

Second Thoughts and Short Reviews: Spring 2020/3
By Brian Wilson

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Please check that the catalogue numbers and links take you to the right place – in a one-man review of this length, errors may easily occur.

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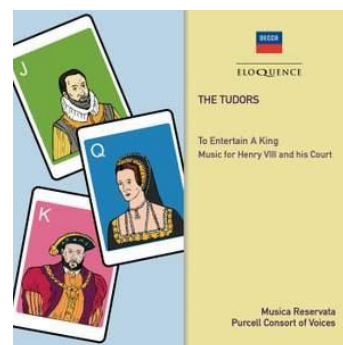
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Neglected Recordings

Several of my colleagues have contributed to a [recent article](#) on recordings that, through no fault of their own, have dropped out of the catalogue or, at least, out of public ken.

Some of them are available to stream and/or download:

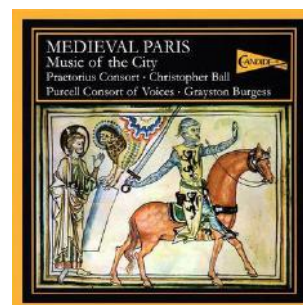
From Gary Higginson's selection: **Music to Entertain a King** is a collection of music by Henry VIII and his circle, performed by Musica Reservata and the Purcell Consort, directed by Grayston Burgess. Reissued in 2015 by Australian Decca Eloquence as **The Tudors: Music to Entertain a King (4804866)**, it remains available to download from [Presto](#), albeit that the download price of £9.58 (mp3) or £11.97 (lossless) is rather steep for a recording that used to be available at budget price and there's no booklet. An earlier release under the Argo imprint can be streamed by subscribers from [Naxos Music Library](#).



Other Decca/Argo/Oiseau Lyre recordings (companies that sheltered under the Decca umbrella) directed by Grayston Burgess can also be downloaded or streamed. I recently reviewed a 2-CD set of music from the **Eton Choirbook**, including Davy's St Matthew Passion (4840250 – [review](#)). That remains available from [Presto](#) on disc and as a download (no booklet with the latter and it costs more than the CDs!).



There's also **The Tudors: Metaphysical Tobacco (4807740)**, CD and download from [Presto](#); **The Tudors: I love alas (4822570)**, CD and download from [Presto](#); **The Tudors: Lo, Country Sports (4822562)**, CD and download from [Presto](#) – [review](#) and an Argo Christmas music reissue **Now make we Merthe (4758589)** - download from [Presto](#). Most of these, and several others, can be streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#). I enjoyed hearing the Eton Choirbook reissue and another album from, St George's Canzona – **The Tudors: Courtly Pastimes: Songs and Dances from Henry VIII's Book (4804865)** – [review](#) – download from [Presto](#), no booklet).



Those happy with mp3 (and no booklet) will find another recording directed by Burgess, with the Prætorius Consort and Purcell Consort of Voices from [uk.7digital.com](#) for £5.49: **Medieval Paris – Music of the City** (Musical Concepts Candex).

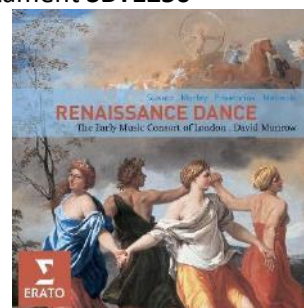
Musica Reservata's recording of *French Court Music of the Thirteenth Century*, directed by John Beckett can be downloaded from Presto (4758779, mp3 or lossless, no booklet) and streamed from [Qobuz](#), and their collection *A Concert of Early Music* can be streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#) (Vanguard SVC-96). Their Philips recording *Music from the Time of Christopher Columbus* seems to have sunk without trace. I must admit that it's some time since I listened to my copy of the CD (432821-2).



Some of Musica Reservata's oldest recordings (from Vox, I believe) are available on an 11½-hour super-budget download collection mis-named *The Big Baroque Box II* (much of the music comes from the renaissance and even earlier, including music by King Alfonso 'the Wise'). Some of these recordings were available on the budget LP label Vox Turnabout and Bach Guild. It's worth streaming from [Qobuz](#), but even the bargain price of £11.99 didn't tempt me to buy the download: I really don't want to hear a commentary on the instruments of the period before every item on one of the constituent LPs every time that I listen. Despite the presence of artists such as Anton Heiller (in Rameau and Couperin) and Concentus Musicus directed by Nikolaus Harnoncourt in a wide variety of music, most of the baroque content comes in less than top-flight performances. Only a few of the Musica Reservata items here feature the very distinctive open-throated vocals which divided opinion; you either love or hate them. (Try *Es taget vor dem Walde*, track 206, preceded by the annoying commentary, or *Kalenda Maia*, track 209, no commentary).

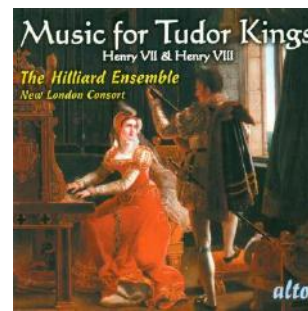
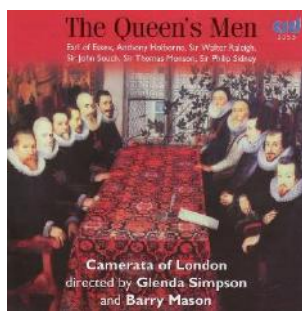
David Munrow, whose Early Music Consort would go on to become more famous than Musica Reservata, graduated from that group. Several of his recordings survive on CD:

- **Henry VIII and his Six Wives**, music for the BBC TV series is on Testament **SBT1250**
- **Renaissance Dance** – music by **SUSATO, PRÆTORIUS, MORLEY**, etc., on an indispensable 2-CD super-budget Erato Veritas **350032** (also as a download, but more expensively). My first choice.
- **Music for Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain** Testament **SBT1251**
- **Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance** another Erato Veritas twofer (**3858112**)
- **The Art of Courtly Love (Machaut, Binchois and Dufay)** is download only, no booklet and much more expensive than when it was a Virgin twofer
- **The Art of the Netherlands**, an Erato Veritas super-bargain twofer (**6284972**). Don't pay more for the download-only *The Art of the Netherlands 1450 – 1520* (Same content, three times the price!)
- **Elizabethan Lute Songs** and **PURCELL** Birthday Odes for Queen Mary (Erato Veritas twofer **9029554315**)



Then there are several recordings made for Decca and DG.

The Hilliard Ensemble and the Camerata of London, directed by Glenda Simpson, made a number of recordings of Tudor music for the super-budget Saga label. Buying them on LP, at ten shillings (£0.50) was always a hit-and-miss affair – the surfaces often sounded as if frying was taking place in the background – but they were well worth having when reissued as pressed by Telefunken and later in their brief incarnation on CD and they would be welcome if someone could reissue them now.

