

Second Thoughts and Short Reviews – Autumn 2019/1
By Brian Wilson, Dan Morgan, Johan van Veen and Simon Thompson

Reviews are by Brian Wilson unless otherwise indicated. My thanks, as always, to my colleagues who have once again spared our readers an all-Mr. Toad performance. (Check the end of *Wind in the Willows* – and read the whole book if you don't know it.)

Summer 2019/2 is [here](#) and Summer 2019/1 is [here](#).

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- **VIVALDI** Complete Concertos and Sinfonias for Strings - L’Archicembalo rec. 2015-18 **BRILLIANT CLASSICS 95835** [4 CDs: 261:53] (see In Brief)
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- **17th Century Playlist** Ed Lyon (tenor); Theatre of the Ayre **DELPHIAN DCD34220** [61:27]
- *Avanti l’opera - An A-Z of Italian baroque overtures* - Charivari Agréable/Kah-Ming Ng rec. 2013 **SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD383** [63:15]
- **Bernard Haitink: The Early Years** Volumes 3 and 4 **BEULAH 3PS51, 4PS51**
- **Christmas** The Gesualdo Six (see In Brief: Christmas)
- **Christmas at St George’s Windsor** (see In Brief: Christmas)
- *Concerti Curiosi: PARADIES, CROFT, PEPUSCH* etc. - Charivari Agréable/Kah-Ming Ng (harpsichord) rec. 2010 **SIGNUM SIGCD249** [62:23]
- **Evensong Live 2019: Anthems and Canticles** King’s College Cambridge rec. 2018-2019 **KING’S COLLEGE KGS0038** [78:44]
- **Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols** Centenary Service - King’s College Choir (see In Brief: Christmas)
- *Haute-Contre #1 Dumesny, Haute-Contre de Lully* – Reinoud van Mechelen **ALPHA 554**
- *Magnificat* – St John’s College, Cambridge rec. 2018 **SIGNUM SIGCD588**

- **Music from Estonia (Heino ELLER, etc.)** – Scottish National Orchestra/Neeme Järvi rec. **CHANDOS CHAN241-26**. For Eller see also composer index.
- **Now may we singen:** Music for Advent and Christmas – Westminster School (see In Brief: Christmas)
- **RECOMMENDED** **Nowell synge we bothe al and sum:** A Feast of Christmas Music from Medieval England – Gothic Voices **LINN CKD591** [77:10] (See In Brief: Christmas)

In chains of gold

William BYRD (1540?-1623) Prelude in C [1:06]

Thomas TALLIS (c.1505-1585) **Christian FORSHAW** *O nata lux de lumine* 5vv [1:59]

William BYRD *Liber primus sacrarum cantionum (Cantiones sacræ): Lætentur cœli* [2:59]

Thomas TALLIS *Salvator mundi* [2:58]

Veni Redemptor gentium I [1:24]

Veni Redemptor gentium II [1:22]

William BYRD Mass for five voices [25:58]

Clarifica me, Pater (3 verses) (Musica Britannica, Vol. 28, No. 49) [2:34]

Gaudeamus omnes [5:17]

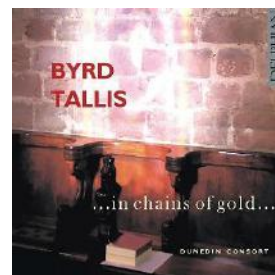
Thomas TALLIS *O sacrum convivium* [3:22]

William BYRD *Justorum animæ* [2:44]

Dunedin Consort: Susan Hamilton (Soprano), Clare Wilkinson (Mezzo), Ashley Turnell (Tenor), Warren Trevelyan-Jones (Tenor), Matthew Brook (Bass), John Kitchen (Organ)
rec. Crichton Collegiate Church, Midlothian, 19-23 January 2003. DDD.

Reviewed as lossless download from chandos.net (no booklet)

DELPHIAN DCD34008 [51:51] See also [review by Steve Arloff](#): ‘Gems of Late Renaissance composition ... beautifully recorded and sung’.



CD available from	
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This recording should not be confused with a Signum album with the same title, a collection of music by Orlando Gibbons (**SIGCD511** – [review](#) – [Autumn 2017/3](#)). Though the quotation is taken

from Thomas Morley, who meant it as a criticism of singers who hogged the limelight, both recordings turn it around as the peg on which to hang some excellent performances of very appealing music. The Signum offers a very fine introduction to Orlando Gibbons and the Delphian would serve very well for anyone wishing a single-CD survey of Byrd and Tallis. The caveat, however, is that there is so much more to Byrd and Tallis that anyone choosing the Delphian selection should be prepared to be tempted further. For starters, *The Tallis Scholars sing William Byrd* which includes his three Masses and his Great Service (Gimell **CDGIM208**, 2 CDs for 1, or download with booklet for £7.99 from hyperion-records.co.uk) and *The Tallis Scholars sing Thomas Tallis* (**CDGIM203**, another 2-for-1 CD or download with booklet for £7.99 from hyperion-records.co.uk).

No download or streamed version of the Delphian comes with the booklet. Steve Arloff complains that it's too brief and often hard to read, but the booklet should always be offered with the download.

RECOMMENDED **Giovanni Pierluigi da PALESTRINA (1525-1594)**

Volume 8

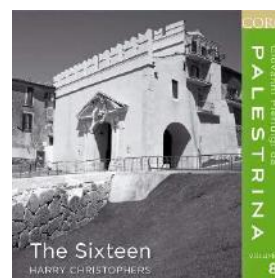
Ego sum panis vivus [6:00]

Fratres ego enim accepi [3:33]


Accepit Jesus calicem [4:21]

Missa Fratres Ego Enim Accepi:

Kyrie [4:43]



Gloria [4:41]
 Credo [7:57]
 Sanctus [2:16]
 Benedictus [2:32]
 Agnus Dei [3:08]
 Caro mea vere est cibus [5:39]
 Pater noster [3:59]
 Sacerdotes Domini [2:37]
 Song of Songs: Nos: 25-27
 Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui [3:13]
 Duo ubera tua [3:13]
 Quam pulchra es [2:58]
 Victimæ paschali laudes [3:28]
 Pange lingua [9:01]
 The Sixteen/Harry Christophers
 rec. Church of St Alban the Martyr, Holborn, London, 20-22 March 2019. DDD.
 Texts and translations included.
 Reviewed as 24/96 flac download with pdf booklet from thesixteenshop.com.
CORO COR16175 [73:19]

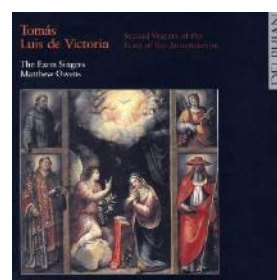
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It's almost superfluous at this stage to offer a detailed review of this latest, eighth volume in The Sixteen's excursion through the music of Palestrina. I could almost refer you to my [review](#) of Volume 7 of this 'distinguished ongoing series' and

leave it at that. Volume 8 begins and ends with music related to the institution of the Eucharist, in the words of the gospels and St Paul, including the Mass based on the setting of Paul's introductory statement that he has received the information, *ego enim accepi*. There is one other recording of the short setting of these words (Hyperion **CDA66867** – [March 2012/2](#)) but not, it appears, of the Mass based on it. That alone makes this release worth the price, especially as the performances and recording, particularly in 24-bit format, are fully the equal of the earlier instalments. I didn't award Recommended status to Volume 7 – I was even more than a little slow in reviewing it – so the award is for the whole series to date, in the hope that we don't have to wait another two years for Volume 9.

Tomás Luis de VICTORIA (1548-1611)

Second Vespers of the Feast of the Annunciation
 The Exon Singers/Matthew Owens
 rec. 3-4 January 2004, Chapel of Giggleswick School, North Yorkshire. DDD.
 Reviewed as lossless download from chandos.net (no booklet).
DELPHIAN DCD34025 [68:44]



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Two of my colleagues reviewed this: John Quinn (JQ) – [review](#) – had no reservations, but Johan van Veen (JV) – [review](#) – did. Without wishing in any way to pose as an arbiter, I had to try this recording myself, not least because Victoria is something of a passion of mine; if forced to choose one for my Desert Island, it might be Victoria even in preference to Palestrina, Byrd or Tallis – until I listen to one of the others again, as with Coro's latest Palestrina (above).

JV's reservations reflect his scholarly approach to the recording: for example, there's no evidence that such a collection ever was or could have been assembled, but there's equally no evidence that what we call Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 ever were performed or intended to be performed as a collection. My own approach is closer to that of JQ, as an informed amateur, and I have to say that I lean much more to

his response than to JV's. If such a collection ever graced the feast of the Annunciation with singing a fine as this, the listeners would have been blessed indeed. Soaring music that takes you out of yourself. The lack of a booklet with any download or streamed version is a definite negative, as is the mis-spelling of, for example, *conci piet* as *consipiet* in the download track information.

A collection of Victoria's music including the psalm settings on Delphian is available from Westminster Cathedral Cathedral Choir (Hyperion **CDA67479**), with a few copies still available on SACD (**SACDA67479**, from hyperion-records.co.uk – see [review](#)). The singing is cooler, with trebles on the top line, and no attempt to reconstruct a Vespers service, but equally desirable, not least for the inclusion of the *Missa Ave Regina cælorum*, another work dedicated to Mary.

For the Delphian recording of Byrd and Tallis (above) I was able to recommend 2-CD-for-1 collections from The Tallis Scholars on Gimell. There was an even better 3-CD Gimell bargain set of *The Victoria Collection* – [review](#) – but it seems to have disappeared; snap it up if you can find it for a decent price, preferably less than the £33.44 being asked for a second-hand copy on Amazon – the three constituent albums can be downloaded for less than that from hyperion-records.co.uk: [CDGIM012](#), [CDGIM022](#) and [CDGIM043](#). All three come in 16-bit lossless for £7.99 each; the third is also available in 24-bit for £15.

Giovanni Girolamo KAPSPERGER (1580-1651)




Intavolatura di chitarone

Jonas Nordberg (theorbo)

rec. 2018, Länna Church, Sweden DDD

Reviewed as 24/44 download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com

BIS BIS-2417 SACD [69:45]

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The theorbo or chitarrone was one of the main plucked instruments in the early 17th century in Italy. It was used in ensemble, to accompany singers and also as a solo instrument. Giovanni Girolamo



Kapsberger, born of German parents, was one of its most prominent exponents. He moved among the highest social circles in Naples and Rome. Jonas Nordberg has made a representative selection from the first and fourth books of pieces for chitarrone, published in 1604 and 1640 respectively. They include pieces of different genres, such as toccatas – pieces of an improvisatory character – and dances, but also variations and pieces based on repeated bass patterns, such as the passacaglia. The fourth book includes some character pieces: the *Battaglia* is a real *tour de force*. Here Nordberg effectively explores the dynamic possibilities of the theorbo. This disc is a testimony not only to Nordberg's technical skills and stylistic sensitivity, but also to Kapsberger's art, which was so admired by his contemporaries. This disc is a must-have for all lovers of plucked instruments. [JV]

17th Century Playlist

Francesco CAVALLI: *Eliogabalo - Misero, così va* [3:41]

Stefano LANDI: *Passacaglia della Vita* [3:52]

Pierre GUÉDRON: *Aux Plaisirs* [4:03]

Nicholas LANIER: No more shall meads be deck'd with flow'rs (Love's constancy) [3:14]

Étienne MOULINIÉ: *O stelle homicide* [3:25]

Giovanni Battista FONTANA: Sonata No.17 [5:51]

Michel LAMBERT: *Vos mespris chaque jour* [3:39]

Antoine BOËSSET: *Je voudrais bien, ô Cloris* [4:50]

Stefano LANDI: *Augellin* [4:03]

Sebastien CAMUS: *Je veux me plaindre* [4:41]

Giovanni Battista FONTANA: Sonata No.8 [5:49]



Stefano LANDI: *Damigella tutta bella* [3:54]

John DOWLAND: Time stands still [3:08]

My Thoughts are wing'd with Hopes [2:46]

Stefano LANDI: *Canta La Cicalletta* [4:22]

Ed Lyon (tenor)





Theatre of the Ayre

rec. 27-30 January 2019, St Martin's Church, Salisbury. DDD.

Texts and translations included.

Reviewed as 24/48 download with pdf booklet from chandos.net.

