrop* prelude flows without hint

#### Julien Brocal brings out the modernity of Chopin's thinking

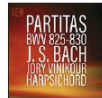
of indulgence. Brocal also stresses the modernity of Chopin's thinking, for example in bringing out the often recessed left-hand harmonies in the A minor piece.

From the Preludes, associated with the disastrous winter Chopin and George Sand spent in Mallorca in 1838–39, Brocal turns his attention to the Sonata in B flat minor, which

Chopin completed the following summer, his first at Sand's Nohant estate. Here the pianist strikes a compelling balance between Romantic volatility and Classical elegance. Each phrase feels carefully considered yet part of a bigger, cumulative picture, and the warm detail in Brocal's touch is captured in superb sound. After a magnificent *Marche funèbre*, the finale sounds less like a ghostly 'wind over the graveyard' than an extended sigh of resignation – Brocal summing things up with another acknowledgement of Chopin's forward-looking vision.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

**ON THE WEBSITE**  
Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website  
[www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com)



**J.S. BACH**  
Partitas Nos 1-6  
Jory Vinikour (harpichord)  
Sono Luminus DSL-92209  
153:34 mins (2 discs)

The title page of Bach's Partitas Nos 1-6, Op. 1 proposes a 'keyboard practice... composed for music lovers to refresh their spirits'. But for players it's hard won 'refreshment'. As Bach's first biographer Forkel observed in 1802, 'anyone who learned to play some of the pieces well could make his way in the world'. Jory Vinikour, the latest to accept their challenges on disc, joins a rich stable of fellow harpsichordists including Christophe Rousset, Andreas Staier and Ton Koopman. His instrument couldn't be more apposite: a copy of a single manual harpsichord built in Hannover some six years after the Partitas were published in 1731, but upscaled to two keyboards. He takes full advantage of its range of colours to vary repeats (adding discreet extra embellishments) but his playing is

always about the music and never self-advertising – indeed his sobriety and no-nonsense directness recalls his sometime teacher Huguette Dreyfus. Although Natalie Clein plays these pieces with same degree of fervour and commitment as on her outstanding Hyperion recording of Bloch's works for cello and orchestra, each of the Suites effectively covers the same musical ground. There's an obvious danger of monotony when the works are side by side, but Clein works hard

The B flat Præludium emerges a touch earnestly while the scintillating Gigue that concludes the first Partita also reveals a furrowed brow; but as the journey unfolds, reservations fall away. Where tempos seem 'cautious' there are palpable compensatory rewards – the D major Gigue, for example, champions exemplary coherence over virtuosic brio. Yet Vinikour is by no means a slave to caution. In the A minor Partita he follows a gutsy 'Burlesca' with a *Scherzo* given a thoroughly muscular workout, before ripping through the Gigue with gusto. An utterly absorbing set that discloses something new at each encounter. *Paul Riley*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



**BLOCH**  
Suites for solo cello  
DALLAPICCOLA  
Ciaccona, Intermezzo e Adagio  
LIGETI

**Sonata for solo cello**  
Natalie Clein (cello)  
Hyperion CDA 68155 64:29 mins

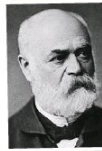
Ernest Bloch composed his three unaccompanied Cello Suites for the charismatic performer Zara Nelsova during the late 1950s when he was living in retirement at Agate Beach in Oregon. In contrast to the exotic and consciously Hebraic modes of expression he exploited in famous works such as *Schelomo*, these Suites are more ascetic and emotionally elusive. They draw inspiration from Bach in their multi-movement structure, which presents a sequence of contrasting slow and declamatory sections with faster and more rhythmically charged material.

Although Natalie Clein plays these pieces with same degree of fervour and commitment as on her outstanding Hyperion recording of Bloch's works for cello and orchestra, each of the Suites effectively covers the same musical ground. There's an obvious danger of monotony when the works are side by side, but Clein works hard

to create as much variety as possible, delivering the more expansive Second Suite with particular ardour. Clein also makes a powerful case for Dallapiccola's *Ciaccona*, *Intermezzo e Adagio*, an extended and often bleak work composed against the traumatic background of the destruction of Italy at the end of the Second World War, which utilises a much more radical harmonic language than Bloch. Undoubtedly the most approachable music in this fascinating programme is Ligeti's Sonata, already a firmly established favourite amongst cellists. Clein's performance is exemplary, bringing requisite warmth and tenderness to the opening 'Dialogo' and propelling the obsessive *moto perpetuo* semiquavers of the 'Capriccio' with tremendous energy and rhythmic drive. *Erik Levi*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

#### BACKGROUND TO...



**Adolf von Henselt**  
(1814-89)

Born in Bavaria, Henselt studied piano under a pupil of Weber's before

making his debut in Munich, aged 15. Ludwig I was sufficiently impressed to send Henselt to Vienna to take lessons with Hummel. However Henselt was more impressed with Thalberg whom he met in Vienna, and whose influence is most evident in Henselt's Etudes, Opp 2 & 5. Schumann rated Henselt as the pianist who 'has given me the greatest pleasure'. In 1838, Henselt went to St Petersburg where he became court pianist and teacher of the Royal family.

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**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



**GLASS**  
Etudes – selection; Koyaanisqatsi; Suite for harp; Lift Off; plus works by Dessner, Muhly, Arnolds, Frahm and Ludwig-Leone  
Lavinia Meijer (harp)  
Sony 8898531432 114:43 mins (2 discs)  
Philip Glass achieves octogenarian status this year, and this CD couplet marks the start of a trickle of commemorative recordings. Glass, one of the founding fathers of minimalism – a style often dismissed by purists and miscommunicated by critics – is perhaps best known for his keyboard and orchestral works. Dutch harpist Lavinia Meijer has been arranging these for her instrument for several years (she recorded *Metamorphosis/The Hours* for Channel Classics in 2012). In this new compilation, Meijer tackles a selection of the piano Etudes; creative and complex pieces that Glass wrote over two decades. Meijer's translation is deeply impressive: the harp's timbre makes it a natural vehicle for this music, but there are practicalities to overcome – such as the chosen range (eg No. 20) and repetitive use of motifs (eg No. 1).

In the second disc, Meijer explores works by five composers inspired by Glass. Nico Muhly is often linked with his American compatriot (the former spent time working as a typesetter in the latter's studio), and two of his early works are featured here: *Quiet Music* and *A Hudson Cycle*, both exquisitely performed by Meijer. A variegated collection (the fleeting *Erl's Waltz* by Olafur Arnalds brings lightness; Ellis Ludwig-Leone's percussive *Night Loops* evokes eerie longing) is bookended by two different arrangements of *Koyaanisqatsi*; the first (by Meijer) is closer to Glass's composition. The second, *Lift Off*, written by Meijer and Arthur Antoine, uses electronic sampling techniques reminiscent of Steve Reich's oeuvre to create an original reimagining of Glass's 1982 soundscape. *Claire Jackson*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

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**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



**HENSELT**  
Piano Works: Etudes, Op. 2 – selection; Improromptus, etc  
Daniel Grimwood (piano)  
Edition Peters EPS 005 78:07 mins

Born in 1814, the Bavarian composer Adolph Henselt (later 'von' Henselt) is in many ways the missing link of Romantic piano music. A pupil of Mozart's student Hummel, he went on to teach the Russian pianist Zverev, whose students included Rachmaninov. His piano music, too, makes crucial connections as the *bel canto* era encounters the 'golden age' of virtuosity. Daniel Grimwood's rather magnificent recording opens with a roller-coaster rattle-dazzle of the 'Concert variations' on a theme from Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*. Anyone who loves Liszt and Godowsky is in for a treat.

Twinkling through a selection of waltzes, nocturnes, improromptus and the powerful Ballade Op. 31, Grimwood brings to the works such limpidity of tone and gentle, nonchalant expression that you could imagine his playing to be effortless, despite the fiendish nature of Henselt's demands. Besides the technical excellence, it is the atmospheres he creates that set this disc apart, bringing a touch of real class to music that deserves, yet rarely receives, such loving attention. Sound quality is close and clear, and Grimwood is credited as his own recording editor. The disc is from the Edition Peters label, in which the branching-out music publisher showcases performers from its own artists' management department, here succeeding to splendid effect. *Jessica Duchon*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

## REISSUES

Reviewed by Jessica Duchon

**BEETHOVEN**  
Piano Sonatas: No. 12 in A flat; No. 17 in D minor (Tempest); No. 22 in F; No. 23 in F minor (Appassionata)  
Sviatoslav Richter (piano)  
Alto ALC 1326 (1960-61) 76:34 mins

Electrifying performances from Sviatoslav Richter, especially in the rapt and mystical elements of the D minor *Tempest* Sonata, plus a hair-raising *Appassionata*. Sound quality varies quite a lot from sonata to sonata.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

**GRIEG**  
Lyric Pieces – selection  
Mikhail Pletnev (piano)  
Alto ALC 1330 (1986/88) 69:36 mins

Recorded in the 1980s and now remastered, these are fine-etched, deeply thought

performances. Pletnev's pianism is quietly spectacular and he finds untold depths within even Grieg's slightest pieces.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

**RACHMANINOV**  
10 Preludes, Op. 23; 13 Preludes, Op. 32  
Yara Bernette (piano)  
Eloquence 482 6031 (1970) 72:24 mins

An intriguing rarity on CD for the first time, Yara Bernette's Rachmaninov Preludes was this

effectively Brazilian pianist's only recording for DG. Her playing heard here is warm, direct and full-blooded.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

**ANTON BAGATOV**  
The Tchaikovsky Competition 1986: works by Tchaikovsky, Scriabin, Chopin, Beethoven and Prokofiev  
Anton Bagatov (piano)  
Melodya MEL CD 10 02464 (1986) 62:43 mins

A strange issue that displays Baragov's fiery playing live at the Tchaikovsky Competition 1986, with presentation seeming to argue against the notion of competitions. Passionate Beethoven, vivid if slightly bumpy Prokofiev.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



