

**Second Thoughts and Short Reviews Summer 2020**  
**By Brian Wilson and Johan van Veen**

Reviews are by Brian Wilson unless otherwise stated.

This will be the last of these articles; after almost twelve years and several changes of style, the format has run its course. I would like to thank all those who, over the years, have made it much more worthwhile than I could have done alone.

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**Firenze 1350: A Medieval Florentine Garden**

**Paola da FIRENZE (c.1355-c.1436)**

*Godi Firenze* [3:42]

**Donato de FIRENZE (fl.1350-1370)**

*Come 'l potes' tu far* (instrumental) [3:39]

**Francesco degli organi [Francesco LANDINI] (c.1325-1397)**

*Adiou adiou* [3:22]

**Giovanni da FIRENZE (fl. c.1350)**

*Per larghi prati, caccia* [3:13]

**Bartolino da PADOVA (fl.1365-1405)**

*Quel sole che nutrical gentil fiore* [6:16]

**Francesco LANDINI**

*Creata fusti o vergine Maria à chanter sur l'air « Questa fanciulla amor »* [5:29]

**Anon.**

*Benedicamus domino, à chanter sur l'air « Ja Falla »* [2:16]

**Paola da FIRENZE**

*Benedicamus domino* [2:19]

**Anon.**

*Benedicamus domino* [1:49]

**Andrea da FIRENZE (d.1415)**

*Non più doglia ebbe Dido* [4:52]

**Francesco LANDINI**

*Che chosa è quest'Amor* (instrumental) [2:02]

**Vincenzo da RIMINI (fl.c.1350)**

*Ay, sconcolato ed amoroso* [3:13]

**Giovanni da FIRENZE**

*Quando la stella* [4:17]

*Quand'amor* [2:13]

**Anon.**

*Poi che veder non poso* (instrumental) [2:39]

**Francesco LANDINI**

*Conviens' a fede* [2:51]

**Lorenzo da FIRENZE (d.1372 or 1373)**

*A poste messe veltri e gran mastini* [2:58]

Roger Helou (organetto)

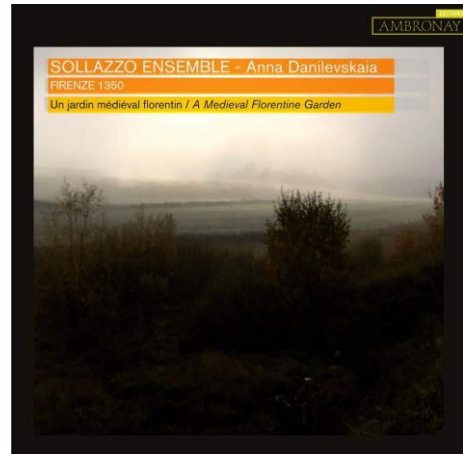
Sollazzo Ensemble/Anna Danilevskaia (fiddle)

rec. Ambronay Abbey, France, 22-25 July 2019. DDD.

Texts and translations included.

Reviewed as lossless (wav) press preview.

**AMBRONAY AMY055** [57:21] For CD purchase details see [Recommended review](#) by Gary Higginson.



The past is a foreign country, as LP Hartley reminds us in *The Go-Between* – and that just refers to the gap between the boyhood and old age of the narrator, from the late Victorian period to 1953. How much further do we need to go back before the past of music and literature really does seem foreign?

Conventionally, early-modern English, French and German date from the early sixteenth century; with a little effort, the language of Luther's Bible is still able to be understood by modern Germans and Cranmer's English Prayer Book in its 1662 form, little altered from the 1549 original, is still used in many Anglican churches. The dynastic struggles of the Wars of the Roses seem more than a century

more remote than the politics of Tudor times, with parallels between the stand-off between Henry VIII and François I and the power politics of our own times.

I'm going to plump and say that there is a clear line of descent between music as we now understand it, classical, jazz and popular, and that of Tudor composers. I have to admit that much of the music of the recent past that appeals to me is the work of modern composers with a sense of the line of continuity between them and their predecessors: for example, Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia* on Thomas Tallis's very simple tune for Archbishop Parker's book of psalms and James MacMillan's advocacy of his neglected Scottish predecessor Robert Carver.

Turn the clock back to Florence in around 1350, as on this Ambronay recording, and I suggest that modern listeners really do find themselves in a very different sound world. Florence at that time was on the verge of what we call the renaissance, a vague term to be sure, but the music of the period was far from what we normally mean when we use that word. Even the names of most of these composers remind us that the modern concept of a surname hardly existed, with people known by their place of birth or residence – hence all the composers here called 'Firenze' – their trade or a nickname. Even the composer better known today as Landini or Landino was referred to by his trade: *Francesco degli organi* or as *Francesco il Cieco*.

None of this is meant to deny the justice of GH's Recommended accolade. Anything earlier than c.1500 may come from an unfamiliar musical world, even the more familiar music of Machaut, but it's music with a beauty of its own and the performances here offer a very fine introduction to it.

I recommend streaming first to try this recording. Unfortunately, my favourite streaming provider, Naxos Music Library, doesn't offer the Ambronay label, but others do. If you like what you hear, Gothic Voices made a very fine series of recordings for Hyperion of the music of this period. A very good place to start would be with their award-winning *A Song for Francesca: Music in Italy 1330-1430* (CDH55291, £6.50 on CD or lossless download with pdf booklet from [hyperionrecords.co.uk](http://hyperionrecords.co.uk)). The composers include Francesco Landini, Andreas de Florentia (alias Andrea da Firenze) and Guillaume Dufay. Once you are attuned to the style this is, as Robert Hugill wrote in his [review](#), a beguiling recording and, I think, more approachable than the Ambronay.



**Salve Salve Salve – Josquin's Spanish Legacy**

**Cristóbal DE MORALES (c.1500-1553)**

Jubilate Deo omnis terra [5:30]

**Plainchant**

Gaudeamus omnes in Domino [1:19]

**Tomás Luis DE VICTORIA (c.1548-1611)**

Missa Gaudeamus: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo [22:20]

Salve Regina [10:01]

Missa Gaudeamus: Sanctus, Agnus Dei [10:50]

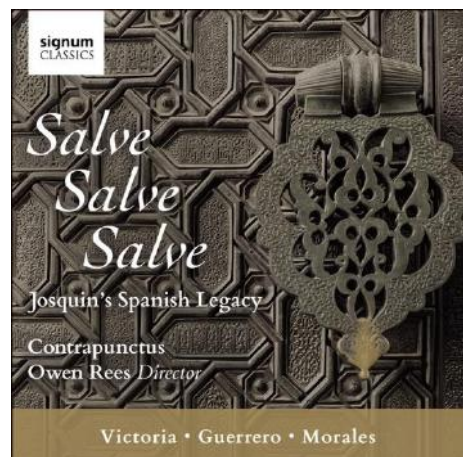
**Francisco GUERRERO (1527/28-1599)**

Ave virgo sanctissima [4:05]

**Plainchant**

Salve Regina [2:40]

**JOSQUIN DESPREZ (c.1450-1521)**



Salve Regina [8:08]

**Francisco GUERRERO**

Surge propera, amica mea [6:14]

Contrapunctus/Owen Rees

rec. 2019, Church of St Michael and All Angels, Oxford, UK. DDD

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as a 24/96 flac download from [Hyperion](#)

**SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD608** [71:19] For CD purchase details see [Winter 2019-20/3](#).

Josquin is a key figure in the history of music. His reputation in his time, and long after, was huge. That is eloquently demonstrated by this disc from the ensemble Contrapunctus, which focuses on one specific feature of Josquin's oeuvre: his use of an *ostinato* motif, a rhetorical-musical technique used to create a strong amount of coherence. This example was imitated by other composers, among them Spanish masters, such as Morales, Victoria and Guerrero.

The largest work in the programme is Victoria's *Missa Gaudeamus*, in which he uses a motif from Morales's motet *Jubilate Deo omnis terra*. In this piece Morales adds a sixth voice with its own text: "Gaudeamus", taken from the introitus for All Saints. This is used as a motto, modelled after Josquin's use of an *ostinato*. The latter used the same technique in his *Salve Regina*, and this inspired Victoria in his setting of the same text and Guerrero in his motet *Ave virgo sanctissima*.

This is a most instructive production, which helps the listener to understand and appreciate an important compositional procedure, supported by informative liner-notes. However, this is more than a musicological exposé: this is very fine collection of pieces, which document the brilliance of renaissance polyphony and some of its best representatives. The singing is of the highest level: beautiful voices, a full command of legato and an optimum transparency, which allows the listener to note the *ostinato* motif. [JV]

## RECOMMENDED

**Heavenly Songs**

**Nicholas LUDFORD (c.1490-1557) Missa Sabato**

**Anonymous**

*Deo gracias Anglia* [4:19]

**Nicholas LUDFORD**

*Missa Sabato: Kyrie* [5:20]; *Missa Sabato: Gloria* [7:25]

*Alleluya* [2:29]

*Sequentia: Hodierne lux diei* [5:25]

**Anonymous**

*Glose sur 'Edi beo thu hevne quene'* (instrumental) [5:51]

**Nicholas LUDFORD**

*Missa Sabato: Credo* [8:32]; *Missa Sabato: Sanctus* [6:20];

*Agnus Dei* [4:44]

**Anonymous**

*Ite missa est* [1:12]

*Glose sur 'There is no rose'* (instrumental) [6:30]

Abide I hope [2:35]

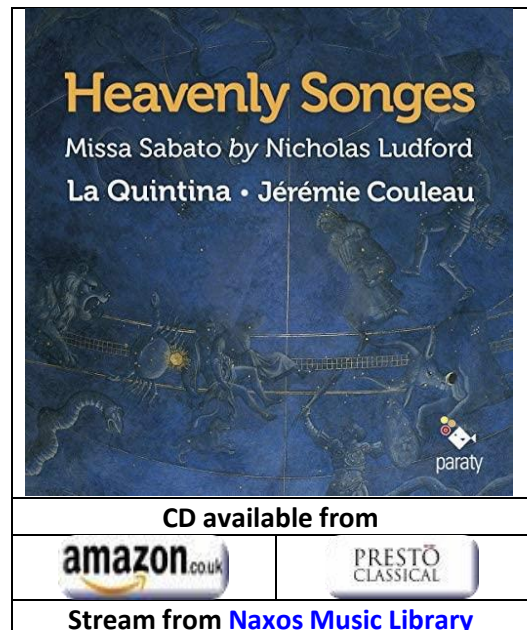
Christophe Deslignes (portative organ)

La Quintina/Jérémie Couleau (tenor)

rec. April 2019, Abbaye de Loc-Dieu. DDD.

First recording of *Missa sabato*. Texts and translations included.