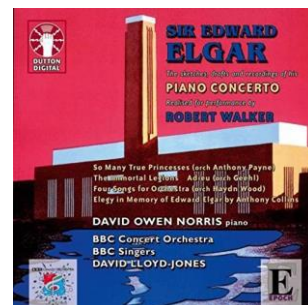


As it is, they seem to have vanished without trace, but a CRD recording *The Queen's Men* survives as a download (CRD3355, download from [Presto](#), stream from [Naxos Music Library](#) no booklet). Despite the title – and the music – the cover shot actually shows not Elizabeth's but King James' council, meeting the Spanish for peace talks (Somerset House 1604).

The Hilliard Ensemble's *Music for a Tudor King* (Henry VII and VIII) was reissued on the Alto label, combined with another recording, of music from the time by the New London Consort. It's very good value, the equivalent of 1½ Saga LPs, at around £6 (ALC1015 [77:12] – [review](#)). CD from [Presto](#), stream from [Naxos Music Library](#).

Another Camerata of London recording, this time directed by Barry Mason, *Shakespeare's Musicke*, on Meridien 723721415525 can be downloaded from [Presto](#). The 'olde' spelling of *musicke* sits oddly with the inauthentic apostrophe in Shakespeare's name. Be warned that this recording attempts 'genuine' Elizabethan pronunciation, which cannot be truly determined; the attempt often sounds ridiculous. If everyone spoke Mummerset, why should Shakespeare parody it in *King Lear*?

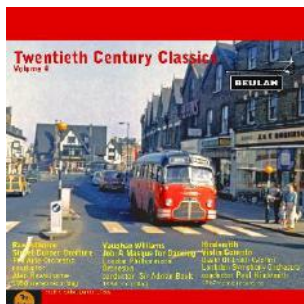
The reconstruction of the **ELGAR Piano Concerto** on Dutton Epoch (CDLX7148), which features in Rob Barnett's selection should have been epoch-making. I'm surprised to find that it has disappeared on disc, having thought it 'attractive and memorable' ([DL Roundup August 2012/1](#)). The article notes that there's a download from iTunes, but I strongly counsel against anything from this source – in m4a and not at full strength – when better is available: in this case streaming or downloading in lossless sound from Qobuz, at £7.99 for the download; that's less than the £9.99 which Amazon UK are asking for the mp3 download – and mp3 at less than full whack, at that. I recommended the Amazon back in 2012, but lossless downloads are now more widely available and preferable.



Having shared Rob Barnett's regret about the Elgar, my own candidate for the greatest loss is **BALAKIREV Symphony No.1**, conducted, as regular readers will have guessed, by Sir Thomas Beecham. It was briefly available on an EMI CD, together with another Beecham recording, of *Tamara*, 'borrowed' from Philips, but seems to have sunk without trace. Other recordings are or have been available, from Karajan, for example, and there are two very decent budget-price versions, conducted by Igor Golovschin (Naxos, with *Islamey* and *Tamara*) and Evgeni Svetlanov (Alto, with *Tamara* and *Russia*), but I would really like to see the Beecham reissued. Fortunately, I snapped up the CD when it was available, but others should also have the chance. The Beulah reissue which I recommended in April 2012/1 should be made more generally available via [Qobuz](#), who offer Beulah reissues in lossless sound.



There may be many recordings of **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS *Job – A Masque for Dancing***, but it never seems to have established itself, perhaps because VW wrote so much beautiful music that it has tended to be side-lined in favour of the more immediate appeal of *The Lark Ascending*. I first got to know it well from Sir Adrian Boult's EMI recording, now available only in a 13-CD set of the VW symphonies and other works (**9035672** – [review](#)). While, by general consent, these stereo remakes of the symphonies are not quite the equal of the earlier Decca mono set, they are still worth having.



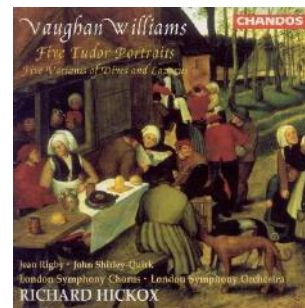
There are two other Boult recordings: his 1953 (mono) Decca can be downloaded from Naxos Classical Archives **9.80375** (around £6) or with *The Wasps Suite* (also 1953) from Decca Eloquence **4611222**. Best of all, it's on a Beulah collection *Twentieth Century Classics 4 (4PDR20, with Rawsthorne Street Corner and Hindemith Violin Concerto* – [review](#) – download or stream in lossless from [Qobuz](#)). The (stereo) Everest recording offers short value (**EVERCD009**) but can be found on CD for around £7 – rather more expensive as a download.

Bargain hunters are well served by David Lloyd-Jones and the English Northern Philharmonia on Naxos **8.553955**, with *The Lark Ascending* and by Barry Wordsworth and the Philharmonia (Alto **ALC1384**, with *The Lark Ascending* and *Greensleeves* – [review](#)). The best bargain comes from Sir Andrew Davis with the BBC SO on Warner Apex **0927443942** (with **WALTON *Belshazzar's Feast***) or on his complete set of the symphonies on an inexpensive 6-CD set (**2564698483** – [review](#) of earlier release).

Another Boult alumnus, Vernon Handley, made a fine recording for EMI, later reissued on CFP, but that seems to be unavailable, so my top choice has to be Sir Andrew Davis, who recorded it again with the Bergen Philharmonic for Chandos; that comes in excellent sound on an award-laden SACD or as a 24-bit download (**CHSA5180**, with *Symphony No.9: Recording of the Month* – [review](#) – [review](#)). Best of all, it's coupled with the equally under-rated *Symphony No.9*. I need add just one thing to what I wrote in [Spring 2017/2](#), when I described this as 'irresistible'; the eclassical download to which I gave a link is even less attractive now for UK purchasers, who are better served by [chandos.net](#) and [Presto](#).

Several of Handley's VW recordings do remain available to download, but, at around £16 each in lossless sound for what used to be on CD at budget price, they are hardly competitive.

Two other Vaughan Williams works ought to be better known: *Flos campi* and *Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus* are at least as beautiful as the ubiquitous *Lark Ascending*. A fine recording of *Flos campi* is coupled with the Suite for viola and orchestra and McEwen's Viola Concerto (**CDA67839** – [review](#) – [January 2012/2](#)), but the best recommendation comes on a Chandos SACD (**CHSA5201** with *Serenade to Music*, etc. – [review](#) – [review](#) – [Spring 2018/3](#)).