# BRIEF NOTES

A review round-up of 24 further new releases, including choral works by Byrd and Britten, Haydn masses and Nielsen's complete organ music



PERFECT ARVO PÄRT:  
The Latvian Radio Choir  
is on dazzling form

**Atilla Symphony No. 2 'Gallipoli – The 57th Regiment'**  
Onur Senler (cello), Angela Ahiskal (soprano); Bilkent Symphony Orchestra/Burak Tüzün  
Naxos 8.579009



The 46-year-old Turkish composer's cinematic elegy to the memory of his nation's 57th Regiment, wiped out during World War I's Gallipoli campaign, is heartfelt and lavishly scored, but the music doesn't quite get to the core of the tragedy. (OC) ★★

**JS Bach Two-part inventions Nos 1-15; Three-part inventions Nos 1-15; Six Little Preludes; Duets Nos 1-4**  
Vladimir Feltsman (piano)  
Nimbus NI 6223



Two-part inventions and three-part sinfonias recorded 17 years apart in very different acoustics. But Feltsman brings a tonal richness and a pleasing sense of line to these miraculous miniatures. (OC) ★★★★★

**JS Bach Organ works II**  
Miklós Teleki (organ)  
Hungaroton HCD 32782



The bright-sounding Aquincum organ in the Hungarian town of Siófok is closely recorded which reveals plenty of detail but can be wearing on the ears, particularly the high principals and mixtures. Teleki's Bach playing, however, is spirited. (OC) ★★

**Beethoven Kreutzer Sonata**  
(arr. Czerny and Franchomme)  
**Schnabel Sonata for solo cello**  
Moór Ballade in E  
Samuel Magill (cello),  
Beth Levin (piano)  
Navona Records NV6024



I'm not altogether convinced by the Kreutzer Sonata arranged for cello, despite the distinguished arrangers and performers. The atonal solo sonata by Schnabel is another tough listen, but you couldn't ask for a more committed performance. (RF) ★★

**Byrd • Britten Choral works**  
The Choirs of Jesus College, Cambridge; Bertie Baigent & Jordan Wong (organ); Mark Williams (director) Signum SIGCD48



These are good performances of two British composers by both choirs of Jesus College, Cambridge. The College Choir, which uses female undergraduate singers, gains the edge over the choristers in a focused, sparkling performance of Byrd's *Laudibus in sanctis*. (EC) ★★

**Casella • Donatoni • Ghedini • Malipiero Works** by Casella, Donatoni, Ghedini, fMalipiero Orchestra della Svizzera italiana/Damian Iorio  
Naxos 8.573748



Colourful and characterful playing by this Lugano-based orchestra makes this exploration of music by 20th-century Italian composers a pleasure. Casella's quirky and quick *Divertimento per fulvia* is a particular treat. (EC) ★★★★★

**Downes Orchestral works**  
Czech Phil/Ondřej Vrabeč  
Artesmon AS 744-2



There's a Sibelian quality to Downes's work – wide open spaces that both entrance and unnerv. The Czech Phil gives fine performances. (OC) ★★★★★

**Guretzky Cello Concertos etc**  
Harmonious Society of Tickle-Fiddle Gentlemen Chandos CHAN 0816



Writing for a cello-obsessed count in the early 18th-century, Guretzky is a composer well worth exploring. These performances of his concertos are every bit as frisky and fun as the music itself. (JP) ★★★★★

**Haydn Paukenmesse; Nelson Mass**  
City of London Choir; RPO/  
Hilary Davan Wetton RPO RPO SP 054



Refreshing to hear Haydn on modern instruments – fast movements take splendid flight, although slow tempos can drag under the weight of the ensemble. (OC) ★★

**Kodály • Dohnányi Chamber works for strings**  
Smith, Hayes (violin), Silverthorne (viola), Jenkinson (cello)  
Resonus RES10181 mins



Lively, refined performances of two significant 20th-century Hungarians. Folk music sparked Kodály's imagination, while Dohnányi's joyful *Serenade* has hints of Brahms. (RF) ★★★★★

**Mozart Arias**  
Anett Britsch (soprano); Munich Radio Orchestra/De Marchi  
Orfeo 903 161 A



Appearing in Covent Garden's forthcoming *Mitridate Re di Ponto*, this versatile young soprano records the great Mozart/Da Ponte arias, attractively but with some inevitable sameness. (MSR) ★★★★★

**Nielsen Organ Works**  
Bine Bryndorf (organ),  
Torsten Nielsen (baritone)  
Dacapo 6.220635



Interspersed with songs, this is an indispensable introduction to Nielsen's organ music. *Commotio* is the major work on this disc, but there is plenty of interest elsewhere. (JP) ★★★★★

**Pärt Choral works**  
Latvian Radio Choir/Sigvards Klava  
Online ODE 1286-2



You'll be hard-pushed to find a disc of Pärt choral music more enjoyable than this. Immaculate control and balance does not mean lack of drama – there's intensity and vibrancy too. (JP) ★★★★★

**Prado Cartas Celestes Nos 4-6**  
Aleyson Scopel (piano)  
Grand Piano GP710



Here are three chunky instalments of the Brazilian composer Almeida Prado's celestial 18-movement piano cycle, convincingly performed by Scopel. (RF) ★★★★★

**Saint-Saëns • Ravel • Gershwin Piano concertos**  
Andrew von Oeyen (piano); PKF Prague Philharmonia/Villaume  
Warner Classics 9029590848



Von Oeyen is a terrific player with a good sense of drama and mischief; the orchestra could do with fewer historicists and more Gallic suavity. It's all a bit strait-laced. (OC) ★★

**Schumann Cello Concerto; Symphony No. 2**  
Jan Vogler (cello); Dresden Festival Orchestra/Ivor Bolton  
Sony Classical 88985372122



Vogler finds a deep, powerful sound for the Cello Concerto contrasting with the light touch of the Dresden orchestra, which also gives us a fulsome Symphony No. 2. (EC) ★★★★★

**Vasks Flute Concerto; Symphony No. 3**  
Krenberga (flute); Liepāja Symphony Orchestra/Lakstiga  
Wergo WER 7349 2



Vasks's fraught Third Symphony shares the same soundworld as Shostakovich and, here and there, Khachatryan. The Flute Concerto is a more melodic and mellow affair. Excellent performances. (JP) ★★★★★

**Composing the Island A century of music in Ireland, 1916-2016**  
Various artists RTE CD153



Taking us from Elgarian orchestral bombast and lyrical chamber works to pieces written just last year, this is a fascinating journey through Irish musical history. (RF) ★★★★★

**Confessions of Faith Choral Concertos by**  
Bortoliansky & Schnittke  
MDR Rundfunkchor/Risto Joost  
Genuin GEN17450



A compelling coupling of Russian composers. The choir sings with flair and passion – the Schnittke has stunning moments – though with the occasional rough edge. (JP) ★★★★★

**Consolation Works by Lysenko, Kosenko, Skoryk et al**  
Natalya Pasichnyk (piano) et al  
BIS BIS-2222



Pianist Natalya Pasichnyk and friends explore rare gems from the time of Soviet occupation of Ukraine. Enlightening booklet notes and strong performances. (EC) ★★★★★

**Dansa Works by JS Bach, Henryson and Sandstrom**  
Zilliacus (violin), Willemark (voice)  
BIS BIS-2159 (hybrid CD/SACD)



The D minor Partita's hypothetical chorale roots are explored via interwoven chorale quotations performed by a Swedish folk singer. It's strange but interesting. (RF) ★★★★★

**Homeward Bound Songs**  
Angus Benton (treble), Archer (piano)  
Convivium Records CR035



A 2015 Radio 2 Young Composer of the Year, Benton has a terrific, crystal clear voice. Sadly, this disc of bland song arrangements does him few favours. (JP) ★★

**Revive Opera arias**  
Elina Garanča; Orquestra de la Comunitat Valenciana/R Abbado  
Deutsche Grammophon 479 5937



The mezzo is on fruity, rich form in French, Russian and German arias, exploring 'strong women in moments of weakness'. Her Mignon is especially moving. (RF) ★★

**Sequenza Ysaÿe, Brustad et al**  
Janusz Wawrowski (violin)  
Warner Classics 08256 4 65065 5 9



This fast and furious recording offers a whirlwind tour of solo violin repertoire. Wawrowski is at his best in magical Brustad and virtuosic Ysaÿe. (EC) ★★★★★

**Reviewers: Oliver Candy (OC), Elinor Cooper (EC), Rebecca Franks (RF), Jeremy Pound (JP), Mike Scott Rohan (MSR)**

## The month in box-sets



BIRTHDAY NOTES:  
Turkish pianist  
İdil Biret turns 75

## Cello treats and piano magic

This month's round-up showcases two great cellists

Some enticing cello offerings this month include an invitation to explore the history of the string instrument, from its sketchy 17th-century beginnings to the glory days of the 19th and early 20th centuries. A handsome new book – plus five accompanying CDs – from Alpha Classics (*Alpha 890*) looks to be quite a dense affair, with accompanying recordings from his time at RCA don't include the Elgar, but a 12-CD box (*88985312572*) does contain some interesting repertoire including Janáček's *Pohádka*, Bargiel's *Adagio* for Cello and Orchestra and a disc devoted entirely to John Tavener. Zipping back 300 years or so, Ricerca's *Musica al Time of Louis XIV* is a lavish affair,

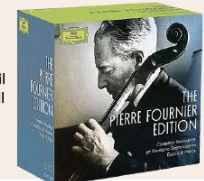
**Pierre Fournier gives rich and sumptuous performances**

with a book and separate volume of eight CDs (*RIC 108*). And it's not all Lully and recordings from his time at RCA don't include the Elgar, but a 12-CD box (*88985312572*) does contain some interesting repertoire including Janáček's *Pohádka*, Bargiel's *Adagio* for Cello and Orchestra and a disc devoted entirely to John Tavener.