DELPHIAN DCD34220 [61:27]

CD available from	
	
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The title may be little more than a peg on which to hang an enjoyable collection of music from England, France and Italy from the seventeenth century, but I'm not complaining. Ed Lyon has

already established a reputation with recordings for several labels, but this is, I believe, his first solo outing. Among his earlier recordings are several of Handel works for Delphian: *Song for St Cecilia's Day* – [review](#) – *Alexander's Feast* – [review](#) – and *The Triumph of Time and Truth* – [review](#) – [review](#) – [review](#). Apart from slight reservations about his over-wide vibrato in places, we have been generally very positive about his singing; I preferred him to Ian Partridge in *Triumph*. Here there is little trace of the mild vibrato which worried some of my colleagues; the singing is very stylish and the accompaniment, led by Elizabeth Kenny (lute) is of the highest quality throughout.

I'm not sure if the CD is similarly afflicted, but the download has some of the tracks in the wrong order, with track 11, the Fontana sonata, placed first, though described in the codec as the Cavalli aria. That means that tracks 1-11 are all wrongly attributed. The same problem afflicts the streamed version from Qobuz but not, apparently, the downloads from Presto.

Haute-Contre #1 Dumesny, Haute-Contre de Lully

Jean-Baptiste LULLY (1632-1687)

Isis, LWV54 (1677) Overture [2:07]

Persée, LWV60 (1682) *Cessons de redouter la fortune Cruelle...* [1:36]

Armide, LWV71 (1686) *Plus j'observe ces lieux, et plus je les admire...* [3:30]

Amadis, LWV63 (1684) *Bois épais, redouble ton ombre...* [2:30]

Acis et Galatée, LWV73 (1686) *Faudra-t-il encore vous attendre...* [1:41]

Ritournelle [0:34]

Achille et Polyxène, LWV74 (1687) *Patrocle va combattre, et j'ai pu consentir...* [2:44]

Miserere, LWV25 (1664) [1:10]

Pascal COLLASSE (1649-1709)

Achille et Polyxène (1687) *Quand, après un cruel tourment...* [1:31]

Entracte [1:16]

Ah ! Que sur moi... – Prélude [1'16]

Marin MARAIS (1656-1728) et Louis DE LULLY (1664-1734)

Alcide (1693) *Mon amoureuse inquiétude...* [2:45]

Ne pourrais-je trouver de remède... [5:50]

Pascal COLLASSE

Thétis et Pelée (1689) *Ciel! En voyant ce temple redoutable...* [5:03]

Énée et Lavinie (1690) *J'entends d'agréables concerts...* [3:11]

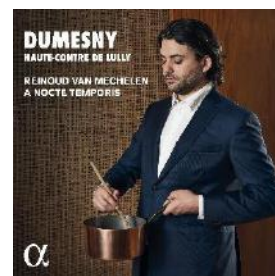
Henry DESMAREST (1661-1741)

Didon (1693) *Infortuné que dois-je faire?...* [3:21]

Le soleil est vainqueur (instrumental) [1:35]

Marc-Antoine CHARPENTIER (1643-1704)

Médée, H.491 (1693) *Que je serais heureux, si j'étais moins aimé! ...* [2:43]



Second air pour les argiens – sarabande [3:17]

Élisabeth Jacquet de la GUERRE (1665-1729)

Céphale et Procris (1694) *Amour, que sous tes lois...* [2:39]

Henry DESMAREST

Théagene et Cariclée (1695) *Ma vertu cède au coup...* [3:15]

Les Amours de Momus (1695) *Lieux charmants, retraites tranquilles ...* [1:41]

CHARLES-Hubert GERVAIS (1671-1744)

Méduse (1697) *Air – sarabande – menuet* [4:10]

Henry DESMAREST

Les Fêtes Galantes (1698) *Ebbro far voglio il mio core ...* [2:59]

Circé (1694) *Sommeil – Ah! Que le sommeil est charmant ...* [5:31]

André Cardinal DESTOUCHES (1672-1749)

Amadis de Grèce (1699) *Hélas! Rien n'adoucit ...* [3:35]

André CAMPRA (1660-1744)



L'Europe Galante (1697) *Sommeil – sommeil, qui chaque nuit...* [5:28]

A Nocte Temporis/Reinoud van Mechelen (haute-contre)

rec. August 2018, Augustinus Muziekcentrum, Anvers, Belgium. DDD.

Texts and translations included. Reviewed as mp3 press preview.

ALPHA 554 [77:13]

CD available from	
	

I had not the first idea what the cover picture is all about – I don't think that a saucepan comes into any of this music – till I read that Louis Gaulard

Dumesny, whose singing it celebrates, was a cook before his discovery. Otherwise, everything about this collection of music associated with Louis Gaulard Dumesny is most enjoyable. The *haute-contre* Dumesny, a high tenor, near enough but not exactly the French equivalent of the counter-tenor, began singing for Lully, whose last six operas he premiered, several of them featured here, and continued as an interpreter of the music of other composers of the age. A very fine successor to Reinoud van Mechelen's recording of the *Cantates Françaises* of Clérambault – [review](#), and his Bach – [review](#) – where I praised his clarity and beauty of tone.

Marc-Antoine CHARPENTIER (1643-1704)

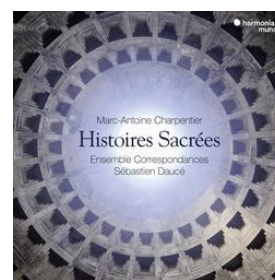
Histoires Sacrées


Ensemble Correspondances/Sébastien Daucé

rec. 2016, MC, Grenoble and the Maison de la Culture, Amiens, France. DDD

Reviewed as 24/44 download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com

HARMONIA MUNDI HMM 902280.81 [2:40:51] For purchase details see [review](#) by Stuart Sillitoe



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Marc-Antoine Charpentier was a kind of an outsider in France in his time. Louis XIV had engaged Jean-Baptiste Lully to create a truly French style which was able to compete with the Italian style. Charpentier was deeply influenced by the latter, and that comes especially to the fore in his oratorios, or *histoires sacrées*. In his oratorios about Judith, who liberates Betulia, Cecilia, who sticks to her faith, and the last hours of King Saul, with David mourning his death and that of his son Jonathan, he could explore his dramatic talents. Sébastien Daucé has recorded these three oratorios and some smaller pieces of a dramatic character, such as a dialogue between Jesus and Mary Magdalene on Easter morning.

This is undoubtedly the best recording of any oratorio by Charpentier. The ensemble is excellent, but there are also some fine solo contributions from Judith Fa (Cecilia), Caroline Weynants (Judith), Étienne Bazola (Saul), David Tricou (David), and, not to forget, Lucile Richardot as the Witch of Endor. Since listening to the digital download, I received the physical production, which includes also a DVD; that is not available

for download (it was [reviewed](#) by Stuart Sillitoe). For me the staged performances, unfortunately not in historical style, add little substantial to what the CDs have to offer. However, they include some pieces not on the CDs; that could be a reason to go for the physical production. [JV]

Carlo Ambrogio LONATI (c.1645 – c.1712)

Complete Sinfonias (Trio Sonatas, before 1677)

Sinfonia a 3 in C [8:43]

Sinfonia a 3 in g minor [10:05]

Sinfonia a 3 in a minor [7:12]

Sinfonia a 3 in D [12:32]

Sinfonia a 3 in g minor [9:05]

Sinfonia a 3 in G minor** 6:49

Sinfonia a 3 in A [7:23]

Sinfonia a 3 in a minor [7:59]

Sinfonia a 3 in C [9:27]

Sinfonia a 3 in D [8:40]

Ewa Anna Augustynowicz (violin)

Ensemble Giardino di Delizie

rec. 11-16 December 2017, Santa Croce Church/Museum, Umbertide, Italy. DDD.

BRILLIANT CLASSICS 95590 [87:55]



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Hard on the heels of submitting my appreciative review of a recent Brilliant set of Vivaldi String Concertos and Sinfonias (**95835** – [review](#)) up popped this recording of music by Lonati, a

composer whom I had never come across. The music is vivid and the performances by this all-female ensemble appealing. There are two Pan Classics recordings of Lonati's sinfonias, one of which was [reviewed with approval by Dominy Clements](#), but this inexpensive Brilliant recording contains more music than either and serves as a fine introduction to the composer. Some download providers are asking for more than the £9 or so which the 2-CD set sells for, but follow the Chandos link for lossless at £7.99 (mp3 for £4.99).

Concerti Curiosi

Pietro Domenico PARADIES (1707-1791)

A favourite concerto for the organ or harpsichord in B-flat [12:37]

Johann Anton REICHENAUER (1694-1730)

Concerto à 5 for oboe, strings and bc in F [10:20]

Johan Daniel BERLIN (1714-1787)

Sinfonia No. 2 à 5 for cornett, strings and bc [9:11]

Johann Christoph PEPUSCH (1667-1752)

Concerto for four violins, viola and bc in a minor [8:19]

Johann Wilhelm HERTEL (1727-1789)

Concerto for trumpet, strings and bc No. 3 in D [10:36]

William CROFT (1678-1727)

Sonata for four violins and bc [4:17]

Pietro BALDASSARI (c.1683-after 1768)

Sonata for cornett, strings and bc [7:00]

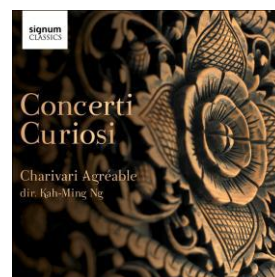
Jamie Savan (cornett), Simon Desbruslais (trumpet), Geoffrey Coates (oboe), Persephone Gibbs (violin)

Charivari Agréable/Kah-Ming Ng (harpsichord)

rec. 11-13 August 2010, St Andrew's Church, Toddington, Gloucestershire, UK. DDD

Reviewed as lossless download with pdf booklet from hyperion-records.co.uk.

SIGNUM SIGCD249 [62:23]



CD available from	
	
Download from	

Johan van Veen [reviewed](#) this in detail in 2011: “This is a disc for adventurous music-lovers who like to extend their horizon and are not satisfied with listening to the same masterpieces over and over again. Charivari Agréable deserve our congratulations with this 20th volume in their

impressive discography. May many more follow.” I’m sorry to see that this was almost the last of the line. Also, having failed to catch up with this release, not only was the music unknown to me, so were even some of the composers. The music is not ‘curious’ in the sense of sounding hard to come to terms with – indeed, to paraphrase the name of the ensemble, it’s all very agreeable. Best of all, the Hyperion download, in 16-bit lossless sound, costs just £6.99. At that price it’s well worth investigating the whole Signum catalogue there, including the complete recordings of Tallis.

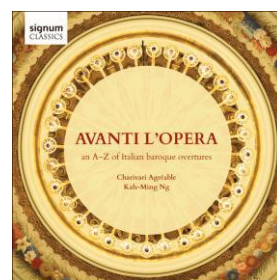
Avanti l’opera - An A-Z of Italian baroque overtures

Charivari Agréable/Kah-Ming Ng

rec. 2013, St Andrew’s Church, Toddington, Gloucestershire, UK. DDD

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from hyperion-records.co.uk.

SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD383 [63:15] For details see [review by Johan van Veen](#).

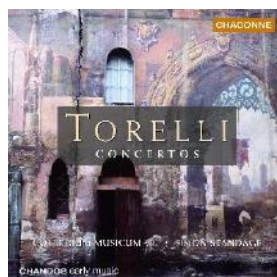


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Download from	

As far as I’m aware, this was the only release from Charivari Agréable after the concerto album (above). Johan van Veen thought it ‘enjoyable and ... brilliantly played ... another gem added to [Charivari Agréable’s] already impressive

discography’ – [review](#). It’s another back-catalogue delight that I’m pleased to be catching up with. It’s available to download in 16-bit (£6.99) and excellent 24-bit (£10.50) formats. On CD the price ranges from £12.75 via \$17.99 to £17.07, so the usual advice to shop around applies.

Another very fine recording from these performers offers ‘The original Brandenburg Concertos’, Op.6, by **Giuseppe TORELLI (1658-1709)**, which I thought ‘another significant addition to their catalogue’ – [review](#). That 2008 recording (**SIGCD157** [62:30]) is also available to download from [Hyperion](#) in 16-bit lossless, with pdf booklet, for £6.99. The equally fine Chandos album of Torelli’s **Op.8 concertos** recorded in 2004 by Collegium Musicum 90, directed by Stephen Standage, can be downloaded from chandos.net in mp3 (£7.99), 16- (£9.99) and 24-bit (£13.99), all with pdf booklet (**CHAN0716** [76:23]).