Fine accounts of *Dives and Lazarus* appear on a recent Onyx appendix to Andrew Manze's cycle of the VW symphonies (**ONYX4212** – [review](#) – [review](#) – [review](#)) and on a similar Hallé collection from Sir Mark Elder (**CDHLL7540: Recording of the Month** – [review](#)), but my recommendation is for a coupling with

a really neglected VW work, the often rumbustious *Five Tudor Portraits* (CHAN9593 – [2013/6](#)). Warner really should reissue the Boult recording of the *Portraits*, but Richard Hickox will do very well as a substitute.

**A Late Medieval Mass on the Rysum Organ
Cracow Tablature (c.1548)**

Præambulum (No. 7) [0:59]

Johann WALTER (1496–1570)

Aus tieffer Not (*Wittembergisch Geistlich Gesangbuchlein* 1524, verse 1) [1:11]

Tablature of **Joannes de LYUBLYN (c. 1540/48)**

De profundis super discantum [1:09]

Johann WALTER

Aus tieffer Not (verse 2) [1:18]

Bells of Rysum Parish Church [0:58]

INTROIT: Nicolaus CRACOVIENSIS (fl. 1540/58)

(Tablature of **Joannes de Lyublyn**), alternating with plainchant *Introitus de Resurrectione Domini:*

Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum [6:27]

KYRIE: Hans BUCHNER (1483–1538)

alternating with plainchant *Kyrie paschale* [6:40]

GLORIA: Hans BUCHNER

alternating with plainchant *Et in terra paschale* [7:08]

Cracow Tablature

Præambulum in principio cantus faciendus [0:56]

ALLELUIA: Conrad REIN (1475–1522)

Alleluia. Pascha nostrum (4 voices) [1:46]

SEQUENCE: Hans BUCHNER, alternating with plainchant

Victimæ paschali laudes [5:22]

Josquin DESPREZ (c. 1450–1521)

D'un autre amer – Victimæ paschali (4 voices, alternating with Organ, Tablature of **Fridolin Sicher**, c. 1512/21) [1:38]

Oldenburg Tablature (c. 1445)

Præambulum super Fantasia plenurij [0:29]

CREDO: Oldenburg Tablature, alternating with plainchant (from Fürstenberg Abbey, Xanten)

Patrem omnipotentem [6:14]

Buxheim Organ Book, (c. 1470)

Wolhin laß vögelin sorgen [0:54]

SANCTUS: Winsum Tablature (c. 1435) alternating with plainchant *Summum Sanctus* [2:35]

Heinrich FINCK (1445–1527)

Cracow Tablature

O sacrum misterium [2:27]

AGNUS DEI: Nicolaus CRACOVIENSIS (Cracow Tablature)

Præambulum pro introductionis peduum aplicaris [1:01]

Tablature of Joannes de Lyublyn alternating with plainchant

Agnus Dei [2:47]

Anonymous (c. 1450) (Cod. Berlin Mus. ms. 40613)

Mit ganzem Willen wünsch ich dir [1:43]

Adam Ileborgh Tablature (1448)



Præambulum super d a f et g [0:51]

Plainchant

Ite missa est [0:30]

Buxheim Organ Book (c. 1470)

Christ ist erstanden [0:46]

Heinrich ISAAC (1450–1517)

Christ ist erstanden (4 voices) [1:09]

Buxheim Organ Book (c. 1470)

Christus surrexit [0:52]

Tylman SUSATO (c. 1510–c. 1570)

Galliards [2:07]

Lorenzo Ghielmi (organ)

Ensemble Biscantores/Luca Colombo

rec. Evangelisch-reformierte Kirche, Rysum (Germany), 9-10 May 2019. DDD.

Organ specification included.

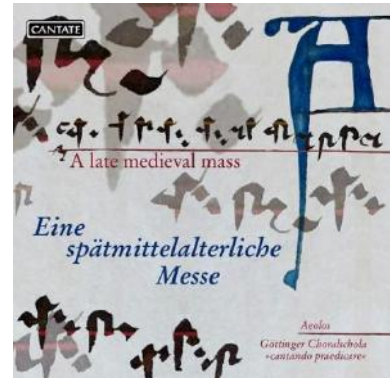
No texts.

PASSACAILLE PAS1065 [60:11]

This recording represents a reconstructed Eastertide Mass, with organ interludes and concluding with dance music by Susato. If it all looks rather academic – which, in a sense, it is – it's nevertheless very enjoyable. Having spent a long time giving the information above, I'm recommending all but the scholarly to skip the details. If you try it by streaming from Qobuz, I think you will enjoy it, too; just leave the academic stuff, such as the alternation between the timeless plainchant and the later medieval composition, 'modern' in its day, to the academics. In fact, the alternation of older and newer music is one of the delights.

The Susato Galliards which conclude the recording should whet your appetite for more of his dance music, as on the David Munrow collection (*Neglected Recordings*: above).

By chance, as I was writing this review, another recording appeared on the Naxos Music Library, with the title *Eine spätmittelalterliche Messe* (A Late Medieval Mass), containing music from the Göttingen St Johannis Missal (14th Century) for the Mass of St John the Baptist: Göttinger Schola cantando prædicare and Ensemble Æolos, rec. 2013 Cantate **C58049** [51:42]. The CD was released in 2018 and can be obtained from [Presto](#). Apart from three pieces by Philippe de Vitry, the Mass is sung in plainsong. The singers are described as amateurs, but they are skilful amateurs – bearing in mind that Göttingen is home to one of the oldest universities, I imagine that most or all of them are academics. The booklet offers plenty of information for the scholarly, but the music has a general appeal. Texts and translations are included, but the English is sometimes rather convoluted: somehow the word 'joy' has dropped out of the otherwise incomprehensible translation of the post-communion prayer.



Cristóbal de MORALES (c.1500-1563)

Super Lamentationes

Capella de Ministrers/Carles Magraner
rec. 2019, Church of the Escolania de la Virgen de los
Desamparados, Valencia, Spain. DDD.

CAPELLA DE MINISTRERS CDM2048 [59:34] For CD
purchase see [review by Gary Higginson](#).

Gary Higginson, who awarded a ***Recommended*** prefix to this recording of Lamentations, contrasted it with an earlier *a cappella* recording from Utopia, which didn't hit the spot for him (Et'cetera **KTC1538** – [review](#)). Whether or not to perform music of this period with or without accompaniment is a thorny issue, which I don't wish to get bogged down in at the moment, other than to agree with GH that the new recording works well, though I found the instruments a little intrusive at times.