**PARATY 220191** [60:45]





There's quite a long queue of reviews on the main MusicWeb site at the moment, so, rather than leave this recording unsung for several weeks, I'm including a short recommendation here. Regular readers will know that I consider Ludford to be unjustly neglected; in many ways his music is as worthy of attention as that of his better-known contemporaries – and even Taverner was little known until the recording companies took him up. Among several recent Ludford contributions to the catalogue, this rates highly. Lovers of early Tudor music need not wait for my longer review; go for it.

Johan van Veen has also reviewed this recording:

In comparison to the œuvre of other English composers from the first half of the 16th century, the works of Nicholas Ludford are not that well represented on disc, as a [survey](#) by Brian Wilson from 2014 shows. The present situation is not that different, although in recent years some recordings have been released, one by the Ensemble Scandicus, directed by Jérémie Couleau. He is also the director of La Quintina, which has recorded one of Ludford's three-part Lady Masses, the *Missa Sabato*.

These masses raise several questions, in particular regarding the performance of those parts of the text which Ludford did not set. Scholars have proposed several options; the performers have chosen for improvisation by voice and organetto on the basis of the so-called *squares*: musical material used as a *cantus firmus*. This practice is known as *cantus super librum* and was part of musical training in Ludford's time. The use of an organetto is another notable feature of these performances. In the course of the 16th century it became more or less obsolete, but was still in use here and there, especially in processions.

In addition to the mass, the ensemble has added some carols, two of which are played on the organetto with diminutions. This seems to be the first recording of the *Missa Sabato*, and the approach of the ensemble results in a quite fascinating performance, also thanks to the excellent singing and playing. It offers the possibility of becoming acquainted with performance practices that are rather rare these days, and a composer who deserves much more attention. For those interested in Renaissance polyphony, this disc is a must have. [JV]

**Johannes LUPI & Lupus HELLINCK**  
***Motets, Te Deum, Missa Surrexit pastor***  
**Lupus HELLINCK (1493/94-1541)**

Missa Surrexit pastor bonus [32:17]

**Johannes LUPI (c.1506-1539)**

Salve celeberrima virgo [09:40]

Quam pulchra es [06:48]

Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel [03:49]

Te Deum laudamus [18:01]

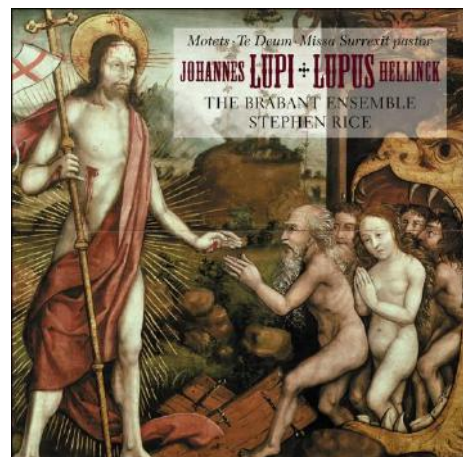
The Brabant Ensemble/Stephen Rice

rec. 2019, Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Loughton, Essex, UK

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as a 24/96 FLAC download from [Hyperion](#)

**HYPERION CDA68304** [70:40] For CD purchase see [review](#) and [review](#).



Even to those who have a special interest in renaissance polyphony Lupus Hellinck and Johannes Lupi may be unknown quantities. They were contemporaries and were both representatives of the Franco-Flemish school. However, there is no obvious connection between them, and they seem to have been brought together into one programme because of the similarity of their names. There was some

confusion between them in their own time, as well. Hellinck is represented here with a mass for five voices, in which he used material from the Easter motet *Surrexit pastor bonus* by Andreas da Silva (born probably between 1475 and 1480), unfortunately not recorded here. As was common in mass settings of the time, it includes various passages for reduced voices.

Lupi left a smaller number of works, due to his early death. Two pieces bear witness to the importance of the veneration of Mary; *Salve celeberrima virgo* is for eight voices and is notable for some strong dissonances. The setting of the *Te Deum* is remarkable for a different reason: settings of this text usually had an *alternatim* structure, but Lupi's version is through-composed.

This disc deserves a whole-hearted welcome, first because of the little-known repertoire, almost certainly available on disc for the first time. It is excellent stuff, and receives an outstanding performance from The Brabant Ensemble, whose voices blend perfectly and whose singers demonstrate their full command of legato. In his full-length [review](#) Brian Wilson noted that the text is often not that easy to understand. I agree, although that was likely not the main concern at the time. My main regret is that Stephen Rice seems not to care about Latin pronunciation in the southern Netherlands at the time. [JV]

**Thoinot ARBEAU (Jehan TABOURET) (1520-1595)**

*Orchésographie* (1589)

Florilegio Ensemble/Marcello Serafini

First released 2003.

**PAN CLASSICS PC19027** [56:12]

**Thoinot ARBEAU (Jehan TABOURET)**

*Orchésographie*: selections (1589) [44:17]

**John PLAYFORD (1623-1686)**

*The English Dancing Master*: selections transcribed and arranged Jeremy Barlow [14:38]

The Broadside Band/Jeremy Barlow

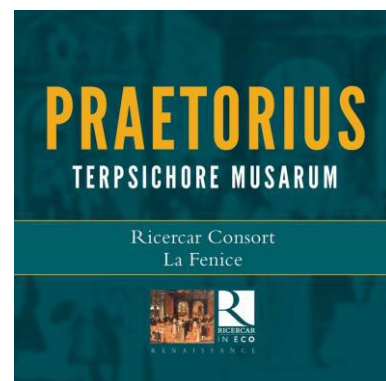
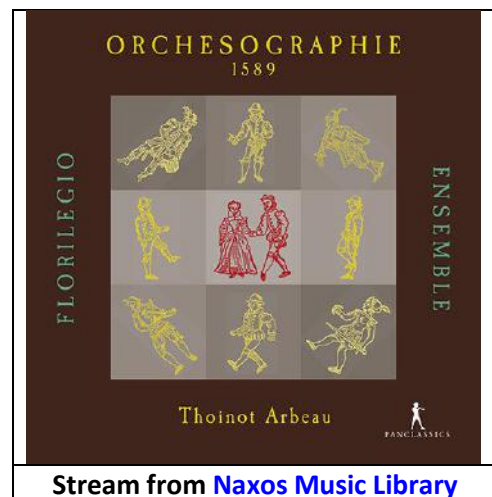
rec. 1982, 1984. DDD.

Reviewed as lossless download with pdf booklet from [eclassical.com](http://eclassical.com).

**HARMONIA MUNDI D'ABORD HMA1951152** [58:55]

The two largest collections of renaissance dance music are Arbeau's *Orchésographie* and Prætorius' *Terpsichore*. Arbeau's pen name was an anagram of his real name – as a cleric, he didn't want it to be known that he collected anything as frivolous as courtly dance music and even added instructions on how to perform the dances contained in his collection.

Coincidentally, recordings of both the Arbeau (Pan Classics – see below) and Prætorius' *Terpsichore* have recently been reissued. For the latter, on the Ricercar label, RIC136, see [Reissues January 2018](#).



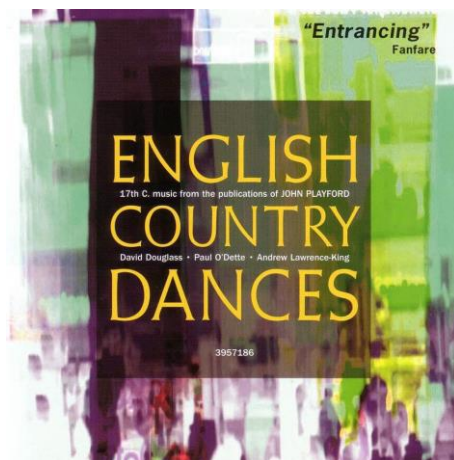
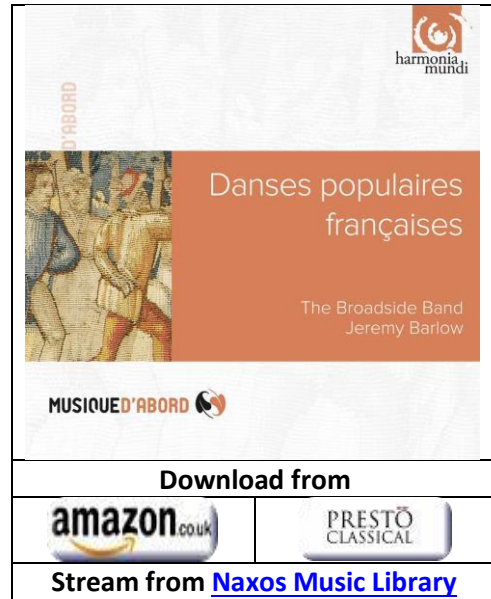
There used to be a Turnabout LP of *Orchésographie* with lively playing but a bit hit and miss at times, and more recently The New York Renaissance Band recorded it for the Arabesque label (not widely available). Going a little further back, there are budget-price versions from The Prætorius Consort (music by Arbeau, Prætorius, Lambranzi, Holborne and Demantius, Alto **ALC1076** – [June 2011/1](#)) and Harmonia Mundi, as listed above.

The **Harmonia Mundi**, download only, costs around £5.50 in lossless sound and comes with a rudimentary booklet; the Alto can be found on CD for around £6.50, again with a fairly basic booklet. Don't pay almost as much for the Harmonia Mundi in mp3; go for the lossless version.

The **Pan Classics** recording has recently been added to Naxos Music Library, albeit without any booklet, so I can't give details, but the CD, which seems to have been released in 2003, is being offered by a hopeful seller on Amazon for £240.23. Nor does a recording from Convivium Musicum which I reviewed in [May 2012/2](#) seem to be generally available any longer.

You won't go far wrong by streaming the Pan Classics from Naxos Music Library or by downloading the Harmonia Mundi at its very attractive price. If the latter offers a slightly shorter selection, it makes up by adding a few items from Playford. UK purchasers of the Harmonia Mundi are best served by the Presto download rather than the eclassical.com priced in US\$.

There's another Harmonia Mundi recording of music from Playford's collections: **English Country Dances - 17th Century Music from the Publications of John Playford**. This 77-minute selection performed by David Douglass, Paul O'Dette and Andrew Lawrence King, recorded in 1998 (**HCM3957186**) was briefly available on a budget-price label, Classical Express, which offered some valuable recordings but has since disappeared. Fortunately, downloads are again available: [Presto](#) offer lossless sound for £5.98. Readers outside the UK may prefer the eclassical.com version in \$US, but that is rather expensive. Stream from [Naxos Music Library](#).