Magnificat

Johann KUHNAU (1660-1722)

Magnificat in C [20:45]

Jan Dismas ZELENKA (1679-1745)

Magnificat in C, ZWV107 [11:38]

Magnificat in D, ZWV108 [10:31]

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

Magnificat in D, BWV243 [28:23]

Yukari Nonoshita (soprano), Gerd Türk (tenor), Miah Persson (soprano), Chiyuki Urano (bass), Akira Tachikawa (alto)





Bach Collegium Japan/Masaaki Suzuki

rec. November/December 1998, Kobe Shoin Women’s University, Japan. DDD.

Reviewed as lossless download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com.



BIS-CD-1011 [71:31]

CD available from	
	
Download from	

I'm delving into fairly deep back catalogue here for a recording released slightly too early to have been reviewed on MusicWeb. It also predates most of the wonderful series of Bach cantata recordings, sacred and secular, which Suzuki and his team

recorded for BIS and it comes in 16-bit only – no SACD or 24-bit download.

There are, of course, other very fine recordings of the JS Bach *Magnificat*, both in its D major version and the alternative with the Christmas interpolations. Some of them set it in context with other composers, as is the case with the Hyperion album on which Jonathan Cohen conducts Arcangelo in settings by JS, JC and CPE Bach (**CDA68157** – [review](#) – [review](#) – [Spring 2018/1](#)). There is also at least one other recording of the *Magnificat* by Bach's immediate predecessor at Leipzig, on a CPO recording which Curtis Rogers thought inferior to Suzuki – [review](#). I mentioned the BIS recording almost as an aside in reviewing an album of Zelenka's Christmastide music in [DL News 2013/16](#), so I thought it high time to give it a proper airing and to praise an offering which prefigures all the virtues which would come to the fore in the later recordings – including Suzuki's continuing series of Bach's organ music (Volume 3, **BIS-2421 SACD**).

George Frideric HANDEL (1685-1759)

Sosarme, HWV30 (1732)

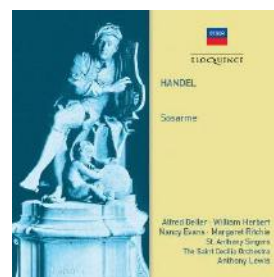
Helen Watts (contralto - Melo), Margaret Ritchie (soprano - Elmira), Ian Wallace (bass-baritone - Altomaro), Alfred Deller (counter-tenor - Sosarme), William Herbert (tenor - Haliate), Nancy Evans (mezzo-soprano - Erenice), John Kentish (tenor - Argone)

The St. Anthony Singers, St. Cecilia Orchestra

Anthony Lewis

rec. 1954. ADD/mono

DECCA ELOQUENCE 4828582 [2:27:39]



Sosarme may be no great shakes as drama, but that doesn't prevent it from containing some fine music. With no complete modern recording to its credit, this Decca reissue will do well enough, but it's sonically nothing to write home about, even by comparison with many of the other ground-breaking baroque recordings which they have been bringing us recently. It is, however, half the price of two (LP-derived?) download-only offerings of this same recording which we have had to make do with until now. The quality, even with the deficiencies of this reissue, makes it worth its price of £11 or so, but it also points the need for a modern recording. As so often, the lossless download costs more than the CDs, comes without booklet, and I see no need for either to be the case.

Handel's *Fernando*, which uses mostly material from *Sosarme*, has been recorded by Alan Curtis with Il Complesso Barocco – [review](#) – [review](#). (Now Erato **3654832**).

Gottfried August HOMILIUS (1714-1785)**Complete Organ Chorales**

Thomas Kientz (organ)

Magda Lukovic (soprano), Martine Lorentz (contralto), Thomas Kientz (tenor),



Jean Moissonnier (bass)

rec. 2013, Eglise des Jésuites of Porrentruy; Eglise Sainte Famille of Schiltigheim, France. DDD.

Organ specification included

HORTUS 153/4 [2 CDs: 100:46]



CD available from	
	

Originally available only direct from Editions Hortus when Johan van Veen [reviewed](#) and liked it in 2018, I'm pleased that this recording is now more widely on offer, on CD and as a download. It was briefly on offer from Qobuz, reduced from £9.99 in lossless sound to £2. It's well worthwhile even at the full price (around £14 on CD) but it's also worth looking out for offers like that, excellent value but available for a short time. This neglected composer from the generation after Bach has been better represented in recent years, not least by Carus, but this fine organ recital should certainly not be overlooked. The Ahrend organ on which the programme is played is a copy of the Silbermann instrument in Glachau.

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1781)

String Quartet No.14 in G, K387 'Spring' [30:07]

Divertimento in F, K138 [10:09]

String Quartet No.15 in d minor, K421 [27:01]




Quatuor Van Kuijk

rec. April 2019, Teldex Studio, Berlin. DDD.

Reviewed as mp3 press preview.

ALPHA551 [67:22]



CD available from	
	

The recording by Quatuor Van Kuijk of the Debussy and Ravel Quartets may have fallen a little short on magic by comparison with the Vlach Quartet's classic account, but not by far at all ([September 2017/1](#)). We seem to have missed their earlier Mozart recording, of Quartets Nos. 16 and 19, with Divertimento in D, K136, so I listened to that, too (**ALPHA246**). The playing on both recordings is strong rather than magical, most suited to the 'Dissonance' Quartet (No.19) on the earlier album, but that's better by far than Mozart as a Meissen figurine and a very useful reminder throughout that the great developments in the string quartet form that Haydn and Mozart occasioned led to those great pinnacles of the form in Beethoven's late quartets, the germs of which are to be found in Haydn and Mozart and Beethoven's own earliest quartets, Op.18. Not my top choice, then, though the earlier release won a 'Choc de Classica' and a 'Diapason Découverte'.

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

[Piano Sonata](#) No. 30 in E, Op. 109 [18:15]

Piano Sonata No. 31 in A flat, Op. 110 [19:36]

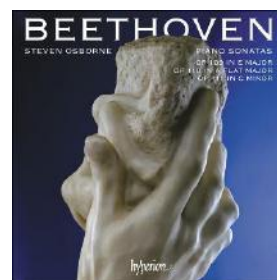
Piano Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111 [25:45]


Steven Osborne (piano)

rec. 2018, Perth Concert Hall, Scotland

Reviewed as 24-bit ALAC download from [Hyperion](#)

HYPERION CDA68219 [65:09] For availability see *Recording of the Month* – [review](#) – [review](#).



CD and download from	
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I downloaded this album in preparation for [hearing Steven Osborne playing this programme at the Lammermuir Festival](#).

It's a treat of a collection, and the ALAC files I listened to are a delight. There is a twinkle to the sound that sets it off beautifully, and the Perth Concert Hall acoustic seems to hug the sound in a warm embrace. Osborne's conception of Beethoven's final sonatas is holistic and completely convincing, and each one builds to a concentrated, thoughtful final slow movement that makes a fitting climax for each. I found the halo of concentration around the finale of No. 32 a thing of particular wonder, but that's to choose one jewel as a purely personal preference from a collection of gems. A lovely set in superb high-resolution sound. [ST]

Franz SCHUBERT (1797—1828)

Rondo in A for violin and strings, D438 (1816) [15:04]

Concerto in D for violin and orchestra, D345 ('Konzertstück') (1816) [9:35]

Polonaise in B flat for violin and orchestra, D580 (1817) [5:52]

Sonata in g minor for violin and piano, D408 (1816) [21:46]

Fantasy in C for violin and piano, D934 (1827) [25:04]

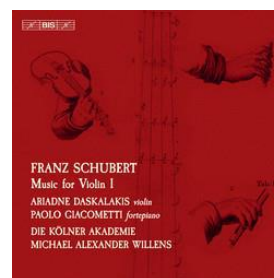
Ariadne Daskalakis (violin)

Die Kölner Akademie/Michael Alexander Willens

Paolo Giacometti (fortepiano)

rec. December 2017, Deutschlandfunk Kammermusiksaal, Cologne, Germany (works with orchestra);

February 2018, Stadsgehoorzaal-Aalmarktzaal, Leiden, The Netherlands (works with piano)

Reviewed as 24/96 stereo download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com. Also available in surround sound and on SACD.**BIS-2363 SACD** [78:40]

CD available from	
Download from	

There's nothing essential here, but it's an enjoyable reminder that Schubert learned the violin from an early age and wrote music for it. The first pieces, likeable but little more, were composed as leader of the student orchestra at the

Stadtkonvikt where he attracted the attention of Salieri. The exception is the Fantasy in C, dating from the end of Schubert's life. Its Deutsch catalogue number places it within weeks of the heart-rending String Quintet in C – a really essential work. If the Fantasy is not quite in that class, it's still an important part of his output, with several fine recordings to its credit, primarily from Alina Ibragimova and Cédric Tiberghien (Hyperion **CDA67911/2**, with complete Duos: *Recording of the Month* – [review](#)) and Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov (Harmonia Mundi **HMC901870**, with Grand Duo, D574 – [review](#)).

[Reviewing the Hyperion in 2013](#) I noted that lovers of period instruments might prefer Jacqueline Ross and Maggie Cole (Naxos). Paolo Giacometti's fortepiano on BIS is rather dry, but that doesn't detract from the sensitive performance of the slow movement's *Sei mir gegrüsst* music. If the fortepiano fails to appeal, the other two recordings should do the trick for you – and you really should have one recording of the Fantasy.

Franz LISZT (1811-1886)*Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, S.172a (1847)

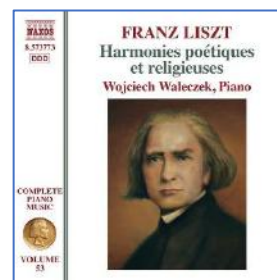
Wojciech Waleczek (piano)

rec. 2018, Concert Hall of The Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music, Katowice, Poland

Reviewed as streamed from Naxos Music Library.

Pdf booklet included

Liszt Complete Piano Music Vol. 53

NAXOS 8.573773 [72:27]

As I was editing Dan Morgan's 'Recommended' review of this album – [review and purchase details](#) – I was listening to it via Naxos Music Library. Now, regular readers may have noticed that I don't often go for solo piano music, though Liszt's two piano concertos and *Totentanz* – the version for piano and orchestra – and his organ music are a very different matter. This recital of the original 1847 *Harmonies* piqued my interest, so I had to include it in this round-up. At the time of writing, it was available in 24-bit sound from Presto for £3.94, a limited offer, but you should be able to find the regular lossless download for around £4.80.

Jacques OFFENBACH (1819-1880)*Boule de neige*: Overture [4:55]*La valse du divorce* [3:14]*Six fables de la Fontaine* (Orchestration: Jean-Pierre Haeck) (world premiere):*Le Berger et la Mer* [4:18]*Le Corbeau et le Renard* [2:26]*La Cigale et la Fourmi* [4:46]*La Laitière et le Pot au lait* [4:41]*Le Rat de ville et le Rat des champs* [2:05]*Le Savetier et le Financier* [8:02]*Les Bavards*: Overture [5:57]*C'est l'Espagne* [2:55]*Les Deux Aveugles*: Overture [3:25]*Madame favart*: Overture [4:43]*Monsieur Choufleuri*: Overture [2:01]*Schüler Polka* [2:05]

Karine Deshayes (mezzo)

Orchestre de l'Opéra de Rouen Normandie/Jean-Pierre Haeck

rec. October 2018, Studio Tutti, La Seine Musicale and December 2018, Studio Riffx-1, La Seine Musicale, Paris. DDD.

Texts and translations included. Reviewed as mp3 press preview.

ALPHA 553 [55:41]

CD available from	

Nothing here is as remotely well known as Offenbach's *Orphée aux Enfers* or the confection from his operettas, *Gaîté Parisienne*, but the music

is tuneful and his settings of six of La Fontaine's popular *Fables*, here recorded for the first time in an orchestrated version, brought him to the attention of the Parisian public. These and the other vocal items are fetchingly sung by Karine Deshayes and the orchestral support is equally attractive. How could the overture to an operetta called 'Mr Cauliflower' not be fun? The only rival for this and several of the other pieces comes from a CPO collection of Offenbach *Folies symphoniques* and Overtures (**555275-2**).

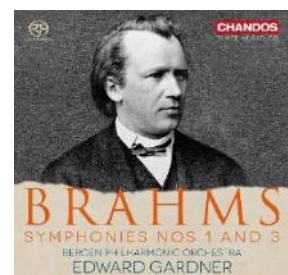
Johannes BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Symphony No.1 in c minor, Op.68 (1862–76) [45:28]

Symphony No.3 in F, Op.90 (1883) [35:45]

Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra/Edward Gardner

rec. Grieghallen, Bergen, Norway; 2–5 October 2018. DDD/DSD

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from chandos.net.**CHANDOS CHSA5236 SACD** [81:24]

CD available from	
Download from	

Edward Gardner and Bergen Philharmonic have been producing some fine recordings for Chandos of late. Their account of Bartók's *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, released simultaneously with the Brahms

(below) offers the most convincing version that I know. At the same time, the orchestra's partnership with Andrew Litton has produced a very fine recording of Holst's *The Planets* and Elgar's *Enigma Variations* (also below). The new Brahms couples two symphonies which used to take up the whole or the better part of a single LP each on a single 81-minute SACD.