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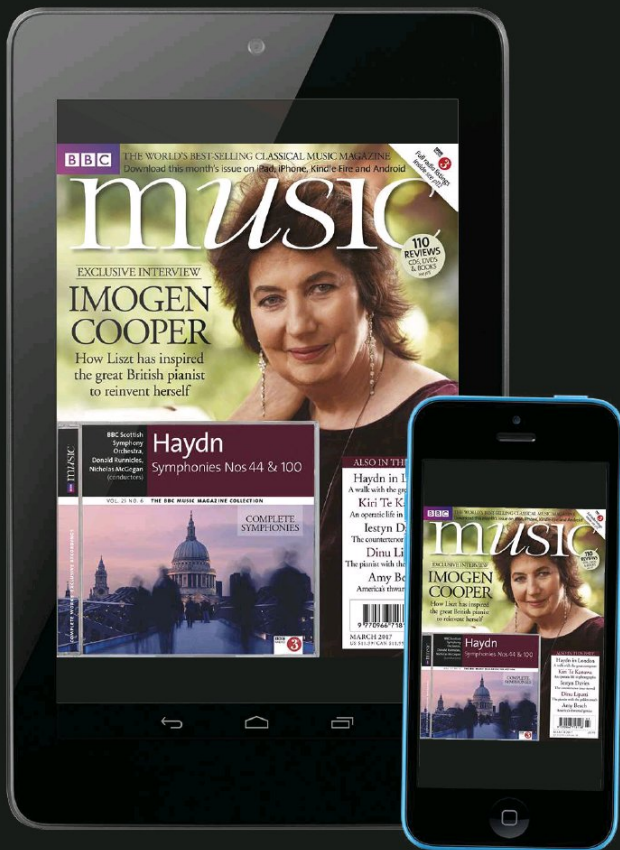


Rameau, either. Nice to see the rarely-performed organ masses by Nicolas de Grigny, Louis Couperin and Louis Marchand getting an airing among the chamber, opera and orchestral music. For such a colourful subject matter, however, the book could have done with a few more images.

Lastly this month, 75-year-old Turkish pianist İdil Biret's career is celebrated in a 13-disc survey of Bach and Mozart in recordings from 1949-2016 (*IBA 8.501206*).

The selections may be slightly random, but the performances are refined and, in particular, her Mozart is beautifully articulated.





## HEAR FROM THE TEAM



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# WORLD

Top albums include vocal music from a 'forgotten' south Russian village; plus cellist *Jean-Guihen Queyras* joins Persian *zarb* drummers

## MUSIC WORLD CHOICE

### Moor-ish music

*Michael Church* enjoys Paul Bowles's Moroccan field recordings, on CD at last



**RACE AGAINST TIME:** Paul Bowles travelled Morocco to record a disappearing culture



### MUSIC OF MOROCCO

Recorded by Paul Bowles

Dust-To-Digital DTD-46  
270-24 mins (4 CDs)

The American record label Dust-To-Digital won critical acclaim with *Longing for the Past*, its treasury of archive recordings from South-East Asia, and it's no surprise that this new box should be up for a Grammy. But Dust-To-Digital's secret is not just beautiful presentation (this time the notes come in a leather-bound book) – it's the sheer unexpectedness of the musical content. In 1959 the

American composer, poet and novelist Paul Bowles (author of *The Sheltering Sky*) criss-crossed Morocco making recordings of traditional music for the Library of Congress. But we have had to wait until now for a generous selection of those recordings to be edited and published by the ethnomusicologist Philip Schuyler, complete with Bowles's own photos and notes.

Much of this music was already disappearing when it was recorded; Bowles described his project as 'a fight against time'. The mastering of the tapes is so good that the *gnawa* choruses, synagogue chants and self-accompanied bands have a salty immediacy: a fascinating soundworld.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



**VOXTRA**  
The Encounter of Vocal Heritage  
Heritage Muziekpubliek 08  
65:26 mins



**UZBEKISTAN:**  
*Spiritual & Sufi chant*  
Ensemble Yasavi Ocora  
C 560268 76:20 mins



**DISCOVER MUSIC FROM THE PACIFIC**  
Various artists Arc Music  
EUCD 2662 61:04 mins



**WARSAWA WSCHODNIA**  
Laweczka available from folk.pl 118:53 mins



**HAWNIYAZ**  
Kayhan Kalhor, Salman Gamberov, Cemil Qocgiri  
HMC905277 56:58 mins



**THRACE: SUNDAY MORNING SESSIONS**  
Jean-Guihen Queyras, Bijan & Keyvan Chemirani  
HMC902242 63:08 mins

It isn't just the confusing liner notes, it's the whole caboodle of *VOXTRA's The Encounter of Vocal Heritage* which leaves one disoriented.

Because although this group eschews 'fusion', claiming that the very different musics it represents remain clear and distinct, one really doesn't know where one is as they deliver their songs. But since those songs are marvellous, that's OK by me. They came together in Belgium, but their backgrounds span the globe: Albanian iso-polyphony, Sardinian *cantu a tenore*, beko blues from Madagascar, Finnish *yoik* singing, and Belgian *recit chanté*. The Albanian and Sardinian forms provide a rock-solid foundation over which singers from the other regions add their effects, and the whole thing has a remarkable integrity of purpose (★★★★★).

You know precisely where you are with *UZBEKISTAN: SPIRITUAL AND SUFI CHANT*. Against a background of contrasting lute timbres, plus

spike-fiddle, *ney* flute, and simple percussion, two of this Central Asian country's leading cantors deliver ecstatically devotional songs. This art form may now only have a small following in its own country, but it speaks out of a culture whose roots go back many centuries, and which is one of the most gracefully civilised manifestations of Islam (★★★★★).

The explorer and composer David Fanshawe (1942-2010) left many musical legacies, of which *African Sanctus* is the best known, but the most significant one consists of thousands of hours of indigenous music which he recorded during his ten-year odyssey through the islands of the Pacific. Many tracks on *DISCOVER MUSIC FROM THE PACIFIC* were recorded by him: welcome rites, entertainments and celebrations, often laced with the sound of the sea (★★★★★).

The folk music of Russia remains surprisingly little explored, given its richness: communism in China eradicated forever huge swathes of indigenous music, but not so in Russia, which is still full of little local traditions. And it's thanks to a dedicated group of Polish ethnographers that we now have what are probably the last recordings of the muscular polyphony of women singers in the south Russian village of Podseredneye. They made many visits to establish trust, and the music they brought back foreshadows the impending death of that tradition, as young people have no interest in it. *WARSAWA WSCHODNIA's Laweczka* represents a most constructive tribute: alongside the Podseredneye singers' tracks are the Poles' own renditions, which they now perform on tour (★★★★★).

We end where we began, with two further examples of genuine fusion, the first led by the Iranian *kamancheh* maestro Kayhan Kalhor. The opening track of *HAWNIYAZ* was recorded without any rehearsal, the morning after a concert at the Morgenland Festival in Osnabrück, and it's a lovely melding of piano (Salman Gamberov), tenbur lute (Cemil Qocgiri), song (Aynur), and spike-fiddle. These superb musicians weave a very powerful spell (★★★★★).

As do cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras, lyra-master Sokratis Sinopoulos and zarb drummers Bijan and Keyvan Chemirani. *THRACE: SUNDAY MORNING SESSIONS* reflects a truly inspirational coming-together of French avant-gardism, Macedonian fiddling, and Maghrebi rhythms (★★★★★). *Michael Church*



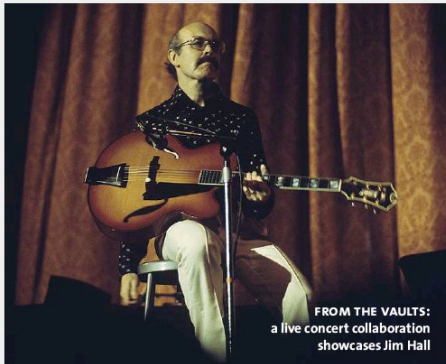
# JAZZ

An inventive, small-scale release by saxist *Trish Clowes*; a wide survey of *Jazz in Italian Cinema*; plus the return of Scottish trumpeter *Colin Steele*

## BBC MUSIC JAZZ CHOICE

### Meeting of minds

*Garry Booth* enjoys a rediscovered recording of guitarist *Jim Hall* and bassist *Red Mitchell*



FROM THE VAULTS:  
a live concert collaboration  
showcases Jim Hall



#### JIM HALL & RED MITCHELL

**Valse Hot: Sweet Basil 1978**  
Jim Hall (guitar), Red Mitchell  
(double bass)  
ArtistShare ASO148 50 mins

The original *Jim Hall/Red Mitchell* LP, a live recording of the duo made in 1978, is a hard-to-find collector's item. Lucky, then, that previously unreleased tapes from the same shows at Manhattan's Sweet Basil club were discovered by chance in Jim Hall's apartment after his death in 2013.

The lovingly remastered reel-to-reel tapes captured a priceless gig of the sort that's rarely seen today: an intimate, informal masterclass in improvisation by world-class players in front of a small rapt audience.

The partnership and place were perfect, Hall's mellow, luminous guitar lines swinging in tandem with Mitchell's poetic, melodious bass through a programme of choice standards. There are delicious digressions and diversions, but not a dead spot nor blind alley to be found.

Whether it's tiptoeing through the haunting ballad 'Alone Together' or making a detailed, deep blue study of 'God Bless the Child', the interplay is simply sublime.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★

Hear an excerpt of this recording at [www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com)



#### TRISH CLOWES

##### My Iris

Trish Clowes (sax), Chris Montague (guitar), Ross Stanley (piano and Hammond), James Maddren (drums)  
Basho SRCD 53-2 52 mins

Trish Clowes is a former Radio 3 New Generation Artist, but this is a distinction she has no need to trade on as this latest CD demonstrates that all earlier promise continues to be roundly realised. Her previous album, *Pocket Compass* (reviewed Christmas 2014) explored the potential in mixing jazz line-ups with classical ensembles and integrating composition and improvisation. With this latest album she continues to explore quirky harmonies and textures with a group that looks fairly conventional in jazz terms, but is used in distinctive ways.