Others have been more enthusiastic about the Utopia recording, but best of all for me is a recording by the Brabant Ensemble on Hyperion, which GH himself made a ***Recording of the Month*** – (**CDA57694** [review](#)) and which I had already reviewed as part of a parcel of CDs from that ensemble; I ended by writing that it made me very keen to hear the rest of the parcel – [review](#). Not only does that recording make the strongest possible case for performing this music *a cappella*, it offers extra music, including the first recording of the *Magnificat primi toni*. In addition to the CD, it's also available in lossless sound, with pdf booklet, for £8 from hyperion-records.co.uk. The only downside is that it contains only three of the Lamentations, *Coph, Zai* and *Nun*, some 25 minutes in all.

Pierre De MANCHICOURT

Jubilate Deo [6:17]

John SHEPPARD

Reges Tharsis [4:54]

Pierre De MANCHICOURT

Reges terræ [6:10]

Thomas TALLIS

Suscipe quæso [9:41]

Francisco GUERRERO

Ave virgo sanctissima [4:34]

Ave Maria [4:19]

Pastores loquebantur [6:09]

Thomas TALLIS

Mass 'Puer Natus'

Gloria [10:57]

Sanctus [4:39]

Benedictus [3:39]

Agnus Dei [8:49]

John SHEPPARD

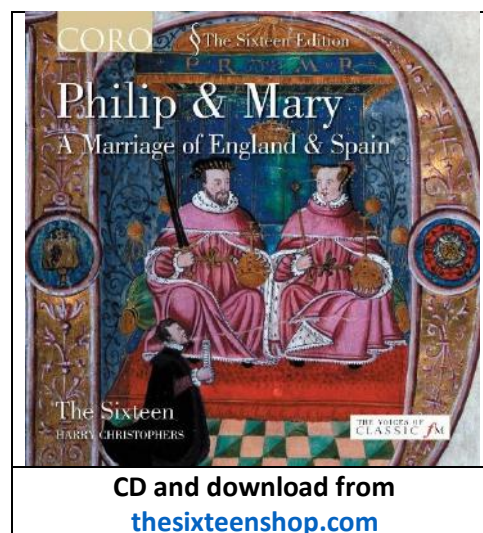
Libera nos [3:28]

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers

rec. St Jude's on the Hill, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, 21-23 January, 1998. DDD.

Texts and translations included

CORO COR17038 [75:03]



There's no need to sing the praises of these performances of the music, by musicians in the service of both monarchs, which may have been performed at the marriage of Queen Mary and King Philip; I did that a long time ago, in October 2008. That was on the basis of a variable-bit mp3 download; now it's available in a much better quality version, 16-bit lossless, with pdf booklet for £10, from thesixteenshop.com.

Johannes de CLEVE (1528/9-1582)

Carole qui veniens [5:34]

Missa Rex Babylonis [32:55]

Es wel uns Gott genedig sein [2:38]

Laudate Dominum [4:35]

Timete Dominum [4:42]

Credo quod redemptor [5:55]

Carole cui nomen [5:19]

Jakob VAET (1529-1567)

Rex Babylonis [9:13]

Cinquecento

rec. July 2019, Kloster Pernegg, Waldviertel, Austria. DDD.

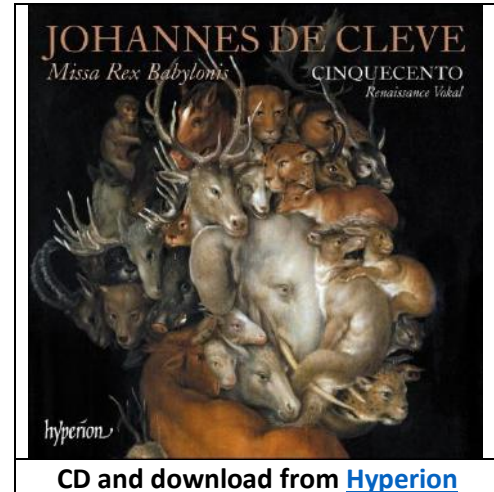
Texts and translations included

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from

hyperion-records.co.uk.

Due for release in July 2020.

HYPERION CDA68241 [70:51]



CD and download from Hyperion

This is the only available recording of the *Missa Rex Babylonis*; indeed, there are only two other generally available recordings which contain anything by Johannes de Cleve and only one of the shorter pieces on the new Hyperion appears elsewhere (*Rhineland Renaissance*, Singer Pur, Oehms **OC820**). Cinquecento are past masters at bringing to life composers who may not even register as names, as in the case of Jakob Vaet, whose *Missa Flos campi* they brought us back in 2009. I gave that a **Recording of the Month** recommendation (**CDA67733** – [review](#)) and the new recording, which also slips in Vaet's *Rex Babylonis*, the starting point for Cleve's Mass, is another in a long line of such recordings.

I reviewed that Vaet Mass in inferior m4a from iTunes. It's now available from Hyperion in superior sound, along with Cinquecento's other very fine recordings. The Vaet can be obtained for £8 (16-bit) or £9 (24-bit) from hyperion-records.co.uk. All Cinquecento's Hyperion recordings can be found [here](#).

Little is known about de Cleve – presumably he came from what is mangled in English as Cleves: 'Anne of Cleves' was actually Anna of Cleve. What we do know, and an analysis of the music, is contained in the booklet and, as that's available free from the Hyperion link, I won't repeat it here. I'll just say that this is another Hyperion Cinquecento recordings to add to your shopping list. It would have been better to have had the Vaet first, so that we had it in mind in hearing the Mass, but it's easy to play it first.

Tocatta: From Claudio Merulo to Johann Sebastian Bach
Claudio MERULO (1533-1604)

Toccate d'intavolatura d'organo, libro 2: Toccata prima
 [4:58]

Jan Pieterszoon SWEELINCK (1562-1621)

Toccat 9. Toni a1, SwWV296 (Fitzwilliam Virginal Book)
 [5:29]

Giovanni PICCHI (1571/2-1643)

Toccat (Fitzwilliam Virginal Book) [4:01]

Girolamo FRESCOBALDI (1583-1643)

Toccat decima [4:30]

Michelangelo ROSSI (1601/2-1656)

Toccat settima [5:01]

Johann Jakob FROBERGER (1616-1667)

Toccat No.3, FbWV103 [3:22]

Johann Kaspar KERLL (1627-1693)

Toccat cromitica Nr.4 [4:14]

Mathias WECKMANN (1616-1674)

Toccat IV in a minor [5:10]

Dieterich BUXTEHUDE (1637-1707)

Toccat in G, BuxWV165 [5:07]

Johann Adam REINCKEN (1643-1722)

Toccat in A [6:12]

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

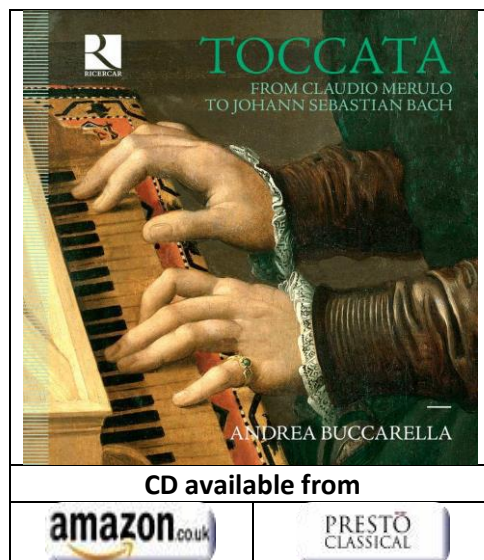
Toccat in D, BWV912 [11:03]

Andrea Buccarella (harpsichords)

rec. Centeilles, Église Notre-Dame, May 2019. DDD.