Playford's music is less subtle than that of Arbeau, but both make excellent ways to lift spirits subdued by the pandemic and lockdown. There's one track, however, which merits comparison with the best music of the period: *Faronell's Division on a Ground* (track 13) is one of the many then popular variations on *La Folia*.

**Orlandus LASSUS (1530-1594)**

*Inferno*: Motets for six and eight voices

Omnia tempus habent [4:27]

Audi tellus [7:48]

Ad Dominum cum tribularer [3:42]

Media vita in morte sumus [1:50]

Circumdederunt me dolores mortis [2:49]

Libera me Domine [2:26]

Recordare Jesu pie [2:58]

Deficiat in dolore vita mea [2:40]

Vidi calumnias [4:21]

O mors quam amara [4:56]

Cum essem parvulus [4:01]

Vide homo [2:44]

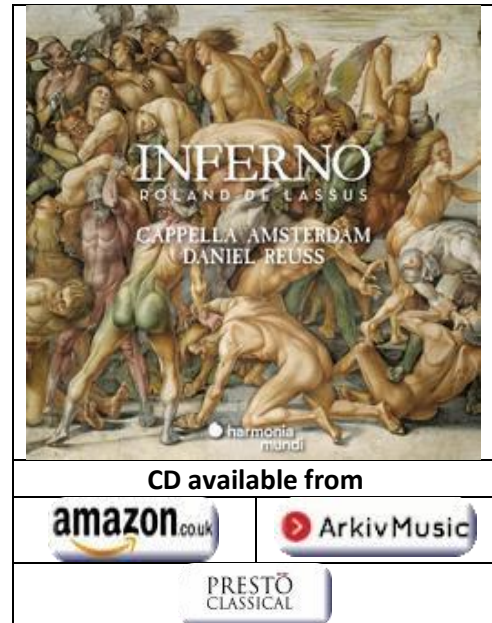
Cappella Amsterdam/Daniel Reuss

rec. 2019, Waalse Kerk, Amsterdam, Netherlands DDD

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as a 24/96 FLAC download from [eclassical.com](http://eclassical.com)

**HARMONIA MUNDI HMM902650** [49:13]



In the case of pre-romantic music, it is risky to construct a connection between a composer's state of mind and his music. However, there are good reasons to assume that Orlandus Lassus deliberately selected texts of a rather sombre nature during the last decade or so of his life. It is known that at that time he suffered from melancholia and even depression. His last cycle of works was the *Lagrime di San Pietro*, about St Peter expressing his sorrow for his denial of Christ. The motet Lassus added to this cycle also closes a recording of motets by the Cappella Amsterdam under the direction of Daniel Reuss. It is not surprising that several motets are settings of texts from Ecclesiastes, which emphasize the vanity of life.

Reuss, in interviews with Dutch newspapers, noted that it is rather fitting that this disc was released at a time that the world is suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The mood of these motets may well reflect the mood of many people who experience the pandemic's effects.

Cappella Amsterdam is a versatile ensemble, singing music from the renaissance until our own time. Here it comprises sixteen singers. I would probably prefer a slightly smaller ensemble, but fortunately it produces a transparent sound, which helps to ensure that the text is clearly intelligible. That is especially important in Lassus's music, which is full of textual expression. He was an absolute master in this department, and this recording is an eloquent demonstration of that. Despite its rather short playing time, this is a disc not to be missed. [JV]



**Orlandus LASSUS (1532 - 1594)**

***Lagrimae di San Pietro***

*Il magnanimo Pietro* [2:12]

*Ma gli archi* [2:25]

*Tre volte haveva a l'importuna* [2:21]

*Qual a l'incontro di quegli occhi santi* [2:44]

*Giovane donna il suo bel volto in specchio* [2:15]

*Così talhor* [2:00]

*Ogni occhio del Signor lingua veloce* [2:12]

*Nessun fedel trovai, nessun cortese* [2:44]

*Chi ad una ad una raccontar potesse* [2:18]

*Come falda di neve* [2:54]

*E non fu il pianto suo rivo* [2:19]

*Quel volto, ch'era poco inanzi stato* [2:35]

*Veduto il miser quanto differente* [3:09]

*E vago d'incontrar chi giusta pena* [2:40]

*Vattene vita va* [2:31]

*O vita troppo rea* [2:35]

*A quanti già felici in giovinezza* [2:25]

*Non trovava mia fé si duro intoppo* [2:31]

*Queste opre e più* [2:14]

*Negando il mio Signor* [2:27]

*Vide homo, quae pro te patior* [3:47]

Gallicantus/Gabriel Crouch

rec. 2-4 January 2013, St Michael's Church, Highgate, London, UK. DDD

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk).

**SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD339** [53:21] For CD details see [review](#) and *Recording of the Month* – [review](#).

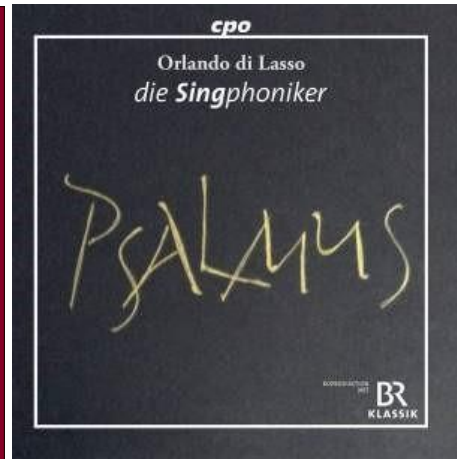


The new **Harmonia Mundi** recording of Lassus' largely penitential music serves as a first-rate reminder not only of the quality of the composer's music but of the extent to which people's lives in the Sixteenth Century were still governed by the medieval fear of death in a way that the current Covid-19 crisis makes it easier for modern listeners to relate to. The plague, bubonic, pneumonic or both, was an ever-present threat until, fortuitously, the Fire of London wiped out the cause of its spreading. Worse still, was the mysterious 'sweating sickness', which, between 1485 and 1555, could kill fit people in hours. Though the Puritans whitewashed the paintings of the Last Judgment, known as 'The Doom' on church walls, such as is depicted on the cover, the 39 Articles dismissed the 'popish' concept of Purgatory, and the English Prayer Book from 1552 asserted that the faithful departed were all safely in the hand of God, and even the Council of Trent put right many of the abuses such as the selling of pardons, some of the greatest music of the period – and later, e.g. Purcell's funeral music for Queen Mary and the *Burial Service* of his pupil William Croft – was composed with the fear of death in mind. Even the English Prayer Book retained as one of the opening sentences one of the texts which Lassus sets here, *Media morte*, In the midst of life we are in death.

Like JV (above) I would have appreciated a longer programme, but the eclassical.com per-second charging policy takes care of that. In all other respects, I appreciated this recording as much as my colleague.

I missed the **Signum** recording of *Lagrimae di San Pietro* when it was released. There are two other very fine recordings of this emotionally charged late masterpiece, both at budget price, directed by Bo Holten on Naxos (**8.553311**) and by Philippe Herreweghe (Harmonia Mundi Musique d'Abord **HMA1951483** – [review](#)), but the Signum is also a strong contender and comes in 24-bit sound, while the 16-bit download – both from Hyperion – is only a little more expensive than either of these.

For more of Lasso in serious mode, and, perhaps, evidence of the composer's gloomy nature, try *Die Singphoniker* on CPO in his settings of the penitential psalms, c.1559. (**CPO 555264-2**, 2 CDs). Or the less expensive 2-for-1 Hyperion Dyad with Henry's Eight (**CDD22056**, download



with pdf booklet or Archive Service – [review](#) – [review](#). From [hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk)).

**Pietro Amico GIACOBETTI (1558-1616)**

*Lamentationes per la Settimana Santa a 5 voci cum omnibus responsiis ...* (Lamentations and responses for Holy Week, Venice, 1601)

Maundy Thursday:

Lamentation I: *Aleph* [6:46]

Lamentation II: *Vau* [4:41]

Response: *Tristis est anima* [3:20]

Lamentation III: *Inimicus misit* [5:26]

Good Friday:

Lamentation I: *Heth* [5:27]

Response: *Seniores populi* [2:28]

Lamentation II: *Lamed* [5:15]

Lamentation: II *Aleph* [5:34]

*Omnes amici mei* [2:44]

Holy Saturday:

Lamentation III: *Incipit oratio Jeremiae* [6:28]

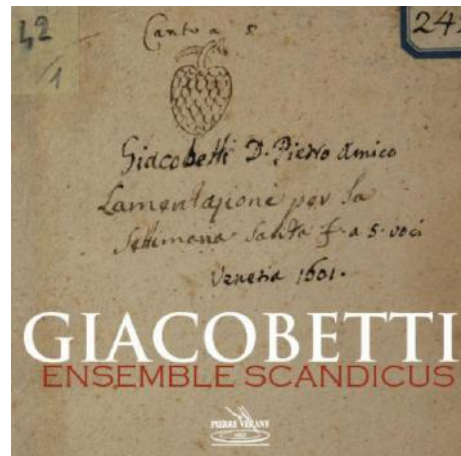
Response: *Tenebrae factae sunt* [3:35]

Ensemble Scandicus

rec. 2017.

Texts and French translations included

**PIERRE VERANY ARION PV717011** [51:24] Availability: see review below.



Last month I added some contributions to the Neglected Recordings list. Now I'm adding another recording that I missed when it was released; I hardly need to apologise because it's not easy to obtain; available in the UK only as a download or as streamed from [Qobuz](#), with pdf booklet, in lossless sound for £7.19. That's better value than Amazon UK's mp3 at £9.99, without booklet; it really is high time that all suppliers offered lossless downloads routinely and didn't charge over the odds for mp3, often not at the highest bit-rate.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah were recited or sung in the Latin rite over the course of the Sacred *Triduum*, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, interspersed with a number of responses. All renaissance and baroque settings seem to vary from my copy of the 1955 restored Holy Week services, as restored immediately before the advent of shopping-basket vernacular services. Giacobetti seems to have set the first verse of each of the Lamentations, followed by the recurring exhortation 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord', and all the responses, 27 in all over the three Nocturnes of Matins for each of the three days. There are pdf scores of the Lamentations for Maundy Thursday and for three of the responses online. Ensemble Scandicus have included seven of the nine verses which Giacobetti set, together with three of the responses on their recording. There's much more to praise than to regret here.

With just 51 minutes on the clock, they could have given us more, but that's my only complaint. I'm only too pleased to have this recording and to have had my attention directed to it. I was not entirely happy with an Ensemble Scandicus recording of the music of Nicholas Ludford because it had been transposed down for this all-male ensemble, but the Giacobetti sounds brighter, with some light-sounding counter-tenors on the top lines. The recording is good, but the book is a little skimpy.