My benchmark for the Brahms symphonies remains the cycle which Otto Klemperer made with the Philharmonia, most recently reissued in a 4-CD set with the Overtures and *Deutsches Requiem* (Warner **4043382**, a real bargain for around £14.50). The Symphonies and Overtures remain available to download for around £13 in lossless sound (Great Recordings **5627422** – [review](#)). The EMI recordings, always rather

craggy, are no match for the Chandos in SACD or 24-bit format, but they suit Klemperer’s forthright way with Brahms.

Klemperer was often slow, but not in Brahms: in the first and last movements of Symphony No.1 he actually comes in faster than Gardner, yet manages to spin out beautifully the big ‘Beethoven’ tune in the finale, which is where the great Brahms performers are to be judged for my money. I wouldn’t want to be without the Klemperer, but the new Chandos is much better recorded and the First Symphony comes off very well, with the sort of string tone more often associated with the Vienna Philharmonic.

The Third is slightly less successful – I miss Klemperer’s cragginess – but anyone looking for a modern recording and excellent value coupling should seriously consider this new release. Karajan fans should look at his 2-CDs-for-1 DG set of all four symphonies in sleek performances with the Berlin Phil (**4530972**).

Modest MUSSORGSKY (1839-1891)

Boris Godunov (original 1869 Version)

- Alexander Tsymbalyuk (bass, Boris)
- Maxim Paster (tenor, Shuisky)
- Mika Kares (bass, Pimen)
- Sergei Skorokhodov (tenor, Grigory)
- Okka von der Damerau (mezzo, The Innkeeper)
- Alexey Tikhomirov (bass, Varlaam)
- Hanna Husáhr (soprano, Xenia)
- Johanna Rudström (mezzo, Feodor)
- Göteborg Opera Chorus

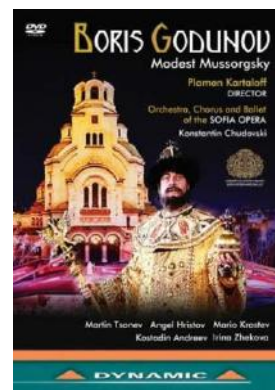
Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra/Kent Nagano

Russian text (transliterated) and translation included.

rec. live 2—11 March 2017, Gothenburg Concert Hall, Sweden. DDD/DSD.

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com.

BIS BIS-2320 SACD [62:24 + 62:50]



Martin Tsonev (Boris Godunov)

Mario Krastev (Fyodor)

Irina Zhekova (Kseniya)

Rumyana Petrova (Nurse)

Sergei Drobishevski (Shuysky)

Angel Hristov (Pimen)

Kostadin Andreev (Grigoriy Otrepiev)

Petar Buchkov (Varlaam)

Hrisimir Damyanov (Holy Fool)

Sofia Opera/Konstantin Chudovski

Pamen Kartaloff (Producer/Director/Stage designer)

rec. in front of Aleksandr Nevskiy Cathedral, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2014.

NTSC colour. PCM 2:0 stereo. Picture ratio 16:9.

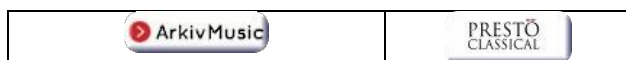
Subtitles: Russian, English, Italian, German, Bulgarian and Korean.

Synopsis included: no texts.

Region 0 – all regions

DYNAMIC 37718 DVD [115 minutes] Also available on blu-ray from some dealers.

BIS SACD available from	
Download BIS from	
Dynamic DVD available from	



If you don't mind the original *Boris*, without the female interest added in the later version, and

don't need the visuals, the BIS could be your go-to version. I know that's a lot of ifs, but the original is more compact in construction, running to two CDs instead of three, and the very good 24-bit recording compensates for the loss of visuals.

In any case, the splendour lies in the music, but if you want the spectacle, though again not the revised version, the Dynamic DVD will serve very well. With the Aleksandr Nevskij Cathedral as the background, it could hardly fail in the first respect, while the Boris of Martin Tsonev, while not in the 'greatest' category, is well worth hearing and the rest of the cast hardly inferior. The setting works well for the Coronation Scene, less well for Pimen in his cell, which becomes a hut on wooden supports. It's rather odd, too, to see the plaza in front of the cathedral laid with rails and to have the False Dimitry, Varlaam and Misail enter the inn on a steam engine which also serves as the innkeeper's oven, but these are minor reservations. The implication in the notes, in Italian and English translation, that the Polish scene is included is less forgivable. (Incidentally, beware of reading the 'reviews' attached to this DVD on Amazon UK; at least three of them are clearly referring to other productions, as are some of those on Amazon US, where two appreciative reviews ARE about this production.)

Three other recordings are worth mentioning: the classic 1952 Boris Christoff (in three major roles) and the Chandos highlights in English with John Tomlinson (**CHAN3007**) – see [DL Roundup April 2012/1](#). For the Karajan Boris (Decca **4757718**), see [August 2010](#). For the Christoff recording, ignore the emusic link – the Naxos Historical reissue is the one to have (**8.110242/4** – [review](#) – [review](#)).

The Gergiev recording which used to offer both the 1869 and 1872 versions on five Philips CDs for the price of three is now download only, still reasonable value for around £39 in lossless sound (**4622302**, no booklet). Decca to whom the Philips catalogue has now passed, offer just the 1872 version for an even more reasonable price of around £14.50 in lossless sound (**4783447**, with pdf booklet). The 5-CD set was Ralph Moore's first choice – [review](#). The download of the revised version would sit well with either of the new recordings of the original. Choose the Dynamic for the spectacle, good singing and recording, the BIS for even better vocals and sound. Price-wise, there's very little in it.

Bargain hunters will find Mark Ermler's Bolshoi recording of the Rimsky-Korsakov revision of the 1872 version on Alto for as little as £4.49 in mp3 or £6.79 in lossless; Ralph Moore's comment that those on a budget need not hesitate makes this a tempting proposition.

Sir Charles Villiers STANFORD (1852-1924)

Overture in the style of a tragedy, Op.90 (1903) [8:56]

Verdun, Op.151 (1917-1918, composer's arrangement of Organ Sonata No.2

Eroica):

Solemn March [8:27]

Heroic Epilogue [8:15]

A Welcome March, Op.87 (1903) [5:24]

Fairy Day, Op.131* (for solo soprano, SSAA chorus and small orchestra, 1912):

Fairy Dawn [7:15]

Fairy Noon [5:18]

Fairy Night [6:08]

A Song of Agincourt, Op.168 (1918, rev. 1919) [15:49]

Kerry Stamp (soprano)*

Codetta*

Ulster Orchestra/Howard Shelley

rec. 27-29 August 2018, Ulster Hall, Belfast. DDD

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from hyperion-records.co.uk.



HYPERION CDA68283 [65:32] For CD availability see [review by Rob Barnett](#): ‘This disc is a resoundingly confident contribution to the Stanford revival...To be celebrated’.

CD and download from



Though not claimed in the booklet as premieres, none of this music is otherwise available on record and I don't recall any previous recordings. One might have thought that the Stanford barrel had been scraped fairly clean with the renewed attention that his music has been receiving lately, and I wouldn't claim that we have any neglected masterpieces here. It is, however, all well worth hearing and the performances continue the fine service that the Ulster Orchestra did for Stanford under Vernon Handley's direction for Chandos.

Those who have yet to invest in Handley's recordings of Stanford's seven symphonies might well consider that a higher priority than the new Hyperion: **CHAN9279**, 4 CDs, around £32: the lossless download from [chandos.net](#) is more expensive than the discs, at £39.52. The separate releases remain available, some as downloads only, and the fillers which originally accompanied the symphonies are collected on a 2-CD set **CHAN10116X**, mid-price, or download from [chandos.net](#) in lossless sound for £14.99 – [review](#).

Hyperion, too, have several recordings of Stanford's music, some of them with Piers Lane, which I would regard as more vital than this latest release. Most recently I welcomed music by Stanford, Bairstow and Harris from Westminster Abbey (**CDA68259** – [Spring 2019/2](#)). Michael Greenhalgh also thought that a 'cracking good' recording: Bargain of the Month – [review](#). I've listed some other fine Stanford recordings from Hyperion as an appendix.

The two main works on the new Hyperion both relate to the First World War, albeit from different angles. *Verdun* is an arrangement of two movements from Stanford's Organ Sonata, dedicated to Widor and the heroic efforts of his fellow French at the battle of that name. The original is impressive music and, though I didn't think the orchestration added much to the picture, I liked it as well as John France did Daniel Cook's performance of the sonata on the organ of Salisbury Cathedral (Priory **PRCD1095**, with Organ Sonata No.1, etc. – [review](#)).

The Agincourt Song, on the other hand, celebrates the notable English victory over the French in the fifteenth century. The underlying theme is the fifteenth-century *Agincourt Carol* – a reminder that carols are not just for Christmas – perhaps most familiar for its use in Walton's music for the film of *Henry V*. Stanford's treatment is less overt than Walton's; you have to be familiar with the original to spot it underlying the music at the opening. Like everything else here, it receives the best possible advocacy from a label which has done so much to promote the Stanford cause.

Appendix – Stanford's music on Hyperion:

- Cello Concerto, etc. – Gemma Rosefield, BBC Scottish SO/Andrew Manze **CDA67859** – [review](#)
- Clarinet Concerto – Dame Thea King, Philharmonia Orchestra/Alun Francis **CDH55101** budget price (with FINZI) – [review](#) – [DL Roundup September 2010](#)
- Piano Concerto No.1 – Piers Lane, BBC Scottish SO/Martyn Brabbins **CDA66820** (with PARRY) – [review](#)
- Piano Quintet, String Quintet No.1 – Piers Lane, RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet **CDH55434**, budget price – [review](#) of original release
- String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2 – RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet **CDH55459**, mid-price – [review](#) of original release
- Violin Concerto, Suite for violin and orchestra – Anthony Marwood, BBC Scottish SO/Martyn Brabbins **CDA67208** – [review](#)
- Serenade (Nonet) – Capricorn **CDA66291** (with PARRY Nonet) (Archive service or download) – [DL Roundup September 2012](#)
- Choral Music – Trinity College, Cambridge/Stephen Layton **CDA68174** – [review](#) – [Summer 2017/2](#)
- Sacred Choral Music – Winchester Cathedral/David Hill **CDS44311/3**, budget price

- Fantasies 1 and 2 for clarinet quintet – Dame Thea King, Britten String Quartet **CDH55076**, mid-price (with FUCHS and ROMBERG)
- Clarinet Sonata – Dame Thea King, Clifford Benson **CDD22027**, 2 CDs for 1 (with English Music for Clarinet)

(see also the list appended to the review of the Choral Works in [Summer 2017/2.](#))

Sir Edward ELGAR (1857- 1934)

[Variations on an Original Theme](#), ('Enigma Variations') Op.36 [32:17]

Gustav HOLST (1874 – 1934)

[The Planets](#), Op.32 [49:38]

Female Voices from Bergen Philharmonic Choir & Edvard Grieg Kor

Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra/Andrew Litton

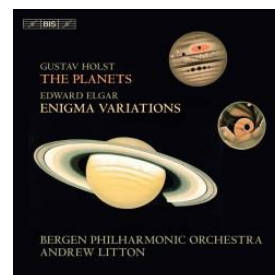
rec. June 2013 (Elgar) and February 2017 (Holst), Grieghallen, Bergen, Norway.

DDD/DSD

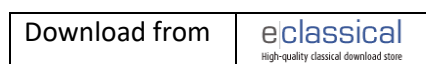
Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [eclassical.com](#).

BIS BIS-2068 SACD [82:42]

For purchase details, see Recommended [review](#) by Robert Cummings, [review](#) by John Quinn (Recommended) and [review](#) by William Hedley.



Coupled as above: LSO/Pierre Monteux (Elgar), VPO/Herbert von Karajan (Holst) Decca Originals **4758225** mid-price CD or budget-price download.