Like most contemporary saxophonists, she tends to use the soprano rather too much for my taste, but that's my problem. On each of her saxes she continues to arrive at satisfyingly foreseeable destinations by surprising, inventive and absorbing routes. The inspirations behind the compositions (all hers except one) are varied and thought-provoking, realised in engrossing group performances that engage the head, heart and feet. *Barry Witherden*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



#### JAZZ IN ITALIAN CINEMA

**Remastered Original Soundtracks**  
Giorgio Gaslini, Chet Baker, John Lewis etc  
Jazz on Film JFO03 (vinyl only) 38 mins

Italian cinema has an intriguing history, while the development of

jazz in Italy is a direct reflection of a changing political and cultural environment in a period bracketed by the roots and aftermath of two world wars. The confluence of these two art forms during the late 1950s and early '60s is demonstrated admirably on this enjoyable vinyl LP of thoroughly atmospheric music, running the gamut from cool intimacy to rumbustious big band arrangements.

There are a few familiar names to reassure the uncertain Anglo-Saxon jazz listener, such as Chet Baker, John Lewis and Giorgio Gaslini, while the accompanying notes and documentation do an excellent job of preparing the listener for the programme. This is the label's first release on vinyl, and the sonic results only lose a star due to the vagaries of some of the source material; the remastering is faultless and the bombproof 180gm vinyl pressing is truly mellifluous. *Roger Thomas*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★

**RECORDING** ★★★★★



#### COLIN STEELE QUINTET

##### Even in the Darkest Places

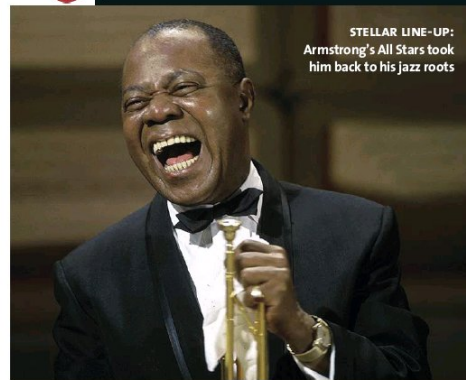
Colin Steele (trumpet), Michael Buckley (sax), Dave Milligan (piano), Calum Gourlay (bass), Stu Ritchie (drums)  
Gadgemo Records GAD002CD 61 mins  
It's been a while since we've reviewed a disc by Scottish trumpeter Colin Steele and that's because he's been recovering his technique after some bad advice damaged his ability to play, taking him out of action for some years. This new album is worth the wait. The line-up is less overtly Celtic than predecessor *Sramadh* – without fiddles and pipes – with a focus now on the core jazz quintet.

That said, the harmonies are still laced with his trademark Celtic lilt, fused with his own gentle tone. 'Looking for Nessie' presents a breezy Loch-side jaunt, spurred on by inventive shifts of bass rhythm from quinter newcomer Gourlay, while 'Independence Song' is a swinging highlight, with its catchy, soulful piano introduction from Steele's long-time collaborator Milligan. Elsewhere, saxist Buckley interjects bebop-style solos. Harking back to the small-band formula of 2005's *Through the Waves*, this disc is a welcome return to form. *Neil McKim*

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**RECORDING** ★★★★★



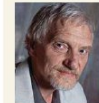
## JAZZ STARTER COLLECTION



STELLAR LINE-UP:  
Armstrong's All Stars took  
him back to his jazz roots

### No. 203 LOUIS ARMSTRONG III

*Geoffrey Smith*, presenter of *Geoffrey Smith's Jazz*, on the trumpeter's late triumph, the All Stars band



Seventy years ago, Louis Armstrong delighted hardcore Satchmo-lovers by appearing in concert with a small group, the kind of New Orleans combo with which he'd revolutionised jazz in the 1920s, rather than the pedestrian big band he'd been leading through the 1930s and '40s. It was what everyone had been waiting for, not least Armstrong himself, a return to the style of his greatest achievements, a free-wheeling format made for mutual inspiration and joy.

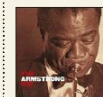
Its success also presented, as his manager Joe Glaser saw at once, a golden business opportunity. Glaser sacked the big band and launched Louis Armstrong and the All Stars, the ensemble with which Armstrong became synonymous, touring the world almost until his death in 1971. The band introduced a new generation of listeners to Satchmo's genius and charisma, which shine through *The Armstrong Box*, a Storyville set chronicling the All Stars in live broadcasts and concerts from 1947-67, in seven CDs and one DVD.

Though in later years the band's shows came to be criticised as formulaic, its first line-ups are

starry indeed, with the kind of creative fire you'd expect from a gathering of jazz immortals. Jack Teagarden, Earl Hines, Barney Bigard, Big Sid Catlett: these are natural peers of the Armstrong realm, following his clarion lead in such classics as 'Basin Street Blues' and 'Muskrat Ramble'. Teagarden and Satchmo were particularly close – like brothers, the trumpeter said – playing and singing with shared warmth and wit.

But throughout, Louis reigns supreme. Whether delivering jazz standards or pop tunes, his musicality and power are remarkable, making everything he touches his own, illuminating the simplest phrase. His showmanship was as natural as his musicianship; in both he reached out to his audiences, as you can hear in their applause. And you can hear why younger musicians, even if sceptical of Louis the entertainer, remained awed by Louis the master of jazz and life force – in the words of his biographer, 'less a man than a miracle'.

#### CD CHOICE



**The Armstrong Box**  
Storyville  
108 8609



#### CHRISTMAS 2016

An exclusive interview with Eric Whitacre, the composer who has got thousands singing; plus a festive CD from The King's Singers.

#### JANUARY 2017

We envisage how the world of classical music will look in 20 years' time; plus Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* on the cover CD.

#### FEBRUARY 2017

Join us as we celebrate the 80th birthday of composer Philip Glass with an exclusive interview; plus a CD of his Tenth Symphony.



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# BOOKS

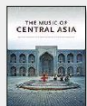
Folk musics of Central Asia made accessible in a landmark volume by the world leading scholar Theodore Levin; plus the latest instalment in Ivy Press's '30-second' series turns to classical music, with mixed results

## MUSIC BOOKS CHOICE

### Enchantment from the East

Michael Church welcomes a long-overdue book on Central Asian music

**VIRTUOSITY ON THE STEPPE:**  
a Kazakh musician playing a  
dombra – the long-necked  
lute of the Turkic people



#### THE MUSIC OF CENTRAL ASIA

Ed. Theodore Levin,  
Saida Daukeyeva &  
Elmira Köchümkulova  
Indiana University Press  
ISBN 978-0253-01751-2 704pp (hbk)

This magnificent book has been many years in gestation, but it has been worth the wait. Its editor-in-chief, Theodore Levin, is the world's leading authority on the music of Central Asia, and any region's musicians would be lucky to receive such close and authoritative scrutiny. But this music cries out for such treatment: until the collapse

of the Soviet empire, few outsiders were granted access to it, and its richness is unparalleled.

Levin and his team of 27 writers are all either ethnographers or musicians, or both: they offer a wealth of insights into a huge variety of forms and styles, each rooted in its social and cultural context.

**The chapters are short, vivid and packed with human interest**

Their intention is to provide a textbook for students both in the West and in Central Asia, where much traditional music withered under Soviet rule, but accessible presentation means no prior knowledge is required to enjoy it.

And enjoy is the word. The chapters are short, vivid and

packed with human interest, and the recordings and videos on the associated website are kaleidoscopically diverse. We encounter the cloistered mystery of *maqom* in medieval cities, and many kinds of virtuosity from the nomadic tribes on the Kazakh *dombra* lute, and – with close-ups of lips and fingers – on the jaw harp which is the region's most ubiquitous instrument. Funeral laments, shamanic recitations, and wedding songs in Kyrgyzstan; Karalpak ballads, and bridal celebrations in Bukhara. I was riveted by the contrapuntal sweetness extracted from the Turkmen two-string *dotar* lute, and by the melismatic beauty of an unaccompanied *folak* sung in remote Badakshan, whose entire melody unfolds within the interval of a single whole tone. ★★★★★



#### 30-SECOND CLASSICAL MUSIC

Ed. Joanne Cormac

Ivy Press ISBN 9781782404255; (hbk) 160pp

'The 50 most significant genres, composers and innovations, each explained in half a minute.' It's a bold claim made by *30-Second Classical Music*, so I decided to put it to the test. All being equal, if I started at 11.35am, I should have done my whistletop chronological tour of Western art music, from Pythagoras to Hans Zimmer, by midday. And I wasn't so far off: after 25 minutes of reading, skipping the extra artist profiles and glossaries, I had reached the section on the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A quarter of an hour more did the trick, averaging out at 48 seconds per explanation – far less catchy than the actual title. Still, the underlying point is that this history is neatly bitesize, if that's what you want, and written in straightforward prose by well-respected writers. Each entry is illustrated on the facing page, sometimes helpfully, sometimes not.

That's the format, how about the content? Great composers are interspersed with explorations of genre, although there's no interrogation of how the Western canon has come about or exploration of who it leaves out. There are one or two questionable (if not downright wrong) claims: Stravinsky is named as one of the most notable symphonists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, for instance. That same list doesn't include Mahler or Bruckner. Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony is described as a tribute to Napoleon, without any discussion of the withdrawn dedication. In the '3-second biographies' that accompany each entry, Anton Rubinstein and Franz Schubert appear twice, which seems rather redundant. And then let me return to those profiles and glossaries. Each era features an artist, presumably to encourage people to go and listen. But Clara Schumann – oddly placed in the 'Classical' era to go with 'The Piano' entry – wasn't around for the advent of recording, and when it comes to the six modern artists featured, there are no listening suggestions. *The Rough Guide to Classical Music* may take up more of your seconds, but it's a much more useful volume. Rebecca Franks ★★

# AUDIO

This month we welcome our new hi-fi expert *Chris Haslam* to help you choose the very best audio and video kit for your recorded music

## MUSIC CHOICE

### NOISE-CANCELLING HEADPHONES Sony MDR-1000X £330

For me, noise-cancelling headphones are up there with the dishwasher in terms of life-enhancing innovation. For the last ten years, I've almost exclusively travelled with Bose, but on a recent long-haul flight my allegiance switched to Sony.