Reviewed as lossless (wav) press preview.

RICERCAR RIC407 [59:12]



This is another academically themed recording that most of the rest of us can also enjoy. It traces the development of the keyboard form known as a *toccat*, from the Italian for ‘touched’, from its beginnings to its fruition in the hands of Bach. It’s performed on four harpsichords, all illustrated and described in the booklet: copies of a small and a large instrument in the Italian style, of a Rückers made in Antwerp and of a large harpsichord in the German style. In general, each piece is played on an appropriate instrument; I suppose it would have been too much to have had the items from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book played on that softer-toned instrument.

The performances are effective and the notes, mainly of interest to the specialist, are written so as to be worth reading by anyone. I need hardly add that the three toccatas by German composers which end the programme take us well beyond the original Italian model, with that of JS Bach straining at the limits of the instruments of his day. By the time that you have reached that final piece, you will want to hear Mahan Esfahani’s recent much praised recording of the whole series of harpsichord toccatas, BWV910-916 (Hyperion **CDA68244: Recommended** – [review](#)).

Claude Le JEUNE (1528/30-1600)

Le Printemps (1603)

O Rôze, reyne des fleurs – *Le Printemps* X (3, 4 & 5 voices) [5:28]

Voicy le verd et beau may – *Le Printemps* VIII (4 & 6 voices) [4:01]

Brunelette, joliette – *Le Printemps* IX (3 & 5 voices) [4:03]

Mes yeus ne cesseront i' point – *Le Printemps* XV – instrumental version [3:37]

La bel' aronde – *Le Printemps* III (4 & 6 voices) [3:41]

Perdre le sens devant vous – *Le Printemps* XIX (3 & 5 voices) [4:09]

Clément JANEQUIN; Claude Le JEUNE

Le chant du Rossignol – *Le Printemps* XII (5 voices) [9:29]

Claude Le JEUNE *Quiconq' l'amour noma l'amour* – *Le Printemps* XXV (4 voices) [1:41]

Je l'ay, je l'ay la belle fleur – *Le Printemps* XIV (3 & 5 voices) [5:04]

Francine, Rôzine – *Le Printemps* XI (4 & 6 voices) [3:35]

Première fantaisie à 4 – instrumental version [8:02]

La béle gloire, le bél honeur doner – *Le Printemps* XXXVIII (4 & 6 voices) [2:57]

Ces amoureux n'ont que douleur et tourment – *Le Printemps* XXXIV (3 & 5 voices) [2:52]

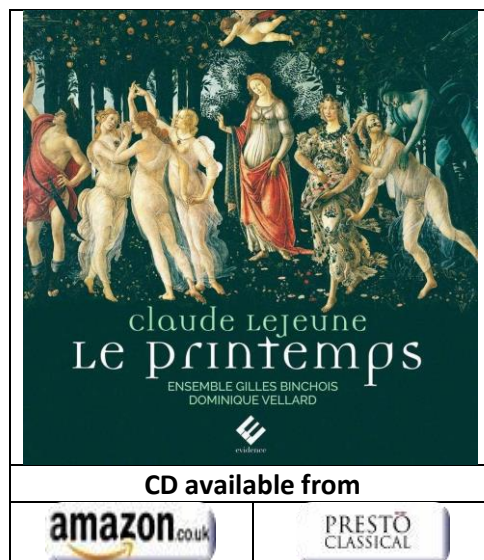
Amour, quand fus-tu né? – *Le Printemps* XXXIX (7 voices) [5'28]

Ensemble Gilles Binchois/Dominique Veillard

rec. l'Église Sainte-Colombe de Hattstatt, 10-13 September 2019. DDD.

Texts and translations included

EVIDENCE CLASSICS EVCD069 [64:07]



I had thought of Claude Le Jeune mostly as the author of the *Octonaires de le Vanité du Monde*, a collection of moralising works, heard many years ago on BBC Radio 3, and his *Dix Pseaumes de David* (Ramée **RAM1005** – [review](#)). That's pretty thin stuff, intended for reformed Calvinist congregations, though its simplicity has a charm of its own, rather like Tallis's settings for Archbishop Parker's collection of psalms – just look what Vaughan Williams made of one of those. I'm happy to report that *Le Printemps* is full of the *Vanité du Monde* against which Le Jeune had inveighed.

Much more endearing is his sole setting of the Latin Mass, *Missa ad placitum*, recorded by Ensemble Gilles Binchois, who have already given us recordings of his music, with Dominique Visse, directed on the new Evidence recording by their founder Dominique Veillard. (Harmonia Mundi **HMA1951607** – [review](#)). Reviewing that recording, I overlooked a Hyperion album which



contains the Mass plus a setting of the *Magnificat*, with alternate verses on the organ, and *Benedicite Dominum* (**CDA66387** [68:08]). That can be obtained as a CDR from the Archive Service or downloaded for £8.99 in lossless sound, with pdf booklet, from hyperion-records.co.uk. The performance, from New College Oxford, directed by Edward Higginbottom, is less secure vocally than the Harmonia Mundi, but I prefer to hear the music, as on Hyperion, without the instrumental accompaniment on

Harmonia Mundi. Incidentally, the eclassical.com download of the Harmonia Mundi has now increased in price and compares unfavourably with the super-budget £5.50 or so which UK£ purchasers should expect to pay for a lossless download.

Le Jeune's secular work, *Le Printans* (Spring) is also endearing, especially as presented here, again by Ensemble Gilles Binchois. He was associated with the arts and music movement La Pléiade and the associated Académie de Poésie et de Musique. If none of the poetry here quite matches the best of Ronsard, or my own favourite member of the group, du Bellay, the music is certainly well worth hearing. Indeed, the notes argue convincingly that only his reformed faith has kept Le Jeune from being as highly regarded as Janequin. Messiaen considered *Le Printemps* one of the greatest musical masterpieces. It's appropriate that this beautiful celebration of Spring, with the added virtue of Botticelli's painting on the cover, should have made it into my last edition for this Spring. The name of Ensemble Gilles Binchois is enough to guarantee the quality of the performances, which drive another nail in the coffin of my misconceived belief that the late C16 and early C17 was an arid time in French music.