Not only is the 1958 Monteux recording ample proof that it's not just the English who understand Elgar, all in all it remains my benchmark for any other recording of the *Enigma Variations* and has done ever since I owned the LP, which I'm surprised to see got something of a dusty reception when it first appeared on RCA. Now Andrew Litton's Norwegian orchestra prove that they, too, have a feeling for Elgar. They do the Holst proud, too, less plush than Karajan with the VPO or, later, in early digital sound, with the Berlin Phil, but more idiomatic. It's hard not to concur with my colleagues' high opinions of this BIS release. The sound is first-rate, too, in 24-bit format, though you need to turn up the wick in the Elgar for the best effect and turn it down again for Holst.

LP fanciers may wish to note that the Philharmonia/Barbirolli recording, coupled with *Cockaigne*, has been reissued with the original Elgar bicycle cover (Warner **9029539003**). I wouldn't return to vinyl at any price, especially not if I had to pay almost £20 for the privilege of a short recording. Even the download from Qobuz is rather expensive at £10.99 (16-bit) or £12.49 (24-bit).

If it's value for money that grabs your fancy, four excellent Elgar recordings, including *Enigma*, with Sir Andrew Davis in charge of the BBC SO can be found on Warner Classics Apex **0927413712** for around £6.

Maurice RAVEL (1875-1937)

Piano Concerto in G major (1931) [22:01]

Tzigane for violin and orchestra (1924) [10:41]

Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major (1929-1930) [19:08]

François Dumont (piano)

Jennifer Gilbert (violin)




Orchestre National de Lyon/Leonard Slatkin

rec. 2012 & 2015, Auditorium de Lyon, France

Ravel Orchestral Works Vol. 6

NAXOS 8.573572 [51:47] Reviewed as a 16-bit download. Pdf booklet included



CD available from	
	

In 2017 I [reviewed](#) the Slatkin/ONL *Daphnis et Chloé* as part of a double bill that included a rival version by Les Siècles under François-Xavier Roth. And while the former is decent enough, it's comprehensively outclassed by the latter. Indeed, I've found Slatkin's forays into French music much less appealing than, say, his ongoing Copland series with the Detroit Symphony, which is quite excellent. (That goes for the sound, too.)

I'm very fond of Krystian Zimerman's whip-smart take on the Ravel concertos, recorded with Pierre Boulez conducting the Cleveland Orchestra and LSO. Both bands are at their scintillating best, as is the soloist (Deutsche Grammophon). That said, I was pleasantly surprised by a similar coupling from pianists Yakov Zak (G major) and Alexander Slobodyanik (D major) with the USSR Academic State SO led by Yevgeny Svetlanov and Vladimir Verbitsky respectively ([Melodiya](#)). Set down in 1959 and 1978, these performances are well worth hearing, despite the very average fillers. Even the mono/stereo sound is acceptable, not a given with Soviet-era tapings.

The French pianist François Dumont turns in comparatively low-key performances of both works. At times, the G major concerto sounds unusually intimate – even introverted – and while that's hardly a hanging offence it makes for a monochromatic reading of this colourful showpiece. Slatkin's routine accompaniment doesn't do much for the D major concerto, either. That's even more of a problem in the *Tzigane*, which gets a warm but otherwise lacklustre outing from Jennifer Gilbert, the orchestra leader. As for the recordings, produced, engineered and edited by France Musique, they're fair to middling, nothing more.

Undercharacterised and underpowered performances; short measure, too. [DM]

Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945)

Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta, BB 114, Sz.106 [28:26]
Philharmonia Orchestra/Herbert von Karajan – rec. 1951. ADD/mono
WARNER CLASSICS 9029538369 [28:26]



My classic recordings for this work come from Reiner (RCA) and Solti (Decca, with LSO and Chicago SO) and I had by-passed this Karajan recording until it re-appeared on [Naxos Music Library](#). It's actually available from Warner Classics on its own as a download for around £4 in lossless sound, while Karajan's Berlin Phil recording, also originally for EMI, comes in tandem with Hindemith *Mathis der Maler* Symphony (**2564624459**, around £6 in lossless sound). The 1951 Philharmonia mono recording, originally released on four 78s, has been decently transferred but comes nowhere near what the RCA engineers were able to achieve for Reiner only a few years later. It's not just the recording, however, that makes me miss the greater power that Reiner and Solti bring to this music. One to stream for interest rather than to purchase.



By 1962, when the BPO recording was made, things were much improved sonically but, while this account of *Mathis* is worthwhile, I'd still look to Reiner and Solti for vintage Bartók. Once again, this is one to stream from [Naxos Music Library](#) rather than to buy and download, I think.

Sándor VERESS (1907-1992)

String Trio (1954) [19:28]

Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945)




Piano Quintet in C, Sz.23 (1904) [42:08]

Barnabás Kelemen (violin), Vilde Frang (violin), Katalin Kokas (viola), Lawrence Power (viola), Nicolas Altstaedt (cello), Alexander Lonquich (piano)



rec. July 2017, Pfarrkirche Lockenhaus (String Trio) and August 2018, Jar Kirke, Bærum (Piano Quintet)
 Reviewed as 24/44.1 (wav) press preview.

ALPHA 458 [61:36] See 'Recommended' [review](#) by Stuart Sillitoe.

CD available from	
	

There are surprisingly few recordings of Bartók's early Piano Quintet: there's a Naxos bargain with Jenő Jandó and the Kodály Quartet, who make a good fist of it, but the Chandos recording from Steven de Groote and the Chilingirian Quartet is now download only (**CHAN8660**, with String Quartet No.6 – from [chandos.net](#), mp3 and lossless, with pdf booklet, or Archive Service CDR). It's a rather over-long piece of Brahmsiana which Bartók later came close to disowning, but it's well worth hearing and both the Chandos and the new Alpha do well by it.

The Chandos would be more competitive if it were to be reissued at mid-price, but the String Quartet coupling is a problem – it's not at all bad, but it's better to obtain the Bartók quartets on one of the highly recommended sets. The Alpha, on the other hand, comes with the Veress which you are unlikely to have obtained elsewhere. Overall, then, the new album, very well performed and recorded, is the one to have.

Béla BARTÓK (1881–1945)

Bluebeard's Castle, Op. 11, BB 62 (*A Kékszakállú herceg vára*, 1911, revised 1912, 1917–18)

Opera in One Act, Libretto by Béla Balázs

Kékszakállú (Bluebeard) - John Relyea (bass)

Judit - Michelle DeYoung (mezzo)

Prologue - Pál Mácsai (speaker)

Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra/Edward Gardner





rec. Grieghallen, Bergen, Norway; 16, 17, and 19 November 2018. DDD/DSD.

Texts and translations included.

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [chandos.net](#).

CHANDOS CHSA5237 SACD [58:55]



CD available from	
	
Download from	

Some works there are which I have never wholly grasped and, for all my love of Bartók's music, *Bluebeard's Castle* is one of them. Hearing parts of this new recording on Radio 3 encouraged me to think that this might be the one to do it when, for example, Iván Kertész and the LSO, with Walter Berry and Christa Ludwig didn't quite make it (Decca Legends **E4663772**)? Ralph Moore characterises that recording in one of his wonderful [comparative surveys](#) as 'full and atmospheric' and 'the performances are superlative'. Apart from the omission of the Prologue, it's his 'ideal in every respect'.

The new recording features a Bluebeard and Judith who have both made names for themselves in their respective roles and who sing most convincingly here. And while the Bergen Phil may not match the LSO with Kertesz, Gardner have made them a force to be reckoned with. Radio 3 Record Review featured the opening of Door 4 and Door 5 and the orchestra give convincing accounts of the garden and the panorama, especially of the latter. With first-rate sound – ideally, turn the volume a little higher – this is well on the way to convincing me that this is the recording to have. If it's a little less dramatic in places than you might expect, the tone of mystery which it captures reminds me of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* from a just a few years earlier.

If it's a budget-price *Bluebeard* that you are seeking, Marin Alsop on Naxos would seem to be the one to have – [review](#).

Igor Feodorovich STRAVINSKY (1882-1971)

The Firebird (complete, 1910)
Orchestre de Paris/Seiji Ozawa
Released 1973. ADD

WARNER CLASSICS 9029540923 [46:04]

Boston Symphony Orchestra/Seiji Ozawa
Released 1984. DDD

WARNER CLASSICS 9029542296 [45:32]



Paris version	
Boston version	

Warner have released in pretty short order Seiji Ozawa's two recordings of the complete *Firebird* ballet. There was an earlier Boston version of the Suite, still available to stream from Naxos Music Library. Both the complete *Firebirds* are download or streaming only and neither comes with a booklet. The Paris version can be obtained very inexpensively, the Boston slightly less so, but worth paying the extra for the tighter playing.

Stravinsky's own Columbia recording (1961) is also download only and more expensive than when it was available on CD, but it comes with *Rite of Spring* thrown in and it remains my benchmark for both works (Sony **SMK89875**). Avoid at all costs the alternative download of Stravinsky's *Firebird* only, which costs as much or more than the version with *Rite*. Even worse, there's a download of the Suite only, also more expensive than the version which I recommend – 25 minutes for £12.99 from one dealer!

The best value of all is offered by Simon Rattle's coupling of *Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka*, *Apollon Musagète* and *Firebird* on Warner (ex-EMI) **9677112** 2 CDs around £8.50 – [review](#) – [review](#).

RECOMMENDED

Sir Arthur BLISS (1891–1975)

The Enchantress (1951) Scena for contralto and orchestra (Words adapted from the Second Idyll of Theocritus by Henry Reed, 1914 – 1986) [17:11]

Meditations on a Theme by John Blow (Psalm XXIII – The Lord is my Shepherd) (1955) [32:11]

Mary of Magdala, Cantata for contralto and bass soli, chorus, and orchestra (Text written and adapted by Christopher Hassall, 1912 – 1963) (1962 – 63) (premiere recording) [27:17]

Dame Sarah Connolly (mezzo) James Platt (bass)
BBC Symphony Chorus; BBC Symphony Orchestra/Sir Andrew Davis
rec. Watford Colosseum; 13 and 14 April 2019. DDD/DSD
Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from chandos.net.

Texts included.

CHANDOS CHSA5242 SACD [76:58]



CD available from	
Download from	

This is the first recording of *Mary of Magdala* and there is only one rival CD version of *The Enchantress*, a work composed for Kathleen Ferrier. Bliss enthusiasts, who haven't been waiting

for this release, will not be disappointed. Good as the Lyrita broadcast recording of *The Enchantress* is – [review](#) – [review](#) – the new Chandos makes an even better replacement for their earlier recording from Linda Finnie and Vernon Handley, though that remains worthwhile for its other contents (**CHAN10221**, with Cello Concerto, Colour Symphony, download only, £7.99 in lossless sound).

There are several fine alternatives for the *Meditations*, but they receive a fine performance here and the first recording of *Mary of Magdala* is reason enough to choose the new version and to award

Recommended status. The work concentrates on the events of the first Easter Day, with the biblical text and two seventeenth-century poems adapted by Christopher Hassall, to whose memory the work was dedicated. It's quiet and contemplative rather than dramatic, in much the same vein as Bliss's pastoral music, such as his *Lie Strewn the White Flocks*¹. Sarah Connolly and James Platt are excellent soloists, very well supported by all concerned.

¹ included in 2-for-1 Chandos **CHAN241-1** and with music by Britten and Holst on Hyperion Helios **CDH55050**, £6.50 on CD or lossless download from hyperion-records.co.uk. See [DL News 2016/1](#) for both.

Heino ELLER (1887–1970)

Night Calls (*Öö hüüded*) (1920–21) [17:39]

White Night (*Valge öö*), Symphonic Suite (1939) [28:56]

Twilight (*Videvik*) (1917) [5:09]

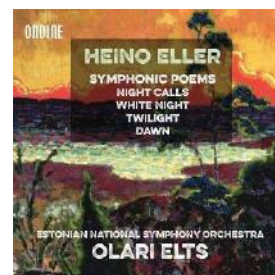
Dawn (*Koit*) (1918, orch. 1920) [7:42]

Estonian National Symphony Orchestra/Olari Elts

rec. April, 2018 (Night Calls); March 25–28, 2019 (White Night; Twilight; Dawn),

Estonia Concert Hall, Tallinn, Estonia. DDD.

ONDINE ODE 1335-2 [59:26]



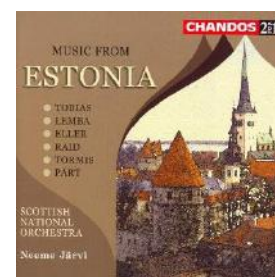
CD available from	
Stream from	

This is my **Discovery of the Month**. Eller's music has been an inspiration to Arvo Pärt and I can think of nothing more appropriate than to quote Pärt's words on the rear cover of the CD:

Heino Eller's oeuvre is typified by strict logic, a cultivated sense of style, subtle and masterly orchestration, and a markedly personal style of composition. These qualities position him firmly alongside the great Nordic composers. [...] Heino Eller was much more than anything I can express in words. It was largely due to him that music in Estonia was able to achieve a cultural and professional dignity.