**Juan ESQUIVEL (c.1560-before 1630)**

***Missa Hortus conclusus, Magnificat, Marian antiphons, Motets***

Regina coeli [2:15]

**Rodrigo DE CEBALLOS (c1530-1581)**

Hortus conclusus

**Juan ESQUIVEL**

Missa Hortus conclusus: Kyrie, Gloria [7:14]

Veni, Domine [1:52]

Missa Hortus conclusus: Credo [8:22]

Ego sum panis vivus [2:34]

Missa Hortus conclusus: Sanctus, Agnus Dei, Ite missa est - Deo gratias [7:13]

Alma redemptoris mater [4:39]

Magnificat 5. toni [8:38]

Ave regina coelorum [3:16]

Nunc dimittis [3:35]

Sancta Maria [3:44]

Te lucis ante terminum [3:15]

Salve Regina [8:10]

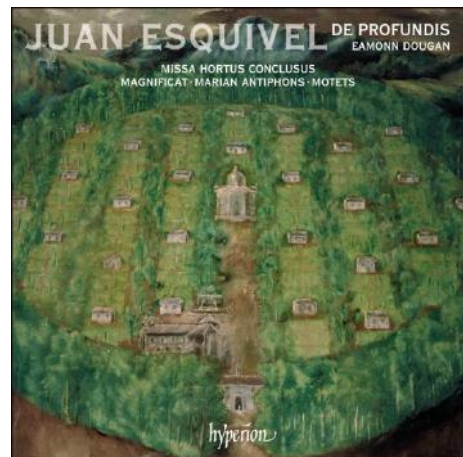
De Profundis/Eamonn Dougan

rec. 2019, St George's Church, Chesterton, Cambridge, UK DDD

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as a 24/96 flac download from [Hyperion](https://www.hyperion.co.uk/)

**HYPERION CDA68326** [69:30] For CD purchase see [review](#) and [review](#).



Hyperion has a well-deserved reputation for releasing discs of renaissance polyphony, often by little-known composers, and performed by top-class ensembles. The present disc is a good example. Not many people will have heard of Juan Esquivel, a Spanish composer of the late 16th/early 17th century, who is largely overshadowed by his two contemporaries Victoria and Guerrero. Although he has left a considerable oeuvre, very little of that is available in recordings, and therefore this disc is of great importance. The main work is a mass, which is interspersed with other pieces. However, no attempt

has been made to a kind of liturgical reconstruction, as the inserted pieces are for different stages of the liturgical calendar.

In his mass, Esquivel reworked material from a lovely motet by Rodrigo de Ceballos on a text from the Song of Songs. Inevitably, the programme includes several pieces which reflect the importance of the veneration of Mary in Spanish Catholicism. Such music often has a strong emotional flavour, and that is especially the case here with *Sancta Maria*. It is a challenge to the performers to bring that out, and De Profundis succeeds with flying colours. The ensemble comprises only male voices, from alto to bass, which are supported by a *bajon*, the Spanish renaissance dulcian. There are different opinions on the role of wind instruments in Spanish polyphony, but the line-up in this production works very well. This is an exciting disc, and I hope more music by Esquivel will be recorded. [JV]

***Intermedi della Pellegrina: Firenze 1589***

Six choreographical and musical *Intermedi* created for the play by Girolamo Bargagli staged in Florence for the wedding of the Serenissimo Don Ferdinando Medici and Christina of Lorraine, Grand Dukes of Tuscany (1589)

**Cristofano MALVEZZI** (1547–1597)

I Intermedio: *L'Armonia delle Sfere*

**Luca MARENZIO** (1554–1599)

II Intermedio: *La Contesa fra le Pieridi e le Muse* and III

Intermedio: *Il Combattimento di Apollo col serpente Pitone*

**Giulio CACCINI** (c.1550–1618), **Cristofano MALVEZZI**

IV Intermedio: *Demoni celesti annunciano l'avvento di un'epoca felice*

**Cristofano MALVEZZI, Jacopo PERI** (1561–1633)

V Intermedio: *Arione e il delfino*

**Cristofano MALVEZZI, Emilio de' CAVALIERI** (1550–1602)

VI Intermedio: *Appare in cielo Giove con il concilio degli dei*

Rossana Bertini, Elena Bertuzzi (soprano); Candida Guida (alto); Paolo Fanciullacci (tenor); Marco Scavazza (baritone); Mauro Borgioni (bass)

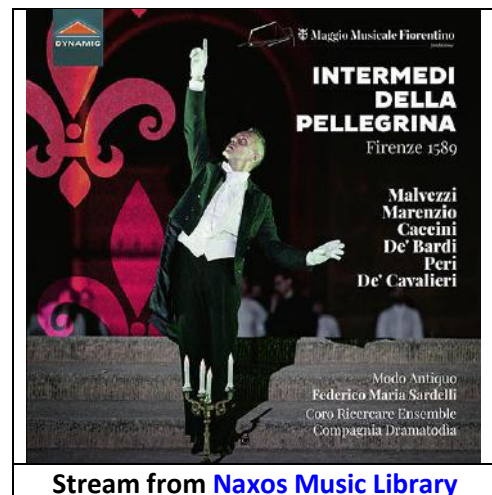
Coro Ricercare Ensemble - Compagnia Dramatodia

Modo Antiquo/Federico Maria Sardelli

rec. live Giardino di Boboli, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, 16th-18th June 2019, LXXXII Festival del Maggio Musicale 2019. DDD.

Texts and translations included.

**DYNAMIC CDS7856** [65:41] For CD availability see [review](#).



You give up waiting for that overdue bus and start walking, when along it comes and you almost miss it. In Spring 2020/3 I reported unfavourably on a Château de Versailles Spectacles DVD that purported to be of these *Intermedi* but wasn't, or not exactly; instead of presenting the originals, they had been chopped into bits and spliced together with excerpts from early Italian operas. Reading Paul Corfield Godfrey's [review](#) of a Naxos blu-ray production of Purcell's *King Arthur*, I see that the *Intermedi* are not the only work to be sliced and diced – I wager that someone will now write an admiring review, as is already the case with the Versailles DVD.

Fortunately, in the same day's reviews as the murdered *King Arthur*, Claire Seymour [reviews](#) this Dynamic live recording of the *Intermedi* in their original form. I'm not sure that I would go so far as to award the 'Recommended' tag, as she does – in many ways the older EMI recording, with Emma Kirkby *et al* directed by Andrew Parrott, still available as a download (Erato **6026842**), remains preferable, and the illustrations in the booklet and the trailer on YouTube certainly put me off the DVD



and blu-ray versions of the new recording – but I'm delighted to have the original music of these fore-runners of opera restored complete and in the correct order and readily available on CD as well as download.

**Claudio MONTEVERDI (1567-1643)**

*L'Orfeo* (orchestrated Ottorino RESPIGHI)

Claudia Clarich; Paolo Coni; Enrico Facini; Nuccia Focile; James Loomis;

Orchestra da Camera Lucchese/Herbert Handt  
rec. live. First released 1995.

**CLAVES 509419** [77:05]

This is a real oddity. Much of Respighi's best music arose from dressing earlier works in new clothes, while retaining the flavour of the original. His *Airs and Dances for the Lute*, for example, are a real delight, but I can't make much sense of this live recording of his orchestration and slight abridgement of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. I can't say if it's the arrangement, the scrawny recording, or the performance, but the music emerges as insipid, a pale shadow of how this opera should sound.



Download from



Stream from [Naxos Music Library](#)

The value of having listened via [Naxos Music Library](#) is that I now know that I don't want any more to do with this recording. The down side is that it comes without booklet, so I can't give a recording date, but it was first released in 1995. Listen once out of curiosity, then forget about it. I'm amazed to see that it's been recommended on BBC Radio 3, albeit only as a 'curiosity'.

**Matthias WECKMANN (1616-1674)**

**Complete Organ Music**

Matteo Venturini (organ)

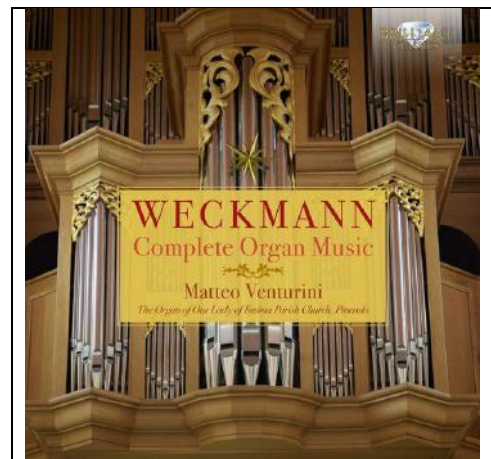
rec. 26-29 November 2018 & 1-5 April 2019, Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church, Pinerolo – Turin, Italy. DDD.

Organ specification included in booklet.

**BRILLIANT CLASSICS 95229** [3:04:03]

See also [review by Glyn Pursglove](#).

There is only one recording of Weckmann's music that can claim to be more complete: on a 5-CD set Bernard Foccroulle (organ) & Siebe Henstra (harpsichord), Ricercar Consort & Ensemble La Fenice offer his complete output, and that comes at a super-budget price, the CDs currently reduced from £26 to £15.60 by Presto, who also have a lossless download, with pdf booklet, for £15 (Ricercar **RIC369: Recording of the Month** – [review](#)).



CD available from



Stream from [Naxos Music Library](#)

Those wanting just the organ works, however, are equally well served by this Brilliant Classics set, again currently reduced from £10.50 to £8.40 from Presto, with a target price of £6.50, with pdf booklet, for a lossless download. In view of the Italian influence on Weckmann's music, this set of performances on a recent Italian organ, itself based on a Schnitger organ in Norden, is appropriate and enjoyable. At the price, unless you have already invested in the Ricercar, what are you waiting

for? Only those who insist on SACD sound will wish to pay more for an MDG recording of Weckmann's organ music, recorded on a Schnitger organ – [Spring 2019/3](#).

**Bonaventura ALIOTTI (c.1640 – c.1690)**

*Il trionfo della morte per il peccato d'Adamo*: Oratorio (Ferrara, 1677)

*Da farsi nella Chiesa della Confraternità della Morte l'Anno 1677.*

Vincent Bouchot (tenor), Capucine Keller (soprano), Anne Magouet (soprano), Paulin Bündgen (alto), Renaud Delaigue (bass), Emmanuel Vistorky (bass)

Les Traversées Baroques/Étienne Meyer

rec. 10 - 13 November 2019 & 9 December 2019, Musée du Hiéron, Paray-le-Monial, France. DDD.

Only available recording.