Les Plaisirs du Louvre: Airs pour la Chambre de Louis XIII
Antoine BOESSET (1587-1643)

Reine que je sers et que je connais (Concert de Diane et ses Nymphes) [2:12]

Bien loin profanes de ces lieux (Concert des Nymphes des Bois) [1:30]

Je perds le repos et les sens [2:37]

After **Pierre GUÉDRON (ca 1565-1620)**

Cesse mortel d'importuner (Juste mespris de sainte Agnez) [5:23]

Antoine BOESSET

Astres pleins de malheurs (Récit de la Nuit) [4:16]

Étienne MOULINIÉ (1599-1676)

Rompez les charmes du sommeil (Air de la Ridicule) [4:01]

ANONYMOUS (perhaps **Louis CONSTANTIN, c.1585-1657**)

Les Suisses [0:55]

Les Suissesses [0:41]

Antoine BOESSET

Monarque triomphant (Au Roy) [2:59]

LOUIS XIII (1601-1643)

Ballet de la Merlaison: Les Gascons [1:02]

ANONYMOUS (perhaps **Louis CONSTANTIN**)

M. de Liancourt [0:44]

Les Vallets de la Faiste [1:00]

Antoine BOESSET

Je suis l'adorable Équité (Récit de la Félicité, la Justice, et les Amours) [2:56]

Étienne MOULINIÉ

Il sort de nos corps emplumés (Concert de différents oyseaux) [5:52]

Antoine BOESSET

Aime-moi Cloris (Dialogue) [3:32]

Étienne MOULINIÉ

Ô doux Sommeil [3:02]

Antoine BOESSET

Fut-il jamais une rigueur pareille [2:41]

Jacques Champion de CHAMBONNIÈRES (1601-1672)



L'Entretien des Dieux [5:12]

After **Pierre GUÉDRON**

Quels tourments rigoureux (Le Purgatoire) [3:52]

Antoine BOESSET

Ne vante point flambeau des cieux [2:23]

Louis COUPERIN (1626-1661)

La Piémontoise [1:28]

Antoine BOESSET

Segua chi vuol iniquo Amore [2:24]

Conseille-moi mon cœur (David disgrâcié) [4:00]

Me veux-tu voir mourir [2:59]

François de CHANCY (c.1600-1656)

Rares fleurs vivante peinture [5:12]

Antoine BOESSET

Ô mort l'objet de mes plaisirs [3:14]

Ensemble Correspondances/Sébastien Daucé (harpsichord and organ)
rec. 24-27 July 2019, TAP-Théâtre Auditorium de Poitiers, France. DDD.

Texts and translations included.

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

HARMONIA MUNDI HMM905320 [81:19]

We are accustomed to collections of music for Louis XIV. The age of his predecessor may not have brought forth quite such a distinguished collection of music, but I very much enjoyed this selection. Most of the music is by Antoine Boesset, who also features on a similar collection released by Alpha last year, *Airs de Cour* (**ALPHA462**). That's a 2-CD set in a hard-back book and, fortunately, there's very little overlap between it and the new Harmonia Mundi. Both feature ensembles who need no recommendation: Ensemble Correspondances here and Le Poème Harmonique, directed by Vincent Dumestre, on Alpha.

I didn't review the Alpha at the time because the press preview reached me in a very poor format – mp3 at 192kb/s – and I was hoping to get a better copy. The Outthere group, of which Alpha is a member, have upped the ante since then and now provide press previews in lossless sound, but I never obtained a better version, so my recommendation now must be modified by my expectation that the CDs sound better.



There's no such problem with the new Harmonia Mundi, to which I listened in splendid 24-bit sound. Both serve, like Le Jeune's *Le Printemps* (above) to disabuse any lingering suspicion that the French music of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was hardly worth listening to.

Stravaganza d'Amore!

The Birth of Opera at the Medici Court

Details after review.

Lea Desandre (soprano), Eva Zaïcik (soprano), Lucile Ricardot (alto), Davy Cornillo (tenor), Emiliano Gonzalez-Toro (tenor), Zachary Wilder (tenor), Nicolas Brooymans (bass);

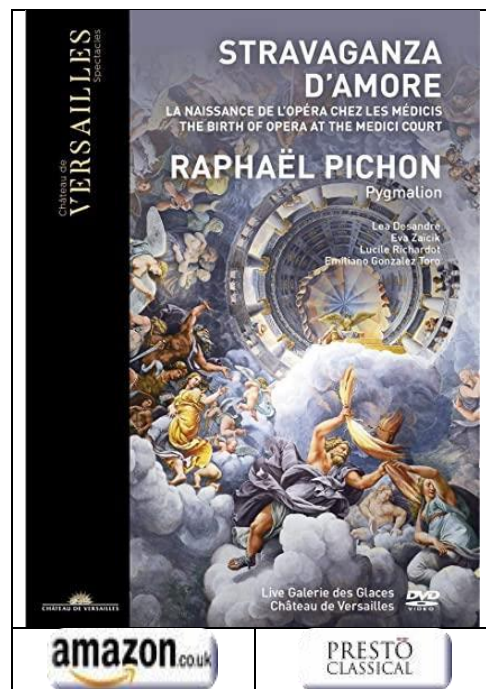
Pygmalion Choir and Orchestra/Raphaël Pichon
rec. live, Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, 11 February, 2019.
NTSC, all regions.

Subtitles: French, English and German.

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES SPECTACLES CVS019 DVD

[1h:47m]

In 2017 I [reviewed](#) a Harmonia Mundi 2-CD set (**HMM902286.87**) with the same title and subtitle as this new DVD and with many of the same performers, including Ensemble Pygmalion and Raphaël Pichon. That, too, was recorded at Versailles, in the Chapelle Royale rather than the Hall of Mirrors like the new DVD.



I was a little disappointed by that earlier recording because the cover, a costume design for the *Intermedii* known collectively as *La Pellegrina*, which graced a lavish Medici wedding in 1589, had led me to expect a complete recording to match the classic EMI LP directed by Andrew Parrott (now Erato **6026842**, download only). What Pichon did there – and repeats on the DVD – is to take snippets of music from the *Intermedii* and from other composers whose works led up to and immediately followed the birth of opera. The new recording contains just seven short excerpts from *La Pellegrina*.