My wife says that I should add that it sounds magical; Rob Barnett said much the same, in more detail, of an earlier Ondine recording containing his Violin Concerto (ODE1321-2 – [review](#)).

The two recordings on which Chandos coupled Eller with music by other Estonians in performances conducted by Neeme Järvi have now been combined on a 2-for-1 set (**241-26** – from chandos.net, with pdf booklet). They also remain separately available as downloads (mp3 or lossless, with pdf booklet) or as CDR copies from chandos.net [here](#) and [here](#). **CHAN8525** couples the *Elegia for harp and strings* (1931), *Dawn* (1918/20) and *Five pieces for string orchestra* (1953) with music by **Kaljo Raid**, while **CHAN8656** offers *Twilight* in the company of music by **Artur Lemba**, **Rudolf Tobias**, **Veljo Tormis** and **Arvo Pärt's Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten**. For some reason Volume 2 is less expensive to download than Volume 1, but the twofer is the best value of all. Unless you must have the 24-bit version of the new Ondine, the Chandos is well worth considering, with more music for your buck and nothing wrong with the 16-bit sound. See also [review](#) by Rob Barnett.



Sergei PROKOFIEV (1891-1953)

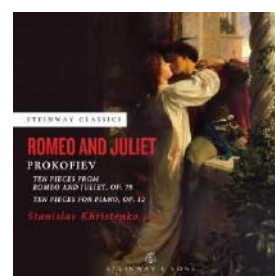
10 Pieces from *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 75 (1937) [32:35]




10 Pieces for Piano, Op. 12 (1906-1913) [23:49]

Stanislav Khristenko (piano)

rec. 2015-2017, Steinway Hall, New York City

STEINWAY 30114 [56:25] Reviewed as a 24/192 download, with pdf booklet, from eClassical



CD available from	
	

One of my top picks for 2017 was a Steinway release of Stewart Goodyear playing his arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*. Apart from the exceptional performance this is

one of the most lifelike piano recordings I've ever encountered; then again, it was recorded by the Sono Luminus team at their studios in Boyce, Virginia, as was a subsequent album featuring pianist Jenny Lin in a mixed programme that includes music from Prokofiev's *Cinderella* ([review](#)). And good as Steinway's own recordings are, they're not *quite* in the SL league.

The Ukrainian pianist Stanislav Khristenko (b.1984) is new to me, but I see he's already recorded a selection of pieces by Brahms, Bruckner, Schumann and Zemlinsky ([Steinway 3032](#)), not to mention some Krenek for [Toccata](#). We've not reviewed the first, but Jonathan Woolf thought highly of the second, which appears to be the inaugural volume in a projected series. Indeed, a preliminary dip into this new Prokofiev release suggests Khristenko is one of a growing number of millennial artists destined to do well. (First-rate sound, too.)

In recent years I've come across two memorable performances of the *Romeo and Juliet* pieces, one from the veteran Vladimir Ashkenazy (recorded for Decca in 1995 and now available on [Eloquence](#)), the other with the Canadian pianist David Jalbert ([Atma Classique](#)). Khristenko starts as he means to continue, those two opening chords more scruff-grabbing than usual. Thereafter, the focus is on articulation and attack, Lauren Sclafani's almost holographic recording blessed with great presence and oodles of detail. Prokofiev really pits the left hand against the right in this music, and the often startling – but always distinctive – clash of concords/discords have seldom emerged so cleanly (and effortlessly). Happily, this pianist is never without feeling, especially in quieter, more inward passages. In short, an illuminating performance that has much to offer newbies and old-timers alike.

The rarely heard Op. 12 - ArkivMusic list just four complete recordings - was written much earlier in Prokofiev's career. And while it may not be as accomplished or individual as, say, Op. 75, it's still mercurial and mischievous. As expected, Khristenko is alive to these elements and exploits them to the full. Any caveats? Only two: the gap between the two works is much too short, one almost running into the other; and 56 minutes of music is short measure.

Splendid performances and sound; I look forward to more from this very talented pianist.

Listeners may also be interested in a marvellous arrangement, for viola and piano, of Prokofiev's Op. 54 *Romeo and Juliet* suite. A well-deserved Recording of the Month ([review](#)). [DM]

RECOMMENDED

Erich Wolfgang KORNGOLD (1897–1957)

Symphony in F sharp, Op. 40 (1947-1952) [44:34]

Theme and Variations for School Orchestra, Op. 42 (1953) [7:47]

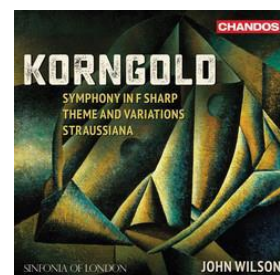
Straussiana for Orchestra (1953) [6:37]





Sinfonia of London/John Wilson

rec. 2019, Church of St. Augustine, Kilburn, London

CHANDOS CHSA5220 SACD [59:17] Reviewed as a 24/96 download, with pdf

booklet, from [Chandos.net](#). Previous review: [Brian Wilson](#) ([Recording of the Month](#))



SACD available from	
	
Download from	

It's good to see the Korngold discography looking so healthy. At the time of Erich Leinsdorf's classic 1975 recording of the opera *Die tote Stadt* (RCA) there wasn't much in the catalogue; since then, the composer has finally been acknowledged, not only as a writer of fine film scores but also for his accomplished concert and stage works. I'm particularly

fond of the violin concerto, especially as played by Gil Shaham and the LSO under the late-lamented André Previn (Deutsche Grammophon, although Philippe Quint is a splendid soloist, too ([Naxos](#)). As for the Symphony in F sharp, I've long gravitated towards Ted Downes's 1992 recording with the BBC Phil, but what makes that album extra special is Linda Finnie's luminous singing of the coupled *Abschiedslieder* ([Chandos](#)). Warm, full bodied sound throughout.

I've not been following John Wilson's Copland cycle for Chandos, also with the BBC Phil, which has attracted plenty of praise on these pages. However, listening to his superbly incisive and *interesting* performance of Korngold's Op. 40, I probably should. Wilson's is a taut, persuasively shaped approach, with a profound sense of loss in the darkly intense third movement. Also, the score's lush, more filmic flourishes – there are a few – are judiciously done. More important, the music feels genuinely symphonic, Downes sounding rather bluff and episodic by comparison. In short, the piece hangs together much better now, every nuance and colour effortlessly extracted and so naturally displayed. Frankly, I can't imagine the symphony being better served than it is here.

I much enjoyed the two fillers, which, are a musical and sonic treat. Korngold is at his sweeping, big-screen best in *Theme and Variations*, while *Straussiana* brims with *echt*-Viennese charm and character. (Indeed, Korngold shows he can out-Strauss the Strausses when it comes to sheer lift and loveliness.) Factor in crisp, very elegant playing and Ralph Couzens' wonderfully transparent recording and it's easy to see why this is a MusicWeb **Recording of the Month**.

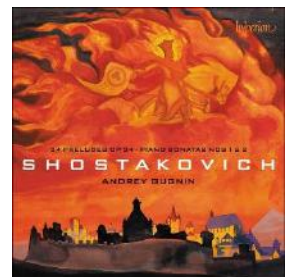
A peach of a programme, delectably presented; more, please. **[DM]**

RECOMMENDED Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

- Piano Sonata No. 1, Op. 12 (1926) [13:03]
- 24 Preludes, Op. 34 (1932-33) [35:54]
- Piano Sonata No. 2, Op. 61 (1943) [28:25]
- Nocturne from *The Limpid Stream*, Op. 39 (1936) [2:04]
- Andrey Gugnin (piano)

rec. 2018, St Silas the Martyr, Kentish Town, London

HYPERION CDA68267 [79:27] Reviewed as a 24/96 download, with pdf booklet, from hyperion-records.co.uk. Previous review: [Dominy Clements](#) (Recommended)



CD available from	
Download from	

In recent reviews I've drawn attention to a batch of younger pianists – many of them millennials – whose blend of virtuosity and uncommon insight is immensely encouraging in a field where, all too often, runaway technique is prized above all else.

But if Dominy Clements' enthusiastic review of Hyperion's new album featuring the multi-award-winning Russian Andrey Gugnin (b. 1987) is anything to go by, then this pianist is definitely a member of the new club. As it happens, I've Dominy to thank for prompting me to download a superb recording of Opp. 34 and 61, as played by Irina Chukovskaya ([Melodiya](#)).

True, these pieces are technically challenging, yet in the right hands they're so much more, as Peter Donohoe's recent accounts of the two sonatas amply demonstrates ([Signum](#)). But if you like a white-knuckle ride, then Raymond Clarke's Op. 12 is hard to beat. (Actually, his Athene recording of the sonatas and preludes is a must-hear for all DSCH fans.) However, he and Donohoe are comprehensively outclassed here by Gugnin, whose confident execution of this precocious piece is a revelation. Moreover, he has by far the best recording, engineered by the ever-reliable Ben Connellan.

When it comes to the 24 Preludes, Tatiana Nikolayeva's less-than-immaculate account, recorded for [Hyperion](#) in 1992, is still worth hearing, although Chukovskaya is more elegant, imaginative and better presented. Again, it's Gugnin who must take the palm, for he brings out such a wide range of moods,

styles and telling detail that, at times, makes it feel like one’s discovering the piece all over again. He offers sparkle, inwardness (lyricism too), hints of antic rigour and dainty little dance tunes, all of it wrapped up in a heady half hour or so of extraordinary musicianship.

The other substantial work here is the Piano Sonata No. 2, which, as expected, is a masterclass in sensitive, beautifully nuanced pianism. As for the perfectly balanced, subtly shaded recording, it’s an object lesson in how to capture the complex timbres and resonances of a piano. I’ve long praised Hyperion for their prowess in this regard, but this raises the bar once more.

Gugnin ends this well-filled album with a transcription of the dreamy little Nocturne from Shostakovich’s ballet, *The Limpid Stream*. Anyone interested in the complete orchestral score should seek out Gennady Rozhdestvensky’s splendid [Chandos](#) recording with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic. (By a happy coincidence, Ben Connellan engineered that one too.) The full and fascinating liner-notes for the Hyperion release are by Robert Matthew-Walker.

First-rate music, a phenomenally talented pianist, a fine acoustic and an exemplary recording; almost certainly a Recording of the Year. **[DM]**

Bernard Haitink: The Early Years

Volume 3

Pyotr Il’yich TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Capriccio Italien, Op.45 [15:05] – rec.1961 ADD/stereo

Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)

Symphony No.4 in A, Op.90 (‘Italian’) [24:46] – rec. 1960 ADD/stereo

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

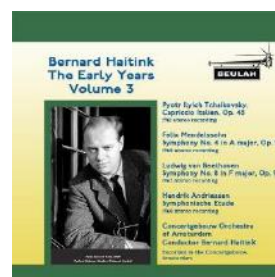
Symphony No.8 in F, Op.93 [26:23] – rec. 1962 ADD/stereo

Henrik ANDRIESEN (1892-1981)

Symphonische Etude [9:12] – rec. 1960 ADD/stereo

Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam/Bernard Haitink
rec. Concertgebouw Grote Zaal, Amsterdam. Dates as above

BEULAH 3PS51 [75:21]



Volume 4

Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)

Overture: *The Hebrides*, Op.26 [9:34] – rec.1960 ADD/stereo

Antonín DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

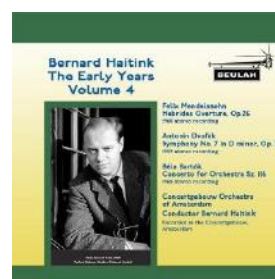
Symphony No.7 in d minor, Op.70, B141 [35:48] – rec.1959 as SABL196:
ADD/stereo



Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945)

Concerto for Orchestra, BB123, Sz116 [36:38] – rec.1960 as SABL213:
ADD/stereo

Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam/Bernard Haitink
rec. Concertgebouw Grote Zaal, Amsterdam. Dates as above

BEULAH 4PS51 [81:56]



Download (Volume 3)	
Download (Volume 4)	

I [reviewed volumes 1 and 2](#) of this series of Beulah reissues of early Haitink recordings some time ago. Since then, his final appearance at the BBC Proms was greeted with the expected enthusiasm. The earlier volumes encompassed Mahler and

Bruckner, both composers with whom Haitink’s name is rightly associated and Volume 3 includes another Haitink special, Beethoven, albeit not with one of the more familiar works but with the ‘little’ Symphony No.8, which happens, along with No.7, to be my favourite.