Text and French translation included

**ACCENT ACC24368** [94:15]



This is one of eleven oratorios by Aliotti, of which four have survived. We usually think of Rome as the originator of the oratorio tradition and names such as Cavalieri, Carissimi and Rossi, but Aliotti was a Sicilian, a member of the Franciscan minorites with an extensive musical training and he was at the forefront of the development of the form in Palermo, in this case for performance by the Confraternity of Death in their church, where he was organist. That's appropriate enough, since the topic is the origin of death from the sin of Adam.

Oratorio originated in dialogue so, appropriately, *Il trionfo della morte* opens with an extended amorous dialogue between Adam and Eve. Ignoring the advice of *Ragione* (reason), Adam's love triumphs over logic and duty; he follows Eve's advice and the inevitable Fall occurs. As in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Adam's uxoriousness is blamed more than Eve's weakness – after all, were women not the weaker vessel? (Try reading Robert Graves' *Wife to Mr Milton*.)

From what might appear dry material, both Milton and Aliotti, in their different ways, but around the same time, bring the biblical account to life. I doubt that we shall have another recording in the near future, but this is more than good enough for us not to need one. Indeed, it's well worth trying from Naxos Music Library; if you like it, as fans of baroque music are almost certain to do, it's available on CD and as a lossless download with pdf booklet (target price £16).

The only other Aliotti work generally available, his *Sansone* (Samson) is available as a K617 download, albeit without a booklet (**K617133**, guide price £8).

**Johann Paul von WESTHOFF (1656-1705)**

***Suites for solo violin***

Suite II in A [9:28]

Suite V in d minor [8:55]

Suite pour le Violon sans Basse Continu in A [12:28]

Suite I in a minor [8:56]

Suite IV in C [8:07]

Suite III in B flat [9:05]

Plamena Nikitassova (violin)

rec. 2019, Martinskirche, Mülheim, Germany

Reviewed as a stereo 16/44.1 download with pdf-booklet from Outhere  
**RICERCAR RIC 412** [56:59]

Johann Paul von Westhoff is one of the main representatives of the German violin school which developed in the second half of the 17th century. He travelled across Europe and performed in front of Louis XIV, who was quite impressed. Westhoff did not leave much music; his six suites or partitas for violin without accompaniment, which undoubtedly influenced Bach's Sonatas and Partitas, are available in only a few recordings.

In several ways the present disc is different from previous recordings. First, Plamena Nikitassova holds the violin against the chest rather than between shoulder and chin. In the booklet it is suggested that this was *the* way the violin was held in the 17th century, but that is doubtful. It seems that different positions coexisted. Another difference is the pitch: a=466 Hz, which was the pitch of organs and, as a result, of performances of sacred music in large parts of Germany. Unfortunately, the booklet does not discuss this issue. The gigue of the sixth suite is incomplete, and because of that the entire suite is omitted. That is a pity; previous recordings included this work, with the incomplete gigue. Instead we get here a *Suite in A*, published by *Le Mercure Galant* in Paris in 1683. This undoubtedly is a highly interesting release, for the reasons I mentioned, but also for the outstanding playing by Plamena Nikitassova. If you love baroque music for the violin, this is a disc not to be missed. [JV]



#### Extra Time

**Tomaso Giovanni ALBINONI (1671-1751)**

*La Statira*: Sinfonia [7:32]

**Antonio VIVALDI (1678-1741)**

Concerto No. 4 in F for violin, strings and harpsichord 'Per la solennità di San Lorenzo' RV286 [13:53]

**Giuseppe Antonio BRESCIANELLO (c.1690-1758)**

Concerto for violin, strings & continuo in G, Bre9 [10:12]

**Nicola MATTEIS the Younger (c.1678-1737)**

*Balletto di Cavalieri Romani, Spagnuoli, e Africani* from Act III of Caldara's *Scipione nelle Spagne* [2:26]

**Antonio VIVALDI**

*Concerto per Sua Maestà Cesarea e Cattolica* in C, RV171 [11:00]

Concerto for violin, strings & continuo in B-flat, RV365 [13:27]

**Nicola MATTEIS the Younger** (arr. Adrian Chandler)

*Ballo* from Act III of Caldara's *Cajo Marzio Coriolano* [13:29]

La Serenissima/Adrian Chandler (violin)

rec. February 2011, April 2015, Holy Cross, Winchester; August 2016, St John's Smith Square, London; February 2018, February 2019, Cedars Hall, Wells

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk).

**SIGNUM SIGCD641** [72:12]





This is the second recoding that La Serenissima have made since transferring to the Signum label. It's good to see that the standards of performance have remained the same – see [review](#) of earlier release, *The Godfather*. Nor has their taste for quirky covers altered; this new release contains material which they were unable to include in earlier albums, hence the title and the football shirts. Left-overs these may be, but very tasty left-overs, from master chefs and reimagined by an equally distinguished team.

Yet another very fine offering to build on the earlier Avie releases, all of which are worth chasing up. Not too sure about the football shirts, though.

**Francesco DURANTE (1684-1755)**

***Requiem in g minor***

*Introitus* [6:16]

*Gradualis et Tractus* [4:03]

Fugue in c minor [3:49]

*Sequentia* [15:33]

*Offertorium* [5:16]

*Sanctus* [2:03]

[anon] *Toccata* [3:52]

*Agnus Dei* [0:48]

*Communio* [3:24]

*Exitus* [8:38]

Francesca Cassinari (soprano), Elena Carzaniga (contralto), Roberto Rilievi (tenor), Matteo Bellotto (bass)

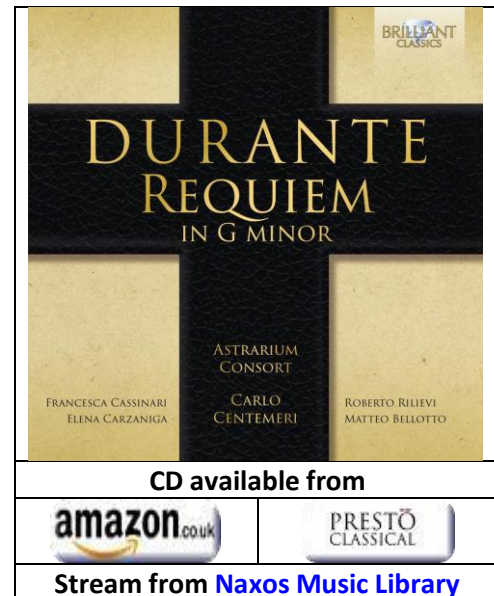
Astrarium Consort/Carlo Centemeri (organ)

rec. 2018, Sant'Antonio, Milan, Italy DDD

Reviewed as a stereo 16/44.1 download from Outhere;

pdf-booklet from brilliant classics.com

**BRILLIANT CLASSICS 96027** [53:44]



Francesco Durante was a remarkable composer. He lived at a time when melody was considered the foundation of music, but he stuck to the contrapuntal tradition he had grown up with. He was one of the leading composers in Naples, but unlike most of his colleagues he did not compose a single opera, which was the main genre of his time. It didn't harm his reputation: he was held in high esteem, not only in Naples, but also elsewhere. His music was still appreciated and performed well after his death. That also goes for the *Requiem in g minor*, which is the subject of the present disc.

This is one of three *Requiem* masses which he wrote. The scoring is modest: four voices and basso continuo. He added two parts for violins, but these can be omitted. Durante's skills in counterpoint come impressively to the fore here. He uses it for expressive purposes: right from the start he applies dissonances to illustrate the pain of death. Later he uses musical figures to depict elements in the text. In 'Lachrymosa dies illa' the opening line seems to illustrate the ringing of funeral bells.

The score includes some short episodes for solo voice(s), but most of the music is for *tutti*. The performers have opted for a performance with one voice per part, which is one of the options; it is certainly possible to perform it with a small choir. The four soloists do an excellent job: their voices blend perfectly; the good intonation guarantees that the dissonances have optimum effect, and the elements of text illustration don't pass by unnoticed.

This recording demonstrates Durante's qualities as a composer of sacred music, and the Astrarium Consort is its ideal advocate. [JV]



**Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)**

***Toccatas BWV 910-916***

Tocatta in g minor (BWV 915) [9:43]  
 Toccata in d minor (BWV 913) (later version) [12:31]  
 Toccata in G (BWV 916) [7:56]  
 Toccata in c minor (BWV 911) [10:01]  
 Toccata in e minor (BWV 914) [6:59]  
 Toccata in D (BWV 912) (later version) [10:50]  
 Toccata in f sharp minor (BWV 910) [9:38]  
 Masaaki Suzuki (harpsichord)  
 Recorded 2018 at Kobe Shoin Women's University Chapel,  
 Japan SACD  
 Reviewed as a stereo 24/96 download with pdf booklet  
 from eclassical.com  
**BIS BIS-2221 SACD [69:04]**

Having recorded Bach's complete vocal output for BIS, Masaaki Suzuki can now focus entirely on the recording of his keyboard works. So far three discs with organ works and the main collections of harpsichord works have been released. The latest addition to this impressive discography is a recording of the seven toccatas for harpsichord, of which it is not entirely clear whether they were intended as a cycle. In the booklet, Bach scholar Yo Tomita sums up what we know about these pieces, the various versions of some of them and the sources in which they have been preserved. We get here the most common versions, but in the Toccata in G, Suzuki turns for the *adagio* to a version with embellishments by Bach's elder brother Johann Christoph. These pieces are rooted in the north German organ school, and bear the characteristics of the *stylus phantasticus*. Among them are strong contrasts between the various movements, some of which follow each other *attacca*, and technical brilliance.

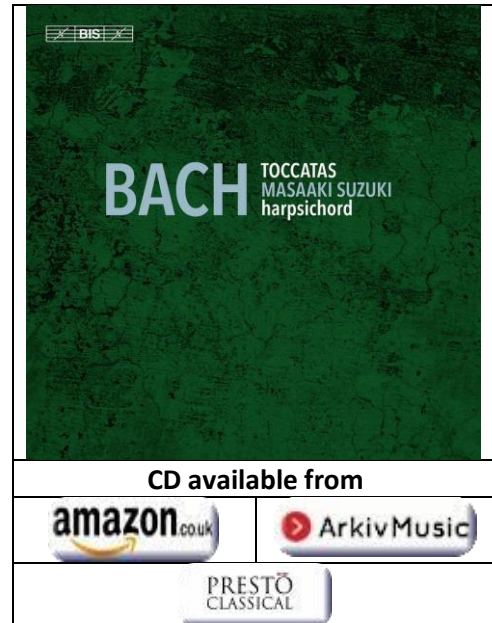
These pieces also include improvisatory sections, and these come off perfectly in Suzuki's energetic performances. He does justice to the contrasts, too. In the opening movement of the *Toccata in G*, I would have liked a few more breathing spaces. Another issue is that there is a bit too much space around the harpsichord. A more intimate recording venue would have been preferable. These are small issues, though, as this is a very fine recording of some of Bach's most brilliant and exciting keyboard works. [JV]

**Johann Sebastian BACH**

***Pour La Luth Ò Cembal***

Lute Suite in e minor, BWV996 [14:52]  
 Lute Partita in c minor, BWV997 [19:06]  
 Prelude, Fugue & Allegro for Lute in E flat, BWV998 [12:19]  
 Sean Shibe (guitar)  
 rec. 20-21 May and 17-18 December 2019, Crichton  
 Collegiate Church, Midlothian, Scotland. DDD.  
**DELPHIAN DCD34233 [46:24]**

There's a long and distinguished history of playing lute music, including that of Bach, on the guitar, dating back to Segovia and including Julian Bream before – and even after – he mastered the lute. The *Gigue* which concludes BWV996 and was one of Segovia's specialities comes over sounding different here – no mere Segovia imitation; Shibe



is more thoughtful, but equally persuasive. He's been hailed as the new Julian Bream, a high accolade indeed, but no exaggeration – and he's less inclined to give us extraneous noises as his fingers catch the strings. My only serious reservation concerns the short playing time, but that seems to be par for these lute pieces: Göran Söllscher on DG gave equally short measure. Though Jakob Lindberg gives us more (BWV995-1000 and 1006), his programme is spread over two CDs (**BIS-587/8**).