It would have been too much to expect anyone to try to reproduce the action of *La Pellegrina*, set on an artificial lake with miniature galleons doing battle, and nothing such is attempted here, which raises the question of how the rather expensive DVD improves on a CD or an audio download. Up-close shots of singers and instrumentalists can soon pall, even with the splendours of the Hall of Mirrors in the background (and often out of focus). In fact, the camera work is so poor, with too many close-ups, that this is best heard in audio only. It would have been so much better to have used the video to illustrate the themes of the music from the works of renaissance and baroque painters.

In one important respect, the new programme differs from the earlier one. I reviewed that alongside a CD of extracts from Orpheus operas, including Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, and noted with surprise that there was no Monteverdi in Pichon's selection. Now there is quite a leavening of Monteverdi, from his madrigals and opera, and I would have liked to have heard these performers in a complete work or works by Monteverdi, or, indeed, in the two earliest operas proper, by Peri and Caccini, bits of which are included here. Best of all, I would have liked to have heard them in the complete *Intermedii* of 1589, performed complete instead of in bits and pieces, as here – the right notes but not necessarily in the right order, to quote the immortal words of Eric Morecambe as he destroyed 'Andrew Preview'

The music is arranged into groups or *intermedii*, with such themes as 'Apollo and Daphne', 'Orpheus and Euridice', but the original *intermedii* were even better integrated. The fact that the performances are so good and the music so ravishing, on this and the earlier Harmonia Mundi album, only rubs salt in the wound. Now I just wish I could find my copy of the EMI CD of the real thing, which came in a deluxe case.

Details:

Girolamo FANTINI (1600-1675)

La Renuccini - Toccata

Cristoforo MALVEZZI (1547-1599)

La Pellegrina – O fortunato giorno

Giulio CACCINI (1551-1618)

Il Rapimento di Cefalo (three excerpts)

Claudio MONTEVERDI (1567-1643)

Lamento della Ninfa

Cristoforo MALVEZZI

La Pellegrina – Dal vago bel sereno

Marco da GAGLIANO (1582-1643)

La Dafne – Ohimè, che veggio

Luca MARENZIO (1533-1599)

La Pellegrina – qui di carne sfama

Allesandro ORLOGIO (1555-1633)

Intrada 24 – Apollo affronta il serpente

Luca MARENZIO

La Pellegrina – O mille volte

Marco da GAGLIANO

La Dafne – Piangete, o Ninfe

Cristoforo MALVEZZI

La Pellegrina – Sinfonia

Claudio MONTEVERDI

Ballo delle Ingrate – Ahi troppo è duro

La lettera amorosa – Se I languidi miei sguardi

Lorenzo ALLEGRI (1567-1648)

Primo ballo della Notte d'Amore – Sinfonia

Jacopo PERI (1561-1633) / Giulio CACCINI

L'Euridice – Al canto, al ballo

Jacopo PERI

L'Euridice – Lassa, che di spavento

Claudio MONTEVERDI

Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria – Giove amoroso

Jacopo PERI

L'Euridice – Non piango e non sospiro; Cruda morte

Lorenzo ALLEGRI

Primo ballo della Notte d'Amore – Sinfonia: Spirto del Ciel

Giulio CACCINI

L'Euridice – Funeste plagge; Trionfi oggi pietà; Sin trionfaro in Guerra

Jacopo PERI

L'Euridice – Gioete al canto moi

Pietro Antonio GIRAMO (fl.1619-c.1630)

Festa Riso

Giovanni Battista BUONAMENTE (1595-1642)

Ballo del Granduca

Cristoforo MALVEZZI

La Pellegrina – Dolcissime sirene; A voi reali amanti; Coppia gentil

Emilio de' CAVALIERI (1550-1602)

La Pellegrina – O che nuovo miracolo

Johann Jacob FROBERGER (1616-1667)

Suite XXX in a minor [9:48]

Jean-Henry D'ANGLEBERT (1629-1691)

Des Pièces de Claveçin... Livre premier (1689):

Fugue grave pour l'Orgue. Fort lentement in d minor [3:11]

Johann Caspar Ferdinand FISCHER (1656-1746)

Musicalischer Parnassus, de la Suite „Uranie“ in d minor [6:01]

Louis COUPERIN (c.1626-1661)

Suite in F [15:38]

Jean-Henry D'ANGLEBERT

Des Pièces de Claveçin... Livre premier (1689):

Prélude in d minor [4:30]

Tombeau de M. de Chambonnières. Fort lentement [5:32]

Chaconne Rondeau in D [3:33]

Johann Caspar Ferdinand FISCHER

De Ariadne Musica (1702): *Ricercar pro Tempore*

Quadragesimae super Initium Cantilenae: "Da Jesus an dem Creutze stund" [2:12]

Louis-Nicolas CLÉRAMBAULT (1676-1749)

Du 1^{er} Livre de Pièces de Claveçin (1704): Suite in c minor [11:42]

Georg MUFFAT (1653-1704)

De Apparatus Musico-Organisticus (1690): *Passacaglia* in g minor [8:25]

Johann Jacob FROBERGER

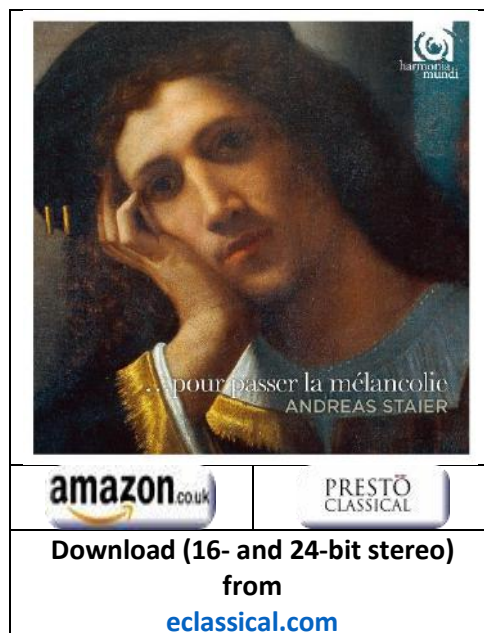
Libro quarto (1656) *de la Suite VI: Lamento sopra la dolorosa perdita della Real Mstà. Di Ferdinando IV, Ré de' Romani etc.* in C [3:48]

Andreas Staier (harpsichord, late C17, modified 1749, restored 2000-2004)

rec. February 2012, Teldex Studio, Berlin. DDD.

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

HARMONIA MUNDI HMC902143 [74:50]



Genius, talent, achievement and melancholy have traditionally gone hand in hand at least since they were linked in the writings of Aristotle, but there was a period from the end of the sixteenth and well into the seventeenth century when it was downright fashionable to be melancholy. The young men in Hilliard's miniatures often assume a melancholy pose, entangled in the briars of unrequited love. Dowland turned melancholy into a musical form, punning on his own name and the Latin *dolens*, sorrowing, and it was still so fashionable when Aubrey wrote his *Brief Lives* at the end of C17 that he asserts in the preface that he was melancholy in the womb.