The MDR-1000Xs are nothing short of brilliant, and better than anything I've ever experienced for minimising engine noise, chatter and toddler grumbles. Many ANC (active noise-cancelling) headphones create a surreal vacuum effect but it's not noticeable here. Instead you're left with quiet, impenetrable calm.

The headphones are light and plush, fold neatly into a reinforced case and have a 20-hour battery life, reliable Bluetooth connection and a 3.5mm cable for plugging into in-flight entertainment systems. They also boast something called a Personal NC Optimiser function, which essentially tunes the noise-cancelling features to the shape of your head. It sounds like a gimmick but it works. And the tricks don't end there. Place your right hand over one ear-cup

and the noise-cancelling cuts out allowing you to hear the outside world at full volume.

The only weak link is the touch-sensitive ear pad controls which are needlessly complicated, but the sound quality soon makes amends. Being able to hear anything clearly on a plane is a bonus, but the MDR-1000Xs offer an exceptional amount of space, and a silky playback whatever genre. No single frequency dominates – instead, you get an even spread across high, mid and bass tones, even when listening to British Airways's on-board classical collection. I'm not sure Schoenberg has ever sounded so enticing at 35,000ft.

sony.co.uk ★★★★★



**IN FOR THE LONG HAUL:**  
the Sony MDR-1000Xs are  
ideal travel companions



### IMPRESSIVE SOUNDBASE Cambridge Audio TV5 v2 £300

Modern televisions look gorgeous, but as designs get thinner the space for speakers shrinks and sound quality suffers. If you've ever tried to listen to a live concert, or stream a digital radio station through the TV, you'll know just how flat playback can be.

The Cambridge Audio TV5 v2 soundbase (above) sits neatly beneath your TV set and, using either an optical or hi-resolution HDMI cable, hijacks the audio output and vastly improves its

sound quality. The two front-facing 5.7cm speakers dramatically improve dialogue, while the dual down-firing 16.5cm subwoofers enhance action sequences at lower frequencies. Together they produce a superb full-range of frequencies, with 180-degree room-filling sound wherever you are seated.

Watching Sir Simon Rattle conduct the London Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Haydn's *The Seasons*, on Sky Arts, the TV5 v2 managed to deliver an immersive and refined, room-filling performance. *Spectre*,

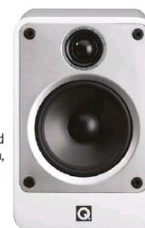
the most recent James Bond movie, also sounded spectacular.

The design, however, is a little basic, lacking a digital display and a little finesse, but given there's also CD-quality aptX Bluetooth streaming it can double up as a discrete

wireless music system.  
cambridgeaudio.com  
★★★★

### LUXURY BLUETOOTH HEADPHONES KEF Porsche Design Motion One £219.95

Whatever misgivings I had with the neckband design, I can't fault the sound quality of these in-ear Bluetooth headphones (top, right) that boast



aptX CD-quality streaming and ten hours of battery life. Listening to the opening minutes of Elgar's Cello Concerto, even as a lowly MP3, there's superb detail to the strings, without the high-end ever sounding shrill.

But what about the design? The build quality is flawless, with a rubber neckband that is comfortable and practical, and earbuds that fit beautifully. The look, however, is an acquired taste.

It's a minor niggle, but the cables are a few inches too long, meaning they're prone to unexpected yanking when being worn, and look a little too much like a spectacle chain when they're not. That said, I've barely taken them off in weeks, such is the richly rewarding performance.

uk.kef.com ★★★★★

### BOOKSHELF SPEAKERS

#### Q Acoustics Concept 20 (£379 per pair, £220 for stands)

Since launching in 2006, Q Acoustics has ruffled plenty of audiophile feathers with its exemplary entry-level speakers, and nothing epitomises the company's success like the Concept 20 bookshelf speakers. They've won every award that matters and continue to offer unbeatable value for money.

As standalone speakers, they're unobtrusive, well-built and refined. The effortless presentation is helped by the Gelcore design, where two cabinets are sandwiched between a gel that disperses unwanted kinetic energy as heat. The result is an exceptionally stable sound from the 125mm woofer (bass) and 25mm tweeter (treble) speakers and a budget-defying performance.

But if you want the best possible sound I'd recommend buying the stands. They're not cheap and the design isn't exactly interior-friendly but they boast the same Gelcore construction and elevate the Canon 20s well beyond the combined £600 investment. qacoustics.co.uk ★★★★★



# LIVE CHOICE

## 20 UNMISSABLE EVENTS FOR MARCH 2017

BBC Music Magazine's choice of the UK's best concerts and operas, plus a guide to Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit*

For detailed concert listings visit [www.classical-music.com/whats-on](http://www.classical-music.com/whats-on)

### 1 ROYAL NORTHERN SINFONIA

Sage Gateshead, 1 March  
Tel: +44 (0)191 443 4661  
Web: [www.sagegateshead.com](http://www.sagegateshead.com)  
It's a case of 'oh, to be in England' when Bradley Creswick directs an all-English line-up that is ring-fenced by Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* and Vaughan Williams's *Tallis Fantasia*. While Creswick takes wing with Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending*, Tippett is represented in *Selling's Round* and Finzi's *Clarinet Concerto* features Timothy Orpen as soloist.

RHAPSODIC REED:  
Timothy Orpen  
gives Finzi's *Clarinet Concerto* an airing



BENJAMIN HART, MARCO BORGREVE

### 2 GALA PIANO ALL-NIGHTER

Town Hall, Birmingham, 3 & 4 March  
Tel: +44 (0)121 780 3333  
Web: [www.thsh.co.uk](http://www.thsh.co.uk)  
As if performing Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* (see p100) wasn't enough, 'olympianist' Anthony Hewitt is pedalling overnight from London to Birmingham, before squaring up to the challenge at 6.30am as part of an eye-catching night-long gala. Opening at Birmingham Town Hall, with the complete Chopin Nocturnes from Gergely Bognányi, the gala numbers Peter Donohoe among the night owls.

### 3 TAMARA STEFANOVICH

Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff, 5 March  
Tel: +44 (0)29 2039 1391  
Web: [www.rwcmd.ac.uk](http://www.rwcmd.ac.uk)  
Ahead of a masterclass the following day, Serbian pianist Tamara Stefanovich schedules a typically imaginative and demanding solo recital that splices some of Rachmaninov's *Études-Tableaux* and Ligeti's *Études*. Excerpts from Kurtág's *Játékok*, meanwhile, separate Bach's D minor violin Chaconne (as transcribed for piano by Busoni) and Liszt's *Variations on 'Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen'*.

### 4 NHK SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA TOKYO

Southbank Centre, London, 6 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7960 4200  
Web: [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)  
Paavo Järvi has been chief conductor of Japan's flagship orchestra since 2015 – the latest in a line mustering Charles Dutoit, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Tadaaki Otaka among the most recent. For the London stopover in a seven-concert European tour, Toru Takemitsu's plangent Requiem for Strings prefaces Mahler's A minor Symphony, the fate-filled No. 6.

### 5 NETHERLANDS KAMMERKOOR

Cadogan Hall, London, 8 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7730 4500  
Web: [www.cadoganhall.com](http://www.cadoganhall.com)  
Britten's Auden-setting *Hymn to St Cecilia* and one of his last works, *Sacred and Profane*, bookend the Dutch Chamber Choir's contribution to Cadogan Hall's enterprising blue-chip choral series. Conductor Peter Dijkstra features works by Lars Johan Werle and takes to the streets with Berio's exuberant *Cries of London*.

### 6 ACADEMY OF ANCIENT MUSIC

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, 9 March  
Tel: +44 (0)121 780 3333  
Web: [www.thsh.co.uk](http://www.thsh.co.uk)  
Directing the Academy of Ancient Music for the first time, viola da gambist extraordinaire Jordi Savall dips a toe in Handel's *Water Music*. But the programme also inclines heavily towards France, starting at the Court of the Sun King, Louis XIV, where a Suite from Lully's *Alceste* paves the way to music from Marais's *Alycyone* and Rameau's operatic swansong *Les Boréades*.

### 7 HALLÉ ORCHESTRA

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, 9, 11 & 12 March  
Tel: +44 (0)161 907 9000  
Web: [www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk](http://www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk)  
Elgar and the Hallé have a long-standing bond. The orchestra gave the premiere of the First Symphony in 1908 and music director Sir Mark Elder maintains a peerless Elgarian pedigree, formerly bumished by Sir John Barbirolli. He presides over a three-day Elgarfest that delves into *Grania and Diarmid*, goes 'Beyond the Score' of the *Enigma Variations*, and ends on a heavenly note with *The Dream of Gerontius*.

### 8 BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Concert Hall, Perth, 10 March  
Tel: +44 (0)1738 621031  
Web: [www.horsecross.co.uk](http://www.horsecross.co.uk)  
James MacMillan and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra introduce Scotland to his Fourth Symphony on 30 March, but there's more MacMillan earlier as violist Lawrence Power revisits the Concerto he premiered in 2014. To left and right are George Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad* and Elgar's protean Second Symphony. Richard Farnes conducts.

### 9 TOGNETTI RESIDENCY

Milton Court Concert Hall, London, 11, 13 & 14 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7638 8891  
Web: [www.barbican.org.uk](http://www.barbican.org.uk)  
Milton Court's artist-in-residence Richard Tognetti returns for three contrasting programmes at the head of his Australian Chamber Orchestra. An audio-visual tribute to Australia's underwater reefs prompts music ranging from Rameau to rock band Alice in Chains; works by Roger Smalley and Péteris Vasks flank the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante; and Tognetti signs off with his own orchestral transcriptions of Beethoven and Brahms.