These works, as the title implies, can also be played on the keyboard – harpsichord or organ – and have been recorded as such, but there's an even more interesting alternative, that strange instrument the lute-harpsichord, which sounds like a large lute but has a keyboard. Michele Barchi's recordings which I particularly liked as part of the Warner complete Bach edition – [review](#) – seem to have disappeared, but there are other Bach recordings on the lute-harpsichord.

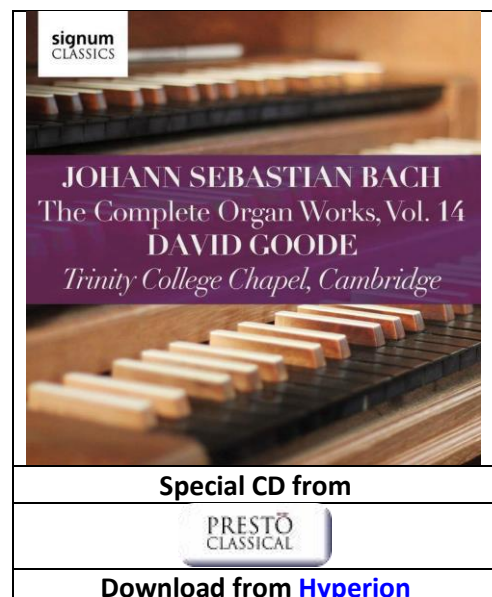
**Johann Sebastian BACH: Organ Masterworks, Vol. 5**

- Prelude and Fugue in G, BWV541 [3:19+4:47]
- Das alte Jahr vergangen ist*, BWV614 [2:31]
- Herr Gott, nun schleuss den Himmel auf*, BWV1092 [2:11]
- Fantasia and Fugue in a minor, BWV904 [3:08+5:07]
- Christe, Du Lamm Gottes*, BWV619 [1:25]
- Herr Christ, der einig Gottes Sohn*, BWVAnhang 55 [2:20]
- Wenn wir in Höchsten Nöten sein*, BWV641 [4:21]
- Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, BWV665 [6:38]
- Prelude and Fughetta in g minor [6:38 + 1:28]
- Trio in c minor, BWV21/1 [2:53]
- Jesus bleibet meine Freude*, BWV147/6 [3:29]
- Adagio*, BWV1001 [3:12]
- Fugue in d minor, BWV539 [5:26]
- In dulci júbilo*, BWV751 [2:18]
- Jesus, meine Zuversicht*, BWV728 [1:57]
- Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein*, BWV734 [2:27]
- O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, BWV618 [2:59]
- Fantasia on *Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott*, BWV651 [6:30]
- Kei Koito (organ of Cruciskirche, Erfurt, 1732-7, restored 2003-9)  
rec. 23-25 September 2014, Cruciskirche, Erfurt, Germany. DDD.  
Download or streaming only. Booklet from [Claves](#).
- CLAVES 1503** [70:41]



**Complete Organ Works Volume 14**

- 'St Anne' Prelude and Fugue in E flat, BWV552: Prelude [8:47]
- Clavierübung* III, BWV669-681 (1739) [38:02]
- Duet in e minor BWV802 [3:18]
- Duet in F, BWV803 [3:36]
- Duet in G, BWV804 [3:08]
- Duet in a minor, BWV805 [2:59]
- Clavierübung* III, BWV682-689 [33:38]
- 'St Anne' Prelude and Fugue in E flat, BWV552: Fugue [6:54]
- David Goode (organ)  
rec. August 2016, Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge. DDD.  
Reviewed as 24/96 download from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#). **SIGNUM SIGCD814** [100:22]



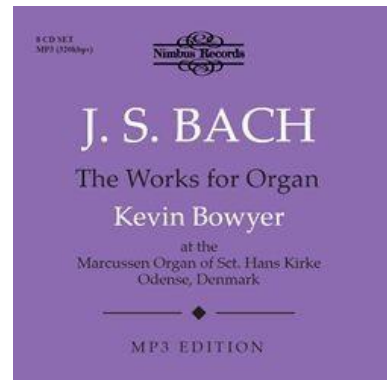
Kei Koto's Bach seems never to have been intended as a complete series; this recording from 2014 seems to have been as far as it got, while David Goode is well on his way to completing his series.

I liked **Koto's** way with Buxtehude – [review](#) – and I like her Bach; any one of the five volumes that she recorded for Claves would make a good introduction to his music. The Erfurt organ is appropriate for Bach and her chosen registration never over-eggs the pudding, though there's plenty of protein where required, as in the closing *Komm, heiliger Geist*.

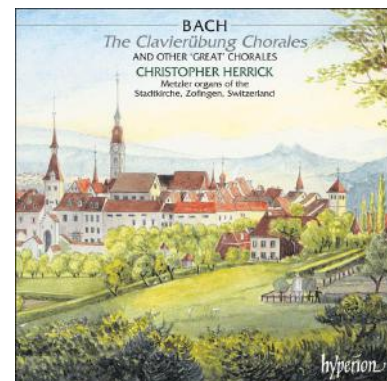
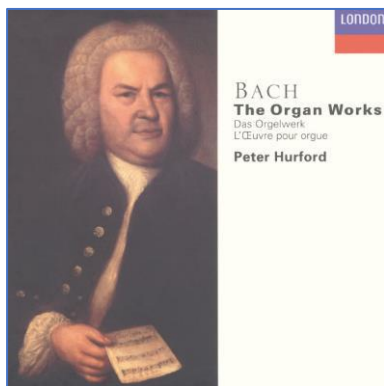
It's especially valuable that the Claves booklet lists not just the organ specification but the registrations for each individual piece; for organists, that marks this recording out from a host of similar offerings.

**Goode** bookends the complete *Clavierübung* III with the 'St Anne' prelude and fugue. As is so often the case – the 'Emperor' concerto is a good example – the nickname applies only in English-speaking countries: the fugue, completely fortuitously, sounds similar to the hymn tune of that name, used for 'O God our help in ages past'. I was 'completely sold' on Stephen Farr's recording of these works, which also includes the Duets, is bookended by BWV552, and was also made on the Trinity College organ (**RES10120: Recording of the Month** – [2013/8](#)). As with the new Signum, that's also available as a 24/96 download and on a regular 2-CD set. The Signum series has been download-only, but Presto have also made this one of their special CD sets. The good news is that in both forms it's offered at much less than the usual 2-CD price.

I must also mention Kevin Bowyer's very satisfying complete cycle, on multiple CDs and also, as a bargain of bargains, complete in 320 kb/s mp3 on Nimbus **NI1721**. Both myself and Kirk McElhearn – [here](#) – gave that a strong recommendation, not just for performance quality, but in terms of the recording. I'm listening to Bowyer's *Clavierübung* III from that release, immediately after the 24/96 Signum and there's very little to choose between them. I always recommend lossless sound where available, and even 24-bit if possible, but these mp3 files are very good indeed. It's available direct from [Wyastone](#) with a 10% discount with the code MusicWeb10. Byzantion listed the contents in his [review](#), but left out 'CD3', where *Clavierübung* III can be located. Bowyer also bookends his recording with BWV552 and includes the *Duetti*.



In fact, splicing *Clavierübung* III between the halves of BWV552 has become traditional. Christopher Herrick also did the same on his recording of ten works from this book and other chorales on Hyperion **CDA67213/4**. (Oddly, some of the other pieces from the set are included with the other later chorales.) That remains available as a special 2-CD set from the Hyperion Archive Service or as a lossless download with pdf booklet – both listed [here](#). Those prepared to splash out a little more will find Herrick's complete Bach recordings still available as a lossless download, with pdf booklet, from Hyperion.





At £45, it's twice the price of the Nimbus set, and you have to download it, whereas the Nimbus comes on a USB stick, but it's still excellent value for 20 hours of wonderful music – [review](#).

I'm not even going to try to recommend a Building a Library choice here – it's not my way, and I want to throw Simon Preston's complete set into the mix, too (DG Collectors Edition **4778628**). That can be found on CD for around £55 and as a lossless download for the same price as Herrick on Hyperion, £45. Avoid the alternative download for three times the price. Fans of Peter Hurford – count me in – will want his complete Bach (Decca **4444102**, download only, around £49 in lossless sound).