Haitink's many admirers will probably already have his Beethoven recordings with the LSO on their in-house label (Nos. 1-9, **LSO0598**, 6 SACDs for around £29 or download in mp3, 16- and 24-bit). No.7 and the Triple Concerto are on **LSO0578**, Nos. 4 and 8 on **LSO0587**. The separate releases are all available in 16- and 24-bit downloads from hyperion-records.co.uk; the 24-bit versions are more expensive than the SACDs, however. Alto are beginning to offer some of these LSO recordings (No.9 **ALC1387** or **ALC1400**), but, at a little over £6 and on CD only – no SACD equivalent – the cost saving is very little.

Haitink's association with Bartók may be a little less obvious, but he also recorded the Violin Concerto No.2 with Henryk Szeryng as soloist in 1969 and that recording remains available separately or with the Concerto for Orchestra, both download only, the latter coupled with the valuable recordings of the three piano concertos which Steven Bishop (now Kovacevich) made with the LSO and Colin Davis. That remains a desirable bargain twofer for around £10 in lossless sound (**4388122**) unless you already have good recordings of the piano concertos – perhaps these when they were available separately – in which case the Beulah becomes more attractive.

None of these recordings received a stellar review when they first appeared, nor would any of them challenge top spot now, but they remain valuable reminders of the start of a brilliant career. As usual, I agree with Beulah's preference for Qobuz, who offer their recordings in lossless sound for the same price (£7.99) that Amazon ask for mp3, but there's an exception in the case of volume 4, where the time of 82 minutes leads unjustifiably to a higher price of £11.99.

The Art of Ernest Ansermet

Maurice RAVEL (1875-1937)

Valse nobles et sentimentales [15:38] – rec. 1960 as SXL2273. ADD/stereo

Nikolai RIMSKY-KORSAKOV (1884-1908)

Scheherazade, Op.35 [43:27] – rec. 1961 as SXL2268. ADD/stereo

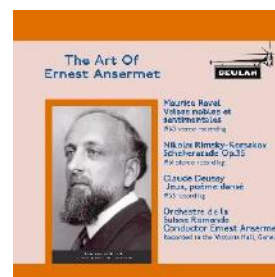
Claude DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Jeux, poème dansé [17:22] rec. 1953. ADD/mono

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande/Ernest Ansermet

rec. Victoria Hall, Geneva. Dates as above.

BEULAH 1PS52 [76:27]



Stream or download from



Ansermet recorded *Scheherazade* at least three times for LP: with the Paris Conservatoire in early stereo in 1954, again in

1958, and once more in this 1961 recording with his own Suisse Romande orchestra which, by general consensus, is the best of the three, with playing superior to that of the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra in 1958. It remains available, differently coupled, on two Decca downloads, both more expensive than the Beulah reissue and the 1954 recording has been reissued by Decca Eloquence (**4800081** – [review](#)). It wouldn't have been my first choice even in 1961 – that would be the Beecham recording, even though it's now download-only and more expensive than when it was on CD (Warner **5669832**) – but it's not far behind and it's much more generously coupled. The opening movement apart, Beecham spins the music out a little more, but I enjoyed this transfer of the Ansermet, sounding better sonically than the Beecham. He was an acknowledged specialist in Ravel and Debussy and he doesn't let us down here in these well-transferred recordings, best downloaded from Qobuz in lossless sound for the same price as mp3 from other providers. Even the 1953 *Jeux* sounds fine – in fact, I wondered if it wasn't the 1958 recording – [review](#).

I often wonder how many people were able to afford the 36/5½ which the LP containing *Jeux* cost in 1954: £1.83, but the equivalent of at least £50 now. And here it is, with around twice the music on that LP, for £7.99.

Time & Eternity**Anon.:** *Kol Nidre* (Cantor) [0:31]**John ZORN (b.1953):** *Kol Nidre* [5:52]**Anon.:** *Elijahu Hanawi* [0:59]**Karl Amadeus HARTMANN (1905-1963)** *Concerto Funèbre* for violin & string orchestra (1939) [21:14]**N. N. IKONNIKOW (?), Wieslaw PIPCZYNSKI:** *Unsterbliche Opfer* (arr. for String Orchestra and Accordion) - War Cadenza (Improvisation) [4:21]**Anon.:** *Boze Ojczy, przebaczenie jest wielkim darem* [0:45]**Tadeusz SYGIETYNSKI (1896-1955)** *Dwa serduszka* [2:12]**Guillaume de MACHAUT (1300-1377)** *Messe de Notre Dame: Kyrie* (Transcription for String Orchestra) [3:38]**Frank MARTIN (1890-1974)** *Polyptyque* for Violin and Two Small String Orchestras (1973): I. *Image des Rameaux* [3:53]**Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)** *Johannes-Passion*, BWV245: Choral *Ach großer König* (Transcription for String Orchestra) [0:46]**Frank MARTIN** *Polyptyque* for Violin and Two Small String Orchestras: II. *Image de la Chambre haute* [5:56]**Johann Sebastian BACH:** Choral *Als Jesus Christus in der Nacht*, BWV265 (Transcription for String Orchestra) [1:24]**Frank MARTIN** *Polyptyque* for Violin and Two Small String Orchestras: III. *Image de Juda* [2:01]**Johann Sebastian BACH:** *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245: Choral *Durch dein Gefängnis* (Transcription for String Orchestra) [1:01]**Frank MARTIN** *Polyptyque* for Violin and Two Small String Orchestras: IV. *Image de Géthsémané* [4:04]**Johann Sebastian BACH:** *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245: *Wer hat dich so geschlagen* [0:59]**Luboš FIŠER (1935-1999)** *Crux* for Violin, Timpani and Bells [6:31]**Frank MARTIN** *Polyptyque* for Violin and Two Small String Orchestras: VI. *Image de la Glorification* [4:04]**Johann Sebastian BACH:** *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245: *O große Lieb* [2:17]

Patricia Kopatchinskaja (violin)

Camerata Bern

rec. September 2018, Radio Studio Zürich SRF.

Texts and translations included.

Reviewed as press preview.

ALPHA ALPHA545 [77:00]

CD available from	

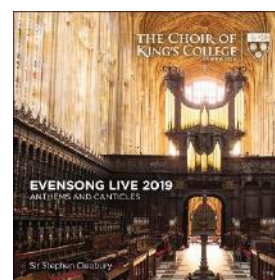
If you were looking for an example of a paradox, this is it. The programme is the most awful mess – in reality, not just on paper – with everything but

the kitchen sink thrown in, yet the album remains valuable for the Hartmann concerto – one of the best performances of this important work – and the Martin *Polyptyque*. The Hartmann concerto, the composer's protest against the terrors of Nazism, takes few prisoners metaphorically, but a performance such as this makes the listener stay the course, and the same is true of the Martin, which works well with the Bach interpolations. It's worth obtaining the album for these two works, but the rest is an ill-thought and ill-digested mess. Fortunately, it's easy to pick and choose if you download it. I've seen the recording described as 'thought-provoking'. Delete the word 'thought' for my reaction, but still go for this for the Hartmann and the Martin. Michael Cookson was similarly torn between admiration and annoyance – [review](#).

The booklet includes the Duccio paintings which inspired the Martin *Polyptyque*.

Evensong Live 2019: Anthems and Canticles**Sir Charles Hubert PARRY:** I was glad [7:11]**Henry LEY:** A Prayer of King Henry VI [1:41]**Patrick HADLEY:** My beloved spake [3:02]**Thomas WELKES:** Short Service: *Magnificat* [2:27]**Charles WOOD:** *Magnificat* & *Nunc Dimittis* in E-flat No.2 [2:49]**Judith WEIR:** Ascending into Heaven [8:01]**William MATHIAS:** Jesus College Service, Op.53: *Magnificat* [4:23]**William BYRD:** The Great Service: *Nunc Dimittis* [4:27]**Williams WALTON:** A Litany 'Drop, drop slow tears' [2:48]**Edmund RUBBRA:** *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in A-flat, Op.65 [4:15]**Sir Charles Villiers STANFORD:** Complete Morning & Evening Service in G, Op.81: *Nunc Dimittis* [3:25]**Charles WOOD:** *Oculi omnium* [1:30]**Sir Charles Hubert PARRY:** Evening Service in D ('the Great'): *Magnificat* [8:22]**Sir Charles Villiers STANFORD:** Complete Morning & Evening Service in B-flat, Op.10: *Nunc Dimittis* [2:56]**Nicholas MAW:** One foot in Eden still, I stand [7:01]**Gerald FINZI:** Lo, the Full, Final Sacrifice, Op.26 [14:17]Choir of King/s College Cambridge/Sir Stephen Cleobury, Ben Parry, Christopher Robinson
rec. King's College Cambridge, May 2018 to May 2019. DDD.

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as 24/44.1 download from hyperion-records.co.uk.**KING'S COLLEGE KGS0038** [78:44]

CD available from	
	Download from

Not long ago I was one of three MusicWeb reviewers who lauded Paul McCreech's reconstruction of a twentieth-century English coronation (Signum **SIGCD569** – [review](#) – [review](#)

– [review](#)). By the time that three of us had given it 'Recommended' status, it had to be a **Recording of the Month**. One of the highlights of that recording is Parry's Coronation setting of the psalm 'I was glad', and that opens the new King's recording, complete with the acclamation *Vivat Regina Elizabetha!* It makes a stirring opening to a very satisfying offering, mostly conducted by Sir Stephen Cleobury, but with very able assistance from Ben Parry and Christopher Robinson when he was recovering from an operation. Self-recommending, really, especially as the download is so inexpensive: £6.50 in 16-bit and £7.30 in 24-bit sound; you should be able to find the CD for £8.75.

Don't overlook the earlier *Evensong Live 2015* (**KGS0011** – [Autumn 2017/1](#); also *Evensong from Oxford*) and 2016 (**KGS0015** – [review](#)). Both can be downloaded from Hyperion [here](#) and [here](#).




Magnificat**Sir Charles Villiers STANFORD:** *Magnificat* & *Nunc Dimittis* in A: *Magnificat* [6:17]*Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in A: *Nunc Dimittis* [5:36]**Kenneth LEIGHTON:** *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* (The Second Service) [11:13]**Herbert SUMSION:** *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in A [8:11]**Herbert HOWELLS:** *Magnificat* & *Nunc Dimittis* (Gloucester, 1946) [11:49]**Gabriel JACKSON:** *Magnificat* & *Nunc Dimittis* (Truro Service) [7:36]**Sir Michael TIPPETT:** *Magnificat* & *Nunc Dimittis* (*Collegium Sancti Johannis Cantabrigiense*) [7:55]

Glen Dempsey (organ)

Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge/Andrew Nethsingha

rec. St. John's College, Cambridge, 19-22 April 2018. DDD.

Texts included. Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from hyperion-records.co.uk.**SIGNUM SIGCD588** [58:44]

CD available from	
	Download from 

Whether by accident or design, St John's have avoided going head to head with their more famous neighbours or, indeed, with Signum's earlier award-laden recording *A Rose Magnificat*

(**SIGCD536**). Both the two new releases represent a feast for the many listeners who regularly tune in to BBC Radio 3 Choral Evening on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons and for all lovers of English choral music.

In brief

Claudio MONTEVERDI (1567-1643)

Vespro della beata Vergine, SV206 (1610)

La Tempête/Simon-Pierre Bestion

rec. November 2018, Notre Dame du Liban, Paris. DDD.

Texts and translations included. Reviewed as mp3 press preview.

ALPHA552 [77:19 + 64:48]



With so many excellent recordings of this wonderful music available, this interventionist recording, with extra instrumentation and interpolated sections left me angry rather than impressed. Some often very fine singing is offset with added settings inspired by folk tradition: the deadly influence of Marcel Pérès at play. First choice remains The King's Consort with *Missa In illa tempore* (**CDA67531/2** – CD or download from hyperion-records.co.uk for £16) or the super-budget Taverner Consort (Warner Veritas **5616622**, with excerpts from *Selva morale*). For *Azahar*, and album where the Bestion treatment works much better, see [Spring 2017/1](#).