### 10 WAGNER'S DIE MEISTERSINGER

Royal Opera House, London, 11-31 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7304 4000  
Web: [www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)  
What with Richard Jones's Welsh National Opera staging, and David McVicar's for Glyndebourne, the UK has enjoyed a golden age of late when it comes to Wagner's 'guided' comedy. Now Covent Garden steps up to the plate with Kasper Holten's farewell as director of opera. Antonio Pappano conducts a cast headed by Bryn Terfel as Hans Sachs.

### 11 HANDEL'S PARTENOPE

The Coliseum, London, 15-24 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7845 9300  
Web: [www.eno.org](http://www.eno.org)  
Relocated to 1920s Paris and inspired by the surrealism of Man Ray, Christopher Alden's Olivier Award-winning 2008 production of Handel's emotional rollercoaster returns ardent Handelian Christian Curnyn to the pit, and mezzo-soprano Patricia Bardon to the stage (though as Arsace this time round). Soprano Sarah Tynan is the alluring Neapolitan Queen of the title.

### 12 MUSIC IN THE ROUND

Kelham Island Museum, Sheffield, 18 March  
Tel: +44 (0)114 249 6000  
Web: [www.musicintheround.co.uk](http://www.musicintheround.co.uk)  
Sheffield's industrial museum provides the counter-intuitive setting for the UK premiere of John Luther Adams's nature-inspired *Canticles of the Sky*. Led by Oliver Coates, over 30 fellow cellists encircle the audience, creating an evocative surround-sound skyscape that shares air space with excerpts from Bach's solo cello suites (performed by Coates).

### 13 MARTIN'S LE VIN HERBÉ

Milton Keynes Theatre, Milton Keynes, 21 March  
Tel: 0844 871 7652 (UK only)  
Web: [www.wno.org.uk](http://www.wno.org.uk)  
Puccini's *Madam Butterfly* and *La bohème* anchor Welsh National Opera's new season entitled 'Love's Poisoned Chalice'. They're complemented, however, by a decidedly less familiar toast: *The Spiked Drink*, Frank Martin's pared-back take on the Tristan and Isolde legend. James Southall conducts Polly Graham's new production, with tenor Tom Randle and mezzo-soprano Jurgita Adamonytė as the intoxicated twosome.

### 14 THE SIXTEEN

City Halls, Glasgow, 24 March  
Tel: +44 (0)141 353 8000  
Web: [www.glasgowconcert halls.com](http://www.glasgowconcert halls.com)  
Criss-crossing the country juxtaposing Palestrina and Poulenc, Harry Christophers and The Sixteen embark on their 'Choral Pilgrimage 2017' this month. They don't reach Scotland until October, but in the meantime are north of the border for the Scottish premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater* whose first performance they gave last October. It's coupled with his chamber orchestral meditation on love and loss, *Tryst*.

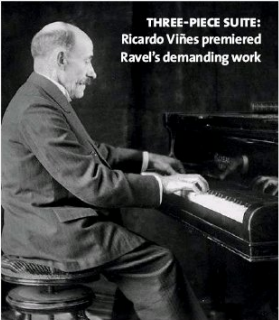
### 15 THOMAS ADÈS DAY

Wigmore Hall, London, 25 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7935 2141  
Web: [www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk)  
Hot on the heels of February's Xenakis Day, London's Wigmore Hall devotes another



QUICK GUIDE TO...

GASPARD DE LA NUIT  
Maurice Ravel



THREE-PIECE SUITE:  
Ricardo Viñes premiered  
Ravel's demanding work

Five key facts about a work being performed this month (Choice 2)

- *Gaspard de la nuit* is a suite for solo piano, written by Ravel in 1908. It has three movements, each based on a poem or *fantaisie* from a collection of works by Aloysius Bertrand. The title loosely translates as 'treasurer of the night' and has demonic connotations. Ravel said: 'My ambition is to say with notes what a poet expresses with words.'
- The work was premiered in Paris, on 9 January 1909, by pianist Ricardo Viñes. Ravel and Viñes had been friends since their early teens and had become part of a group of literary, artistic and musical contemporaries known as *Les Apaches* (the Ruffians), which also included Falla and Stravinsky.
- Lasting just over 20 minutes, the movements stretch a player's technique to the limits. The first, *Ondine*, in C sharp, is based on the tale of a seductive water nymph and Ravel uses cascades of notes to evoke the sounds of falling water. Next, in *Le gibet*, he portrays a desolate landscape where a hanging corpse is lit by the setting sun. A continuous tolling bell, represented by a B-flat ostinato, is played in octaves and sustains the ominous tension.
- The final, famously difficult, *Scarbo*, in G sharp minor, depicts a quick-footed goblin. Ravel said that his aim was to make a complex 'caricature of Romanticism – an orchestral transcription of the piano', adding 'perhaps it got the better of me'.
- Many great pianists have recorded *Gaspard de la nuit*. Among the finest are recent discs by Benjamin Grosvenor (Decca 478 3206) and Steven Osborne (*Hyperion* CDA67731/2), whose playing earned him a nomination for the 2012 BBC Music Magazine Awards. And let's not forget Dinu Lipatti, of course, a brilliant Ravelian. See our feature on the Romanian pianist, p50

to composer Thomas Adès. He discusses the sources of his inspiration between two concerts spanning the early *Arcadiana* for string quartet to 2010's *The Four Quartets*. Works by Lutosławski, Kurtág, Janáček and Gerald Barry contextualise the portrait.

**16 LONDON SINFONIETTA**  
Kings Place, London, 25 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7520 1490  
Web: [www.kingsplace.co.uk](http://www.kingsplace.co.uk)  
A profile of Stockhausen inaugurated London Sinfonietta's 'Turning Points' series examining seminal moments in 20th-century music, and now Ligeti enters the frame – again introduced by Professor Jonathan Cross. A pre-concert outing for the 100 metronomes of *Poème symphonique* yields to *Artikulation*, 10 Pieces for Wind Quintet and *Melodien*.

**17 KREMERATA BALTICA**  
Usher Hall, Edinburgh, 26 March  
Tel: +44 (0)131 228 1155  
Web: [www.usherhall.co.uk](http://www.usherhall.co.uk)  
It's 20 years since violinist Gidon Kremer founded Kremerata Baltica, a chamber orchestra celebrating the talents of the Baltic States (and a 50th birthday present to himself). A celebratory programme spotlights the now 70-year-old Kremer with works including Glass's *The American Four Seasons* and Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*.

**18 GABRIELI CONSORT & PLAYERS**  
St John's Smith Square, London, 28 March  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7222 1061  
Web: [www.sjss.org.uk](http://www.sjss.org.uk)  
After two concerts in Holland, the Gabrieli Consort's 'Handel in Italy' tour reaches



FINISHING TOUCHES:  
conductor Rafael Payare  
oversees Tchaikovsky  
(Choice 20)

London's St John's Smith Square, where Corelli's Concerto Grosso in D, Op. 6 No. 4 sets the scene for Handelian vocal pyrotechnics, culminating in the irrepressibly virile setting of Dixit Dominus. Before it Gillian Webster is the soprano soloist in the cantata *Donna, che in ciel*, written in thanksgiving for Rome's deliverance from an earthquake.

**19 NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**  
Barbican, London,  
31 March – 2 April  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7638 8891  
Web: [www.barbican.org.uk](http://www.barbican.org.uk)  
Between John Adams's *Chairman Dances* and *Harmonielehre*, Yo-Yo Ma gives the European premiere of Esa-Pekka Salonen's new Cello Concerto, capping a three-concert Barbican residency during which Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic take a walk on the 19th-century wild side with Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, and make illuminating bedfellows of Bartók and Mahler.

**20 ULSTER ORCHESTRA**  
Ulster Hall, Belfast,  
31 March  
Tel: +44 (0)28 9033 4455  
Web: [www.ulsterorchestra.org.uk](http://www.ulsterorchestra.org.uk)  
Conductor Rafael Payare (below) extended his contract with the Ulster Orchestra at the start of the season assuming the title of music director, and masterminds this final instalment in Barry Douglas's survey of the complete Tchaikovsky piano concertos. The Third Piano Concerto is offset by the Irish premiere of *Wild Flow* by Belfast-based composer Piers Hellawell, alongside Brahms's First Symphony.



# Supporting young musicians for 65 years

The Royal Over-Seas League's Annual Music Competition is one of the most highly regarded in the UK and the Commonwealth. Now in its 65th year, the competition has fostered many world renowned musicians. Join us for Wind and Percussion, Singers, Strings and Keyboard and Ensembles section finals and find out who will be competing for the £10,000 Gold Medal Prize.

- SECTION FINALS**  
Each Tuesday 7-9pm, Over-Seas House, London
- 14 February Wind/Percussion
  - 21 February Singers
  - 28 February Strings
  - 7 March Keyboard
  - 14 March Ensemble A
  - 21 March Ensemble B
  - 23 March Overseas Award

**GRAND FINAL**  
Wednesday 7 June, 7pm, Cadogan Hall

TICKETS: £15, £12 Friends of ROSL ARTS  
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ROSLARTS







Jonas Nordberg (lute), Mime Yamahiro-Brinkmann (cello)  
**3-4pm Choral Evensong** from Winchester College (rpt)  
**4-5pm The Choir**  
**5-5.30pm The Listening Service**  
**5.30-6.45pm Words and Music**  
**6.45-7.30pm Sunday Feature**  
Opera across the Waves – a look at the history of opera broadcasts  
**7.30-9pm Radio 3 in Concert**  
European Broadcasting Union (bbc)  
**9-10.30pm Drama on 3**  
*Fanny and Alexander*, Episode 1 (rpt)  
**10.30pm-11.30pm**  
**Early Music Late**

13 MONDAY

**6.30-9am Breakfast**  
**9am-12 noon Essential Classics**  
**12 noon-1pm** Composer of the Week Peter Maxwell Davies  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
from Wigmore Hall, London. Robert

14 TUESDAY

**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 13 March



PRIVATE PASSIONS



Each week **Michael Berkeley** talks to a guest about their favourite music, one of whose choices are below



**CHRIS HADFIELD** Astronaut  
*HOLST 'Jupiter, the bringer of jollity' from The Planets*  
*Hallé Orchestra/Sir Mark Elder*  
"One of the most famous celebrations of all the planets across our solar system, of course, was by Holst. I think he did a wonderful job of capturing the immensity of Jupiter. There's a great variety of melodies. When I look at the planet it's staggering to see all of the imagery of that pouring in from the Hubble telescope, not just of Jupiter, but from all its moons."