**Jean-Daniel BRAUN (c1703? - before 1740)**

***Sonatas for flute and b.c.***

CD 1

[Sonates pour la Flûte-Traversiere avec la Baße Op. 1, 1728]

Sonata III in d minor [11:17]

Sonata II in G [09:25]

Sonata IV in g minor [12:52]

Sonata I in D [10:19]

Sonata V in b minor [09:34]

Sonata VI in e minor [12:12]

CD 2

[Six Sonatas pour la Flûte Traversiere avec la Basse Op. 5]

Sonata I in D [09:31]

Sonata II in e minor [09:23]

Sonata III in D [08:44]

Sonata IV in G [10:45]

Sonata V in b minor [10:26]

Sonata VI in g minor [11:56]

CD 3

[Sonatas Op. 7]

Sonata II in e minor [11:53]

Sonata IV in G [08:30]

Sonata III in b minor [08:59]

Sonata V in D [09:13]

Sonata I in e minor [10:24]

Sonata VI in G [09:50]

CD 4

[Pièces sans basse, 1740]

Suite in e minor [12:57]

Suite in G [08:25]

Suite in d minor [13:28]

Suite in e minor [15:30]

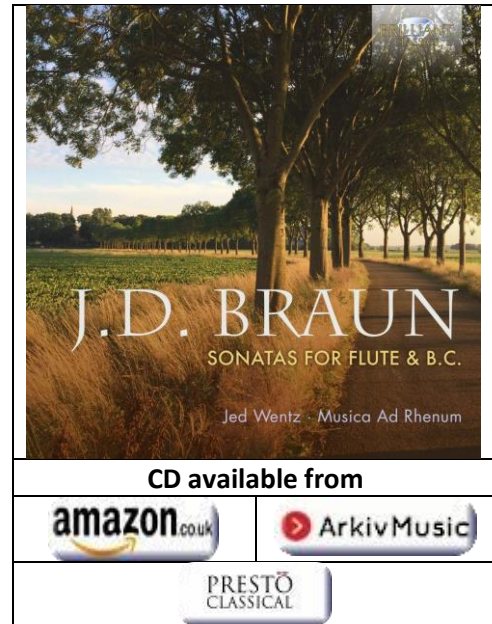
Sonata for transverse flute and bc in e minor [08:48]

Musica ad Rhenum/Jed Wentz (transverse flute)

Recorded 2017 at the Capucijner Klooster, Velp & 2018 at the Nederlands Hervormde Kerk, Mijnsheerenland, the Netherlands DDD

Reviewed as a stereo 16/44 download from Outhere; pdf-booklet from brilliantclassics.com

**BRILLIANT CLASSICS 95764** [4:05:11]



It seems very likely that you have never heard of Jean Daniel Braun. Nor has New Grove: no article is devoted to this composer, about whom we know next to nothing. One thing is for sure: he was a virtuoso on the transverse flute, the instrument which gained strong popularity in his days, especially



among amateurs. However, it seems questionable whether the flute sonatas recorded complete by Jed Wentz and his ensemble Musica ad Rhenum, were within the grasp of amateurs. They are quite virtuosic, and some movements include wide leaps and long passages of runs. The first three discs are devoted to the three collections of sonatas for flute and basso continuo, the last consists of a collection of suites for flute without accompaniment, which remind me of Telemann's fantasias.

They are very meaningful additions to the repertoire. The wide leaps suggest polyphony, especially when they are played at a fast tempo. Wentz has never been afraid of really fast tempi, and there are plenty of movements here where he demonstrates that. His performances are never mechanical, though, thanks to his differentiated treatment of tempo, including *accelerando* and *rallentando*, which creates a strong amount of tension. His partners on the string bass and the harpsichord deliver meaningful contributions to these exciting performances of repertoire which has been unjustly neglected. This is first-rate music which receives splendid performances. Aficionados of the baroque flute in particular should not miss this excellent production. [JV]

**Antonin DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)**

Piano Concerto in g minor, Op.33 (1876) [40:18]

**Bohuslav MARTINŮ (1890-1959)**

Piano Concerto No. 4, H358 'Incantation' (1956) [19:06]

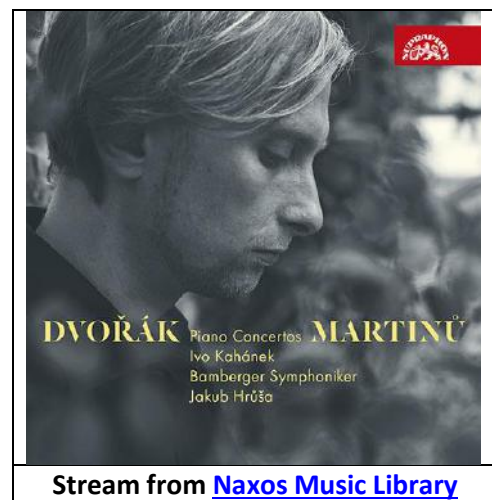
Ivo Kahánek (piano)

Bamberger Symphoniker/Jakub Hrůša

rec. 4-5 October 2017 (Dvořák), live 17-19 January 2019 (Martinů), Joseph Keilberth Saal, Konzerthalle, Bamberg

**SUPRAPHON SU4236-2** [59:22] For CD purchase details see [review by Michael Cookson](#).

'Compelling performances ... with glorious sound to match ... this is an album to relish'. How could I not have followed this up when Michael Cookson wrote in such glowing terms? He was not alone: a 5-star review in BBC Music Magazine has now been crowned by the 2020 Concerto Award there, which finally led me to listen – and agree. It's true that recent performances and recordings of the Dvořák have returned to the original rather than the pruned version which reigned for years, but no-one has presented better advocacy than Kahánek and Hrůša. And, while Stephen Hough and couple it with the Schumann concerto (Hyperion **CDA68099** – [review](#) – [review](#) – [review](#) – [DL News 2016/5](#)), of which you may already have one or more recordings, fellow Czech Martinů makes a more logical coupling. In any case, both Dan Morgan and I had some misgivings about the Hyperion.



**Paul Corfield GODFREY (b.1950)**

Following my **Recommended** [review](#) of *The Children of Húrin* and too late for a detailed review here, an earlier (2019) recording in this Tolkien-inspired cycle arrived: ***Beren and Lúthien*** (PRIMA FACIE **PFGD110/111**). The 2-CD set and downloads (mp3 and lossless) are available from Presto. Once again, the performers are drawn from Welsh National Opera and the virtual orchestra is provided by EastWest Software/Quantum Leap. I've had time for only a brief first listen, but it seemed appropriate at least to signal the existence of this, the fourth of these recordings. It's available on two CDs or as a download from [Presto](#) and on two CDs from [Amazon UK](#). There's no booklet with the download, but full details are available [online](#).



**Joby TALBOT (b.1971)**

Path of Miracles (2005) [62:23]

Tenebræ/Nigel Short

rec. July 2005, All Hallows, Gospel Oak, London. DDD.

Multi-lingual texts and translations included

Reviewed as 24/44.1 download with pdf booklet from

[hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk).

**SIGNUM SIGCD078** [62:23]

**OR** with **Owain PARK (b.1993)** Footsteps (2016) **SIGCD471**

[79:22] For CD purchase details see *Recording of the*

*Month review* by John Quinn. Reviewed as download with

pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk). NB: *Footsteps* is

a 24/96 recording.



Choose the original release on SIGCD078 (also available as an SACD) for a little less, or pay slightly more for the extended reissue. Neither will break the bank. **BUT NB:** some dealers (not Hyperion) are charging for the download of SIGCD471, though not the CD, as for a double album

**Joby TALBOT (b.1971)**

Path of Miracles (2005) [65:19]

Conspirare/Craig Hella Johnson

rec. January 2014, St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Austin, Texas. DDD/DSD

Multi-lingual texts and translations included

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from

[eclassical.com](http://eclassical.com).

**HARMONIA MUNDI HMU807603** [65:19] For SACD purchase details see [review](#) by Dominy Clements.

If you have been listening to one of the traditional recordings of the music for the pilgrimage to Santiago, such as that on Ricercar (*Un Camino de Santiago*, **RIC312** –

[review](#)) or the two SDG albums (*Pilgrimage to Santiago*, **SDG701**;

*Santiago a cappella*, **SDG710** – [review](#)), prepare for something completely different, whether you choose the original or the augmented Signum version or the Harmonia Mundi. I'm not going to try to describe the music, when my colleagues have done so in such detail. I will, however, say that I enjoyed hearing both recordings and my tastes, as regular readers will know, are rather staid.

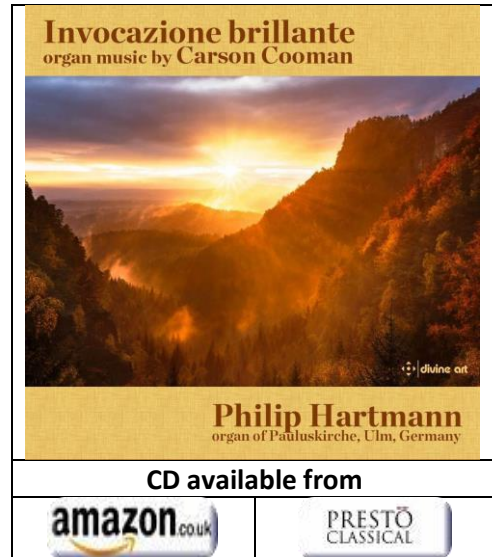
If you want just the Talbot, the original Signum release remains available on SACD, as does the Harmonia Mundi. The latter is in 24/96 format, but you would be hard pressed to reject the Signum, though it's 'only' 24/44.1 – and it costs only £7.85 (16-bit £6.99), with the expanded version costing £9 and £7.99 respectively. The Harmonia Mundi is more expensive, at \$14.70 (16-bit) and \$17.64 (24-bit); UK£ purchasers won't fare much better, with £10.49 and £14.99 being asked, which I make about even at current exchange rates for 24-bit. The SACD can be found for around £10.



**Carson COOMAN (b.1982)**

***Invocazione brillante* (Organ music Volume 14)**

- Musica da processione*, Op.1305 (2018) [3:24]  
*Arioso*, Op.1040 (2013) [3:23]  
*Cortège, Intermezzo, and Litany on the Joseph-Hymnus*, Op.1241 (2017) [9:28]  
*Romanza*, Op.186 (2000) [3:44]  
*Præludium in festo S. Philippi apostoli*, Op.1243 (2017) [4:47]  
*Diptych for New Life*, Op.1205 (2017) [6:19]  
*Arioso cantabile*, Op.1301 (2018) [5:06]  
*Suite in F*, Op.1246 (2017) [10:50]  
*Prelude on ‚Das ist köstlich‘ (Psalm 92)*, Op.1271 (2018) [2:30]  
*Invocazione brillante*, Op.1217 (2017) [3:25]  
*Two Nantucket Sketches*, Op.1298 (2018) [4:16]  
*Lullaby*, Op.1303 (2018) [3:38]  
*Sonatina No.4*, Op.1234 (2019) [9:28]  
 Philip Hartmann (organ of Pauluskirche, Ulm, 1910)  
 rec. 19-21 June 2019, Pauluskirche, Ulm, Germany. DDD.  
 Organ specification and photograph included.  
 Reviewed as lossless (flac) press preview.  
**DIVINE ART DDA25205** [70:22]



This is the latest in the seemingly inexhaustible Divine Art recordings of the organ music of Carson Cooman. The earlier volumes all featured Eric Simmons playing a series of ‘virtual’ organs reconstructed via the digital *Hauptwerk* system. I [reviewed](#) Volume 5 back in 2017 and Volumes 7 and 13 in [Spring 2020/2](#).

Convincing as those virtual organs sound, for Volume 14 Divine Art have recorded a real organ, that of the Pauluskirche Ulm, played by its organist and cantor, with some of the music specifically composed for the town, the instrument or the performer. The new recording brings us up to works composed in 2019, with the significant opus number 1234.