Antonio VIVALDI (1678-1741) Complete Concertos and Sinfonias for Strings - L'Archicembalo rec. 2015-18 **BRILLIANT CLASSICS 95835** [4 CDs: 261:53] *Unless the sheer prospect of this much Vivaldi in one go is too much, this new set is worth much more than its modest price.* [See full review.](#)



Christophe Coin's series of recordings of VIVALDI

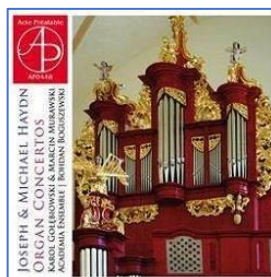
Cello Concertos continues with Volume 3: Concertos in C, RV400; in D, RV404; in d minor, RV407; in G, RV405; in a minor RV420 and in B-flat, RV423. With L'Onda Armonica **NAÏVE OP30574** [58:18].

It's been ten years since Volume 2 – [review](#) – and there has been a change of orchestra but the wait has been worthwhile. As before, Coin employs both the violoncello and the violoncello piccolo.



George Frideric HANDEL (1685-1759) *Orlando* - Bejun Mehta (counter-tenor), B'Rock Baroque O Ghent/René Jacobs rec. 2013 **ARCHIV 4792199** [2 CDs: 159:58] *Certain to become part of my Handel listening experience.* [See full review.](#)

Joseph HAYDN (1732-1809) & Michael HAYDN (1737-1806) Organ concertos - Karol Gołębowski (organ), Marcin Murawski (viola); Academia Ensemble/Bohdan Boguszewski rec. 2018 **ACTE PRÉALABLE AP0448** [50:12] This has become available again from MusicWeb since I reviewed it.



I should point out, however, that Chandos have just released Ian Quinn (organ) and Arcangelo directed by Jonathan Cohen in Joseph Haydn's Organ Concertos Nos. 1 and 2, together with Concerto No.6, for organ and violin (with Sophie Gent, violin). The download includes as a bonus Concerto No.10. (**CHAN20118**, review pending).



On the off chance that there's someone out there who doesn't have Elizabeth Schwarzkopf's recording with the LSO and George Szell of **Richard STRAUSS (1864-1969) Four Last Songs**, Warner have just re-released it, with three other songs and **Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART Four Concert Arias (1756-1791)** with Alfred Brendel and Edith Peinemann (**90295343781**). Still a short offering [47 minutes], but who's counting when the quality is so high? Lossless download

around £7.

Richard STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Metamorphosen, study for twenty-three solo strings, TRV290 (1945) [28:43]

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Symphony No.3 in E-flat, Op.55 'Eroica' (1804) [46:32]

Sinfonia Grange au Lac/Esa-Pekka Salonen

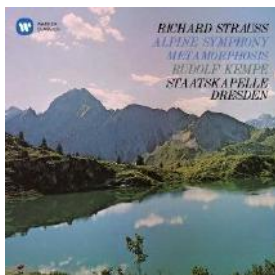
rec. live, July 2018, La Grange au Lac, Évian, France. DDD.

Reviewed as lossless press preview.

ALPHA 544 [75:20] For purchase details see [review by Michael Cookson](#).



This appears among the In Brief reviews solely because I had a problem obtaining the lossless preview – Outhere have reverted to sending mp3, often at low bit-rates, by default to reviewers – and I didn't want to disturb the main body of this edition at such a late stage.



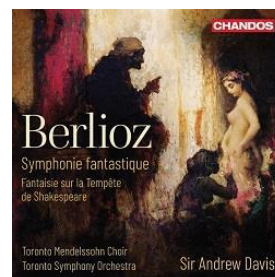
My only reservation in echoing MC's recommendation is to ask if the pairing of these two pieces works for you and to remind readers of the many very fine accounts of the Strauss – Rudolf Kempe's 9-CD box is currently reduced from £29 to £17.40 (Warner **9029554251**) – and even more of the Beethoven. Those not wanting the whole Kempe/Strauss Dresden Staatskapelle box will find *Metamorphosen* with the *Alpine Symphony* on a download for around £6 in

lossless sound.

Hector BERLIOZ (1803-1869) Fantaisie dramatique sur la Tempête; Symphonie fantastique - Toronto Mendelssohn Ch & SO/Sir Andrew Davis rec. 2018

CHANDOS CHSA5239 SACD [70:07] *A very worthwhile account, but not one to alter existing recommendations.* See [full review](#).

A new (live) recording of *Symphonie fantastique* from Les Siècles is forthcoming from Harmonia Mundi, a sequel to their *Harold in Italy* (**Recommended review**) and their earlier (2010) account of the symphony (Actes Sud **ASM02**).



RECOMMENDED Eric COATES (1886–1957) Orchestral Works, Volume 1

The Merry-makers, a Miniature Overture (1922–23) [4:32]

The Jester at the Wedding : Suite from the Ballet (1932) [24:34]

Dancing Nights, Concert Valse (1931) [7:20]

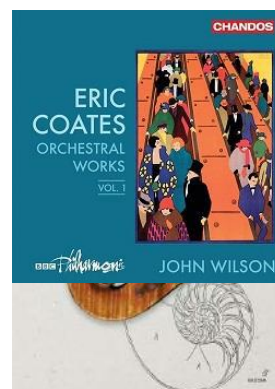
Ballad, Op.2, for String Orchestra (1904) [5:52]

Two Symphonic Rhapsodies on Popular Songs (1933) [9:34]

By the Sleepy Lagoon, Valse-Serenade (1930) [3:57]

London (London Everyday) Suite for Orchestra: *Covent Garden, Westminster, Knightsbridge* (1932) [14:07]

BBC Philharmonic/John Wilson



rec. MediaCityUK, Salford, Manchester; 9 and 10 January 2019. DDD.
Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from chandos.net.
CHANDOS CHAN20036 [70:39] *Roll on Volume 2*. See [full review](#).

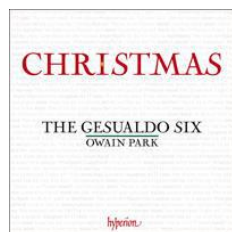
The 1690 'Tuscan' Stradivari Fabio Biondi (violin); Antonio Fantinuoli (cello); Giangiaco Pinardi (theorbo); Paola Poncet (harpichord) rec. 2019 **GLOSSA GCD923412** [61:59] *Not just the first-rate performances and recording make this recording so worthwhile, it's also likely to lead to further exploration of this repertoire*. See [full review](#).

Christmas Preview

Inevitably, some Advent and Christmas releases are beginning to appear or are announced in advance. Among those slated for release in early and late November, I hope to cover:

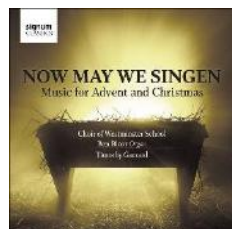
Christmas at St George's Windsor

A sequence of music for Advent, Christmas & Epiphany
Luke Bond (organ)
St George's Chapel Choir Windsor, James Vivian
HYPERION CDA68281 [70:11]
Due 1 November 2019.



Christmas

The Gesualdo Six/Owain Park
HYPERION CDA68299
[74:06]
Due 1 November 2019.

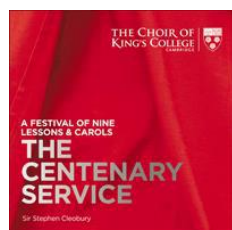


Now may we singen

Music for Advent and Christmas
Ben Bloor (organ)
Westminster School Choir/Timothy Garrard
SIGNUM SIGCD595 [67:11]
Due 25 October 2019.

Heinrich SCHÜTZ (1585-1672)

The Christmas Story, SWV435,
Magnificat, SWV468
and other works
Yale Schola Cantorum/David Hill
HYPERION CDA68315 [71:03]
Due 29 November 2019.



A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

The Centenary Service

Henry Websdale (organ)
King's College Choir Cambridge/Sir Stephen Cleobury
rec. 24 December 2018.
KING'S KGS0036-D [81:53]
Due 8 November 2019.

RECOMMENDED

Nowell synge we bothe al and sum: A Feast of Christmas Music from Medieval England

Veni, O sapientia – Anon (?15th century) [2:51]

Angelus ad virginem – Anon (14th century) [3:06]

Alma redemptoris mater: As I lay – Anon (15th century) [2:29]

John DUNSTAPLE (c.1390–1453) *Gaude virgo salutata / Gaude virgo singularis / Virgo mater comprobaris / Ave gemma cæli luminarium* [4:37]

Nowell, nowell, nowell – Anon (15th century) [3:53]

John COOKE (c.1385–1442) *Ave regina cælorum* [2:14]

In natali novi regis – Anon (12th century) [2:38]

Alleluya: *A nywe werk is come on honde* – Anon (15th century) [3:50]

Mervele not, Joseph – Anon (15th century) [4:13]

Edi be thu, heven queene – Anon (13th century) [4:03]

O sapientia – Gregorian chant [0:45]

Walter FRYE (d.1475) *Ave regina cælorum* [2:36]

Lullay, lullay: *Als I lay* – Anon (14th century) [9:31]

Ecce, quod natura – Anon (15th century) [3:43]

Ave rex angelorum – Anon (15th century) [4:11]

QUELDRYK (fl. c.1400) *Gloria* [2:12]

Ther is no rose of swych vertu – Anon (15th century) [3:06]

Benedicite Deo – Anon (15th century) [4:11]

Leonel POWER (d.1445) *Sanctus* [4:14]

Resonet, intonet – Anon (12th century) [2:02]

Nowell synge we bothe al and som – Anon (15th century) [1:59]

Puer natus est nobis – Gregorian chant [0:59]

Nowell: Owt of your slepe – Anon (15th century) [1:23]

Cantate Domino – Gregorian chant [0:41]

Nowell: Now man is bryghter – Anon (15th century) [1:25]

Gothic Voices

rec. Boxgrove Priory, Chichester, 27-30 October 2018. DDD.

Latin and Middle English texts and translations include

Reviewed as 24/96 press preview

LINN CKD591 [77:10]



This is the only one of these Christmas offerings that I could bring myself to hear in mid-October – too early for the holly and the mistletoe. If I say that it's everything that I expected from the resuscitated Gothic Voices, that's high praise indeed. Without checking, I don't think there's anything here that hasn't been included on other recordings of medieval English Christmas fare, but, while I can think of several other very worthwhile collections of such material, none of them is better done than this, so it's likely to be my top seasonal recommendation this year.

I should also mention that the **Hilliard Ensemble's** 7-CD collection of *Renaissance and Baroque Music*, including the Power, Queldryk and Cooke items from the new Linn recording, is currently on offer from Presto for £12.02, reduced from £18 (Erato **9029582507**). A bargain of bargains, even when it reverts to its 'proper' price. (£16.73 from Amazon UK.). Their smaller (2-CD) collection of Masses and Motets by Power and Dunstaple can be found for around £8.50 – by one of those oddities, the download costs more (Erato Veritas **6024932**).



One other Christmas album can be played at any time of the year – in fact, I first mentioned it in [February 2015](#):

Christmas with the Shepherds

Jean MOUTON (bef. 1459-1522)

Quæramus cum pastoribus [5:41]

Cristóbal de MORALES (c.1505-1553)

Missa Quæramus cum pastoribus: Kyrie [5:28]; *Gloria* [6:30]

Jean MOUTON

Puer natus est nobis [7:15]

Cristóbal de MORALES

Missa Quæramus cum pastoribus: Credo [11:31]

Jean MOUTON

Noe, noe, noe, psallite noe [4:41]

Cristóbal de MORALES

Missa Quæramus cum pastoribus: Sanctus & Benedictus [5:52]

Pastores dicite, quidnam vidistis? [4:02]

Missa Quæramus cum pastoribus: Agnus Dei [6:26]

Annibale STABILE (c. 1535-1595)

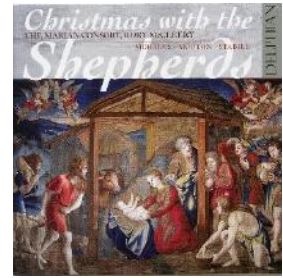
Quæramus cum pastoribus [5:22]

The Marian Consort/Rory McCleery

rec. 13-15 January 2014, Chapel of Merton College, Oxford. DDD

Latin texts and English translations included

DELPHIAN DCD34145 [62:55]



Download from	
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I originally referred to the less than ideal mp3 from emusic.com – like most of their other worthwhile

classical and jazz offerings, it has long since disappeared from there anyway, so it's the greatly preferable 24-bit download from chandos.net that I now recommend. It remains, however, as fine a recording as when I first praised it and when John Quinn and Glyn Pursglove did so in greater detail – [review](#) – [review](#). There's no booklet with the download, or with any other download of this recording that I can find, and that is a problem, an all too common one.