**ROSSINI** *William Tell Overture*  
Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di St Cecilia/Pappano  
"I am amazed by Rossini's *William Tell*, not just by its popularity as a theme in movies and cartoons but, to me, it shows Rossini's great melody writing and his power of understanding all the instruments in the orchestra."

**HANS ZIMMER** *'The Battle' from Gladiator soundtrack*  
*Lyndhurst Orchestra*  
"The movie *Gladiator* came out at the time of my second space flight. Preparing for battle is how you feel getting ready to climb into a spaceship. We watched this scene in the film the night before, to get our mental state right."

**WILLIAM HERSCHEL** *Symphony No. 8 in C minor*  
*London Mozart Players/Matthias Bamert*  
"Herschel wrote dozens of pieces but was also fascinated by technology and what it could show us. I enjoy listening to his compositions in major keys but when I look at the complexity of the solar system, as he must have, I hear minor keys. I hear the contrast and the puzzlement and the constant tug of war that creates the solar system. So, I chose one of his few symphonies in a minor key."

**JOHANN STRAUSS II** *On the Beautiful Blue Danube*  
*Hallé Orchestra/Bryden Thomson*  
"On my first flight we played some music that was a nod to the 2001: A Space Odyssey. This beautiful, lilting, melodic, gorgeous piece of music shows the ballet of a spaceship."

*Private Passions* is on Radio 3 every Sunday at 12 noon and is also available to download as a podcast.

**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Peter Maxwell Davies (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert**  
from the Barbican, London. Lully Alceste Suite, Marais *Alyone* – Suites Nos. 1 & 4, Handel *Water Music* – Suites Nos. 2 & 4, Rameau *Les Boréades Suite*. Academy of Ancient Music/Jordi Savall  
**10-10.45pm Free Thinking**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay

15 WEDNESDAY

**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 13 March  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-3.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**3.30-4.30pm Choral Evensong**  
from Winchester College  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Peter Maxwell Davies (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert**  
from the Barbican. Brahms *Violin Concerto in D*, Op. 77, Strauss *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Op. 30. Janine Jansen (violin), London Symphony Orchestra/Valery Gergiev  
**10-10.45pm Free Thinking**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay

16 THURSDAY

**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 13 March  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.45pm In Tune**  
**6.45-7.45pm Composer of the Week** Peter Maxwell Davies (rpt)  
**7.45-10pm Radio 3 Live in Concert** (rpt)  
**10-10.45pm Free Thinking**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay

17 FRIDAY

**FREE THINKING FESTIVAL**  
BBC Radio 3 brings together leading thinkers for a weekend (17-19 March) of provocative debate and musical performances at Sage Gateshead  
**6.30-9am Breakfast**  
**9am-12 noon** Essential Classics  
**12 noon-1pm** Composer of the Week Peter Maxwell Davies  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune** live from Sage Gateshead. Sean Rafferty presents the launch of the Free Thinking Festival, with performances by pianist Lars Vogt and members of the Royal Northern Sinfonia. Other guests include Newcastle-based jazz duo Diachronix  
**6.30-7.15pm Composer of the Week** Peter Maxwell Davies (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert** live from Sage Gateshead. Beethoven *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat*, Op. 19, Prokofiev *Symphony No. 1 'Classical'*, Haydn *Symphony No. 11*, Beethoven *Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor*, Op. 37, Royal Northern Sinfonia/Lars Vogt (piano/director)  
**10-11pm Free Thinking Lecture**  
from Sage Gateshead



FREE SPIRIT:  
Lars Vogt explores Beethoven (17 March)

18 SATURDAY

**7-9am Breakfast** presented by Martin Handley, live from the Free Thinking Festival at Sage Gateshead.  
**9am-12.15pm Record Review**, presented by Andrew McGregor, live from the Free Thinking Festival. In *Building a Library*, Kate Moleson explores Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*  
**12.15-1pm Music Matters** presented by Tom Service, live from the Free Thinking Festival  
**1-3pm Saturday Classics**, live from the Free Thinking Festival. The composer and pianist Richard Sisson takes a journey through music articulated by the unfolding of time; from the clock's striking of midnight in Prokofiev's *Cherevka* to evocations of heady times past in Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, plus works by Satie, Mozart and Beethoven  
**3-4pm Sound of Cinema** presented by Matthew Sweet, live from the Free Thinking Festival. French Cinema: Guy Austin traces a musical time line through Gallic film, from the pioneering Lumière brothers to the present day  
**4-5pm Jazz Record Requests**, presented by Alyn Shipton, from the Free Thinking Festival  
**5-6.30pm Jazz Line-Up**  
**6-10pm Opera** on 3 from the Metropolitan Opera, New York. Rossini *Guliamme Tell*, Gerald Finley (Guillaume), Marina Rebeka (Matilde) et al. Orchestra of the Met Opera/Fabio Luisi  
**10pm-12 midnight**  
**Hear and Now**  
**12 midnight-1am**  
Geoffrey Smith's Jazz

19 SUNDAY

**7-9am Breakfast** presented by Martin Handley, live from the Free Thinking Festival at Sage Gateshead  
**9am-12 noon Sunday Morning** presented by Jonathan Swain, live from Sage Gateshead  
**12 noon-1pm Private Passions**  
Georgio Locatelli, chef

20 MONDAY

**6.30-9am Breakfast**  
**9am-12 noon Essential Classics**  
**12 noon-1pm** Composer of the Week Ravel  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
from Wigmore Hall, London. Debussy *Première rhapsodie*, Poulenc *Sonata for clarinet and piano*, Robert Schumann *Arabesque in G*, Op. 18, Brahms *Clarinet Sonata in F minor*, Op. 120 No. 1, Annellen Van Waas (clarinet), Nino Gveldtze (piano)  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Ravel (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert**  
from Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius*. David Butt Philip (tenor), Sasha Cooke (mezzo), Iain Paterson (bass-baritone), Hallé Youth Choir, Hallé Choir, Hallé Orchestra/Mark Elder  
**10-10.45pm Music Matters** (rpt)  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay  
**11pm-12.30am Jazz Now**

21 TUESDAY

**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 20 March  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Ravel (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert** live from National Centre for Early Music, York. European Broadcasting Union Day of Early Music. Handel *Overture – Alcina*, *Concerto grosso*, Op. 6 No. 1, *Canzona – Tu delid?* *Tu costantini?*, *HWV171a*, *Pasacaglia in G* from *HWV359*, *Alcina* – selection of recitatives and arias, Bach *Harpischord Concerto in A*, *BWV 1055*, *Wedding Cantata* – *Welchiet nur, betrübte Schatten*, *BWV 202* Maria Koehne (soprano), Neven Lesage (oboe), European Union Baroque Orchestra/Lars Ulrik Mortensen (director/harpischord)  
**10-10.45pm Free Thinking**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay

22 WEDNESDAY

**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 20 March  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-3.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**3.30-4.30pm Choral Evensong**  
from York Minster  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Ravel (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert** (bbc)  
**10-10.45pm Free Thinking**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay

23 THURSDAY

**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 20 March  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Ravel (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert** live from City Halls, Glasgow. Wagner *Tristan und Isolde* – *Prelude* and *'Lebestod'*, Strauss *Four Last Songs*, Wagner *Parsifal* – *Prelude to Act I*, Langgaard *Symphony No. 6 'The Heaven-Storming'*, Erin Wall (soprano), BBC Scottish SO/Thomas Dausgaard  
**10-10.45pm Free Thinking**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay

24 FRIDAY

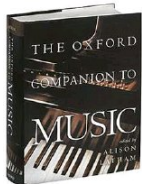
**6.30am-1pm**  
As Monday 20 March  
**1-2pm Lunchtime Concert**  
**2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3**  
**4.30-6.30pm In Tune**  
**6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week** Ravel (rpt)  
**7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert**  
from Royal Festival Hall, Matthew Sweet presents 'From Heaven to Hell at the Movies', in which the BBC Concert Orchestra looks at great choral moments on the big screen.

Works by John Williams, Prokofiev and Orff. Crouch End Festival Chorus, BBC CO/Kaith Lockhart  
**10-10.45pm The Verb**  
**10.45-11pm** The Essay  
**11pm-12.30am Jazz Now**

25 SATURDAY

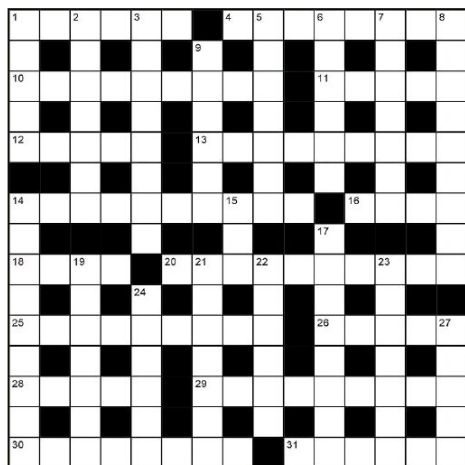
**7-9am Breakfast**  
**9am-12.15pm Record Review** – Building a Library  
**12.15-1pm Music Matters**  
**1-3pm Saturday Classics**  
**3-4pm Sound of Cinema**  
**4-5pm Jazz Record Requests**  
**5-6pm Jazz Live-Up**  
**6-9.30pm Opera** on 3 from Scottish Opera. Debussy *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Andrei Bondarenko (Pelléas), Carolyn Sampson (Mélisande) et al. Orchestra of Scottish Opera/Stuart Stratford  
**9.30am-12.15pm** *Record Review*  
**12.15-1pm Music Matters**  
**1-3pm Saturday Classics**  
**3-4pm Sound of Cinema**  
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# March prize crossword No. 305