As before, a contemplative, often ethereal, mood dominates, no bad thing in these Covid-infested times; the music is enjoyable rather than very distinctive. If you enjoyed some or all of the earlier volumes, you will not be disappointed; otherwise, new listeners start here.

**Sir John Barbirolli - The Complete Warner Recordings**  
**WARNER CLASSICS 9029538608** [109 CDs] Target price  
 £171.

Some time ago EMI, as they still were, released a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 10-CD set of Barbirolli recordings; that's still available from some dealers for around £22.50. The new complete edition offers ten times more, from EMI and Pye original tapes and 78s, at a lower cost per CD, but ... The problem is that most of us already own at least a fair proportion of these recordings, though not everything is available separately. If, for example, you wanted to be reminded of the oboe concertos by Albinoni and others, some in his own arrangement, which Barbirolli recorded with his wife, Evelyn Rothwell, inauthentic but attractive (CD80), they come on the Barbirolli Society's own label (**SJB2009** and **2016**), but for the two items in the complete set which precede them in alphabetic order, Stephen Adams *The Holy City* and *Star of Jerusalem* (CD103), the complete set is the only way to obtain them.



One step lower in alphabetic order and Arensky's *Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky*, once linked to a very fine LP account of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* (CD50) can be obtained on a 2-CD Double Forte album, now much more expensive as a download-only offering (£29 or more in lossless), with recordings of Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov, from Yevgeny Svetlanov, which you may have already (**2435693615**). The Tchaikovsky *Serenade*, very well worth preserving, (also CD50) is not otherwise available in any format, though two movements appear on one of those cannibalised offerings '100 Best Tchaikovsky'.

Warner and Sony are joint heirs to the recordings which Barbirolli made for the Columbia label, so some of the earlier items, which require a good deal of tolerance, can also be found on a 6-CD RCA set (**19075988382**, around £45 or £11.50 as a lossless download). The Warner set also includes later remakes of some of the same items: Barbirolli's arrangements of Byrd, *An Elizabethan Suite*, appear on Warner in two versions (CD19 and CD51). In some cases, such as Elgar's *Cockaigne*, Warner treat us to three recordings (CD12, CD17 and CD44).

There's plenty more Elgar, of course, but that's where the limitations begin: you may well have the classic Cello Concerto (CD84) and *Sea Pictures* (CD105) coupling (CD, download and even vinyl available), with Jacqueline du Pré and Janet Baker, while those who like *The Dream of Gerontius* – I really don't – and own the Barbirolli recording won't be happy to have it duplicated on CD88-89.

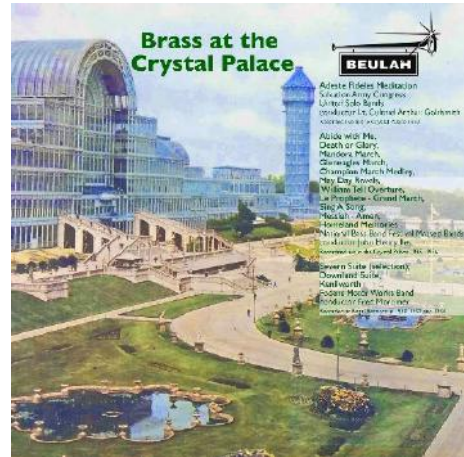
Overall, it's a bargain for those with few Barbirolli recordings who wish to get to know his work better; the rest of us, who may not have room for another bumper box anyway, are better advised to pick and choose from what is available separately. But I do wish that the Tchaikovsky *Serenade* could be obtained separately.

Perhaps Beulah, who have released so many [Barbirolli reissues](#), will oblige.



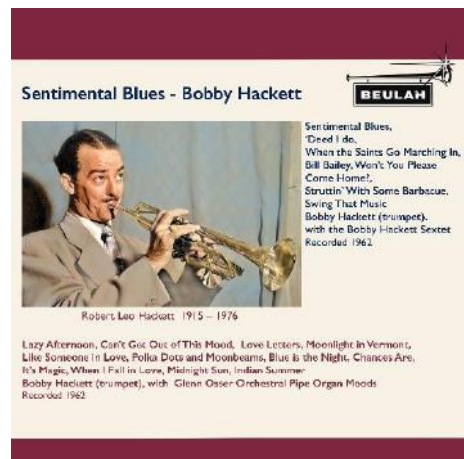
**Brass at the Crystal Palace**

*Adeste Fideles* Meditation  
 Salvation Army Congress United Bands/Lt Colonel Arthur Goldsmith  
 rec. 1933 ADD/mono  
 Abide with me; Death or Glory; Mandora March; Gleneagles March; Champion March Medley; May Day revels; *William Tell* Overture; *Le Prophète* – Grand March; Sing a Song; *Messiah* – Amen; Homeland Memories  
 National Brass Band Festival Mixed Bands/John Henry Iles  
 rec. live Crystal Palace, 1935-36. ADD/mono  
**Sir Edward ELGAR** *Severn Suite* (selection); **John IRELAND** *Downland Suite*; Kenilworth  
 Fodens Motor Works Band/Fred Mortimer  
 rec. Regal Records, 1930, 1932 and 1936 ADD/mono  
**BEULAH 2PD2** [72:34] Download or stream from [Qobuz](https://www.qobuz.com).



**Sentimental Blues**

'Deed I do; When the Saints go marching in; Bill Bailey; Struttin' with some Barbecue; Swing that Music<sup>1</sup>  
 Lazy Afternoon; Can't get out of this Mood' Love Letters, Moonlight in Vermont; Like Someone in Love, Polka Dots and Moonbeams; Blue is the Night; Chances are it's Magic; When I fall in Love; Midnight Sun; Indian Summer<sup>2</sup>  
 Bobby (Robert Leo) Hackett (trumpet)  
 Bobby Hackett Sextet<sup>1</sup>  
 Glen Osser Orchestral Pipe Organ Moods<sup>2</sup>  
 rec. 1962 ADD/stereo  
**BEULAH 1PS70** [57:09] Download or stream from [Qobuz](https://www.qobuz.com).



It's entirely fitting that I should conclude this final edition with some recent Beulah reissues; after all, most editions of these ramblings have contained one or several Beulah recordings.

These and others that I have reviewed in recent months epitomise the strengths of the label: there are other reissues of jazz recordings such as the **Bobby Hackett**, but many of them were not made with the care with which Beulah reissues are produced. It's not just a case of stick an LP or 78 on the turntable, edit out the unwanted noise and stick it online, which I suspect frequently happens. Where there is a residual problem, as in this case, with an over-close recording, you can be sure that's attributable to the original engineers. In fact, it doesn't spoil the release for me; I just recommend a slightly lower than usual listening level – and streaming or downloading from Qobuz in lossless sound. Just occasionally Qobuz charge a little more than the usual £7.99 for a recording that runs over 80 minutes, but usually – as here – their lossless version costs the same as inferior mp3 from others. And if you must have mp3, even though most portable players now accept lossless recordings, you can come back and get that, too.

Best of all, if, like me, you know what jazz you like but aren't well informed, Beulah have a treasure trove of these reissues – and they have recently rejigged their website to point you in the right direction; in this case to [Jazz at Beulah](https://www.beulah.com). I didn't realise that Hackett had been a member of the Glenn Miller Band in the 1940s till I researched this recording. Beulah are educating me, as they did [last month](https://www.beulah.com) when I reviewed *Star Dust*, their reissue of music by Charlie Christian (**1PS65**).

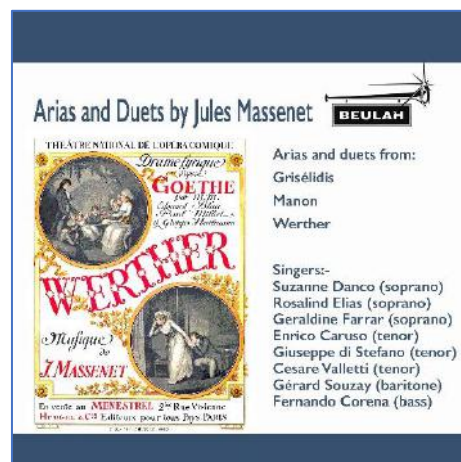
**Brass at Crystal Palace** from the 1930s may be a slightly less popular release. Having said that, however, I know that there will be a considerable audience for it; some years ago I used to go into the step up – step down ward in my local hospital to play music to the elderly patients and, while there were many who liked to hear opera arias – including a lady who had been secretary for many years to a well-known tenor – brass band music always went down well. (I also convinced, over a period of weeks, a fan of Italian tenors that the best Italian tenor was not Italian – Jussi Björling.) Even those who read these pages, if not in the market for *Abide with me*, should find plenty to interest them here, with not just the more predictable classics such as a shortened version of the *William Tell* Overture, which goes down very well with the audience, but six minutes of selections from Elgar’s *Severn Suite* and 12 minutes of Ireland’s *A Downland Suite*. The latter, though sometimes performed in a string arrangement, was composed in 1932 for this very brass band championship, so it was hot off the press.

The closing *Homeland Melodies* will remind older listeners of the UK Theme which used to open proceedings on Radio 4 first thing in the morning, though it casts its net wider than these shores.

You wouldn’t expect crystal clear sound from recordings of this vintage, but I doubt that you would hear them better transferred – again, of course, with the lossless Qobuz transfers the top recommendation. As you have probably guessed, there’s also a [Brass and Military](#) section on the Beulah site – in fact, it’s one of their specialities.

Nor do they neglect classic recordings of classical music – another section on their website: follow the link to [Spring 2020/3](#) where two of their reissues received **Recommended** status and another release reminded us that Wanda Landowska played Mozart on the piano as well as being a harpsichord pioneer.

As I was closing this final edition, I received a further transfer of forthcoming material. Arias and Duets by Jules Massenet includes music from *Griséïdis*, *Manon* and *Werther*, sung by a veritable panoply of artists, including Suzanne Danco, Enrico Caruso, Giuseppe di Stefano and Gérard Souzay, all set off with a colourful cover shot. **(1PS73)**. Some of these artists in Massenet can be found elsewhere – Danco, di Stefano and Bergonzi in *Manon* on Testament SBT21420, for example – but this is a very valuable Beulah release. Some of the items have recently appeared on [Mike Parr’s recent list of neglected recordings](#); voilà.



The recording dates cover a considerable period: the earliest, Caruso and Geraldine Farrar from 1912, inevitably sounds as if recorded at the far end of a large hall, but it does serve as a reminder of a great voice. Other items come from RCA LSC1615, recorded in 1962 and featuring Cesare Valetti with Rosalind Elias and Gérard Souzay. On Mike Parr’s list, this came with a hope that it would be reissued digitally – here it is, as wished for.