The first correct solution of our monthly crossword to be picked at random will win a copy of *The Oxford Companion to Music* worth £40 (available at bookstores or [www.oup.co.uk](http://www.oup.co.uk)). Send your answers to: *BBC Music Magazine*, Crossword 305, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA to arrive by 22 March 2017 (solution in our June 2017 issue). Crossword set by Paul Henderson



### ACROSS

- 1 Tenor, American, following Arab into company (6)
- 4 British composing dynasty in US University location (8)
- 10 Carrier waves surrounding Church in something like a fugue (9)
- 11 Some of the band at Esterházy getting engagements (5)
- 12 Wind instruments displacing first stringed instruments (5)
- 13 Picture what the Penguin Café is known for? (5-4)
- 14 CD - it spins with leader from American composer (3,7)
- 16 Runs into small amount of some jazz (4)
- 18 US composer having many years with contralto (4)
- 20 Singer depicting naval hero encountering whirlpool (6,4)
- 25 Italian composer, angelic figure in Italy (9)
- 26 Verdi hearlessly sat out scene (5)
- 28 What's remarkable for early opera at the outset? (5)
- 29 Lieder nut put out when something else is played? (9)
- 30 Instruction in score of recomposed lead song (3,5)
- 31 Seem upset with the French style in Handel opera (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Seasonal song, nothing penned by one of Bach's sons (5)
- 2 Most of town participating in genuine concert (7)
- 3 A star's rôle not half modified for Mozart part (8)
- 5 Support one involved in most of each of the Rachmaninov trios? (7)
- 6 Composer a knockout on a regular basis after dismissing one (6)
- 7 Violin-maker, one enthralled by reformer (7)
- 8 Beatles classic certainly ready for reinterpretation after time (9)
- 9 Sharpened A is printed in red (6)

- 14 Hear odd opening of concert repeated variously with old string instrument (9)
- 15 Ailing British pianist missing opening (3)
- 17 Ives symphony? A Parisian's disturbed re-lyrics (8)
- 19 Merry, with all the part-songs one could desire? (7)
- 21 Finally gave speech to put out first of complete collection of composer's works (7)
- 22 Dramatically lyrical to a high degree, after swallowing beer (6)
- 23 Debate reallocation of duties involving piano (7)
- 24 Lots of countries regret picking up musical work before Spain (6)
- 27 British singer-songwriter made legendary? Not entirely (5)

### CHRISTMAS SOLUTION NO. 302



### CHRISTMAS WINNER

Ann Speyer, Cheshire

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## THE MUSIC QUIZ

*This month's quiz is making a dramatic entrance*

1. In which opera, premiered in Budapest in 1918, does the inquisitive Judith persuade the title character to open seven doors within his dark home, against his will and with fateful consequences?
2. And in which popular English orchestral work of 1899 does the composer depict, in his own words, a character 'hurriedly leaving the music-room with an inadvertent bang of the door'?
3. 'Aprite, presto, aprite' ('Open the door, quickly') is a frantic duet from which Mozart opera?
4. 'Here is the Little Door' is one of *Three Carol Anthems* (1918-20) by which English composer?

### PICTURE THIS

5. These rather distinctive stage doors (below) can be found at which much-loved concert venue?



6. Name these musical figures who sound like they might be found on a door: a) German-born composer (1685-1759) who was the toast of early 18th-century London; b) English composer (1621-77) whose operas include *The History of Sir Francis Drake*; c) English conductor (1889-1983) who premiered Holst's *The Planets*.
7. Which Australian composer, whose music is known to many through its use in Lloyds Bank adverts, has written piano works called *Second Door on the Left* and *Revolving Doors Rag*?
8. *Out of Doors* is a set of five solo piano pieces written in 1926 by whom?
9. The guitar part of The Doors' 1968 song 'Spanish Caravan' is based on *Asturias (Leyenda)* by which composer?
10. Inspired by the group, who co-composed and performed a *Doors Concerto* in 2000?

See p105 for answers

## IMMEDIATE MEDIA

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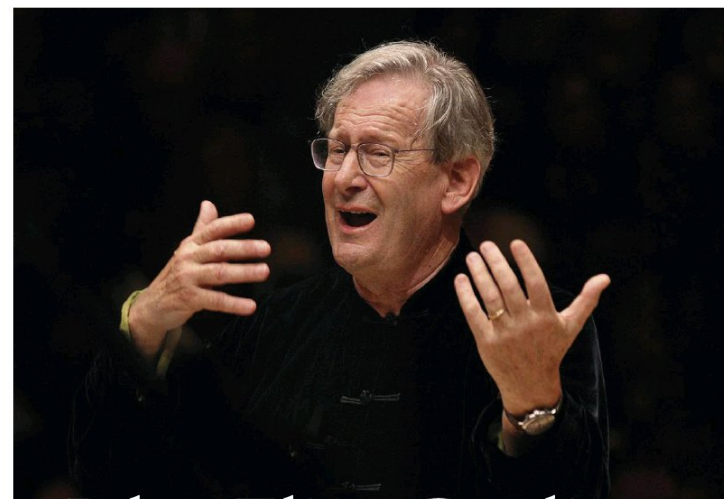
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## NEXT MONTH in *BBC Music Magazine*



# John Eliot Gardiner

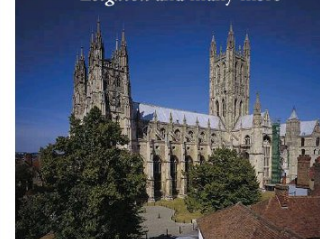
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### Luther's Reformation

On the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, *Simon Heighes* looks at how the religious movement affected the musical world

### Gaetano Donizetti

*George Hall* delves into the life and music of the great *bel canto* opera composer

### International festivals guide

The world's greatest festivals, from Orkney to Kent, New York to California, Paris to Prague...

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# Rebecca Evans *Soprano*

I was a very fortunate child as I was always surrounded by classical music. My mother had been a professional singer and my father had the most incredibly resonant baritone voice, even though he wasn't in the music world. For my 11th birthday, he bought me three recordings of **MOZART** operas conducted by Karl Böhm: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute*. And really it was *Figaro* that decided my path. It became a passion. In particular I think the overture is one of the greatest ever written. It makes me feel so happy, it lifts up everybody's spirits.

Opera was always what I wanted to do, but on the insistence of my father I did science A-levels so I had a career to fall back on. I did biology instead of music and loved it. During my school years my taste in music was different from my peers, and I wanted normality. It was really cool to like **THE POLICE**, and I became hooked, particularly on *Message in a Bottle* and *Roxanne*. Later on in life I did a Schumann project with Sting, and I told him about it. He said, 'You think we were normal?'

Music was always burning inside me, but I started my nursing career training in a hospital near Swansea in 1983. I was able to maintain my singing lessons, and there was a hospital choir which took me on as a soloist. Through that I started to be invited by various choral societies, of which we have many in South Wales. I was invited by the Skewen Music Lovers to be their soloist, and I accepted the engagement and went to the rehearsal the afternoon of the concert. There was this young boy sitting next to the pianist, and I thought he was her son. But he got up, and out poured this voice. It was Bryn Terfel. He asked me what I did. I said I was a nurse, and he said I was a fool. He said I needed to go to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and that I needed to do it right then. I said OK. We've been great friends ever since.

I was in London for three years, then I had the opportunity to audition for the role of Gretel in **HUMPERDINCK's** *Hänsel und Gretel* with Welsh National Opera (WNO). It was for a small tour, about 40 performances including two weeks in the Lyric Theatre in



**FINE FIGARO:**  
'The overture makes me feel so happy'

**BORN IN SOUTH WALES**, Rebecca Evans trained as a nurse before turning to singing. She studied at the Guildhall School of Music, going on to perform with opera companies around the world, including the Royal Opera and Bayerische Staatsoper. This summer Evans plays the Marshallin in a Welsh National Opera production of Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. She has also created a programme of Welsh music for St David's Day, which she performs in Cardiff with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales on 1 March.

Hammersmith. That was another piece that completely changed my life. Later I was invited to record it with Sir Charles Mackerras and got a Grammy for it.

It was glorious to work with Sir Charles. After *Gretel*, I understudied the role of Ilia in **MOZART's** *Idomeneo* at WNO. It was such an honour to be even considered as an understudy; then the woman I was understudying withdrew and I was invited to take over the role. Sir Charles guided me from day one and shaped my career through the role of Ilia. He was an immense influence and a very dear friend, and I probably sang with him more than anyone else. He had this passion for

everything he conducted; he was fresher in spirit and mind even in ripe old age than many young conductors today.

Seven years ago my mother died, and three weeks after that my father died. It was the most devastating thing that ever happened to me, as for many years until I met my husband it was only ever the three of us in the entire world. We were incredibly close. Three weeks after they died, I turned the TV on and there was a BBC Prom with Lang Lang and one of his protégés playing **SCHUBERT's** *Fantasia in F minor*. It started my healing process. I became almost obsessed with the piece. It made me very sad but it also uplifted me. I particularly love the Radu Lupu and Murray Perahia recording. I love Schubert song too, but this *Fantasia* is just sublime. ■

*Interview by Rebecca Franks*

## REBECCA EVANS MUSIC CHOICE



### Mozart

**The Marriage of Figaro**  
Hermann Prey, Edith Mathis, Gundula Janowitz, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau; Deutsche Oper Berlin/Karl Böhm  
DG 449 7282



### The Police

**Message in a Bottle**  
A&M 7474



### Humperdinck

**Hänsel und Gretel**  
Rebecca Evans, Jennifer Larmore, Jane Henschel et al; Philharmonia/Mackerras  
Chandos CHAN31432



### Mozart Idomeneo

Ian Bostridge, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Lisa Milne et al; Scottish Chamber Orchestra/Sir Charles Mackerras  
Warner Classics 9482382



### Schubert

**Fantasia in F minor**  
Radu Lupu, Murray Perahia (piano)  
Sony 88697858112