This new recording by Andreas Staier reminds us that the musical equivalent of the *vanitas* painting, the sitter head in hands or contemplating a skull, can be beautiful. His recording would serve as a useful pendant to the different mood of another Harmonia Mundi release *Les plaisirs de la Louvre* (above, p.11) and to Le Jeune's celebration of Spring (also above, p.12). If melancholy can be made attractive, this is the programme to do it.

With one dealer offering this on CD for under £10 and another asking more than £23 as I write, the usual warning to shop carefully is especially pertinent.

Michele MASCITTI (1664-1750)

Sonate a violino solo e basso, Opera Nona (Violin Sonatas, Op.9, Paris 1738) [68:43]

Quartetto Vanvitelli

rec. 1-3 July 2019, San Medardo Church, Peli, Coli, Piacenza, Italy. DDD.

Reviewed as 24-bit wav press preview.

ARCANA A473 [68:43]



How much longer can the record companies keep resurrecting little-known but worthwhile music? At first it may appear that there is another recording of these sonatas, but that's of the Op.8 set, by the same performers as on the new release (Arcana **A111** – [review](#)). There are also recordings of his Op.2 sonatas (Cantus **C9610** – [review](#)) and his *Concerti a6*, Op.7, and *Sonate da camera*, Op.3 (Bongiovanni **GB5063**). Mascitti's Concerto, Op.7/2, which opens a Naïve recording of music c.1700, caught my fancy (**OP30568** – [review](#)) and Johan van Veen was also impressed by the earlier Arcana release (link above).

If someone had told me that these were recently discovered sonatas by Handel, I might well have been convinced. Certainly, as performed and as recorded by Arcana, this is an album at least to be sampled by lovers of baroque music.

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

Orchestral Suite No.3 in D, BWV1068 [22:25]

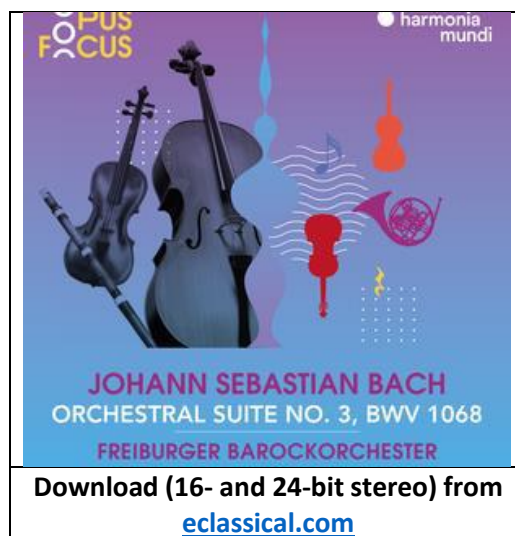
Freiburger Barockorchester

rec. 2011?

Download only?

Reviewed as 24/44.1 download from eclassical.com (no booklet)

HARMONIA MUNDI FOCUS 902113DI [22:25]



I take this to be excerpted from the Freiburg recording of all four Bach Orchestra Suites, though no information is included with the download. It shares part of the catalogue number of that set (**HMC902113/14**) and it would surely have been unfeasible to have re-recorded just Suite No.3. It certainly shares the virtues of the complete set, one of Brian Reinhart's top choices for these Suites – [DL News 2013/18](#) – now available as a download only. The complete set is available for around £10 for lossless and £14 for 24-bit, which means that the eclassical.com downloads in both formats are over-expensive. Nor is this single release, at \$5.04 (16 bit) or \$6.04 (24 bit), especially competitive for UK purchasers, with the £/\$ exchange rate weakened both by Brexit and Covid-19, when single spin-offs like this, such as those from DG, usually come at a budget price. The snazzy cover doesn't make matters any better. None of that diminishes the quality of the performance, but Harmonia Mundi should rethink this, perhaps reissuing the whole set of the Suites on their mid-price label.

Jean-Paul-Égide MARTINI (1741-1816)

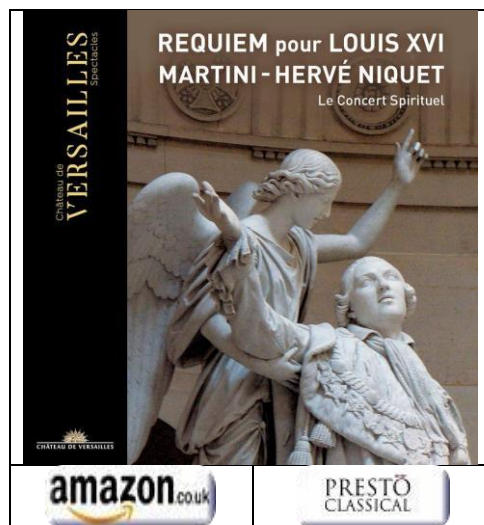
Messe de Requiem pour la Pompe funèbre de Louis XVI et Marie Antoinette (1811) [56:41]

Claude-Joseph Rouget de LISLE (1760-1836)

La Marseillaise [4:22]

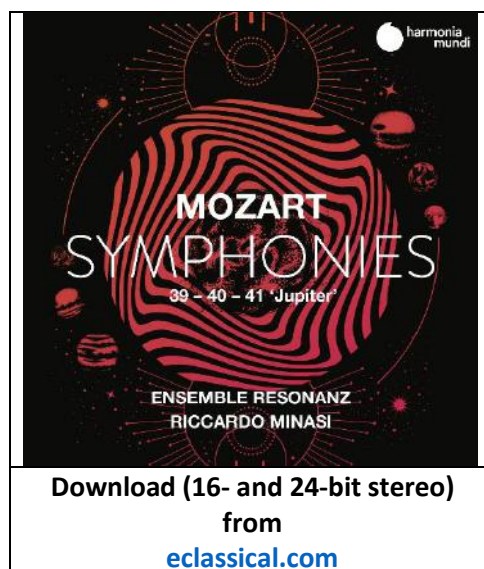
Le Concert Spirituel/Hervé Niquet
 rec. June 2019, Chapelle Royale de Versailles. DDD.
 Texts and translations included
CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES SPECTACLES CVS022 [61:03]

When published in 1813 – and passed off as a new composition, though it dates from two years earlier – Martini dedicated this *Requiem* Mass to ‘the souls of the most famous composers’, but with the restoration of the monarchy in 1815 it was rededicated to Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette and performed in the royal chapel. Hervé Niquet and Le Concert Spirituel have already given us similarly inspired music by Cherubini and Plantade (*Requiem pour Louis XVI et Marie-Antoinette*, **Alpha 251** – [review](#) – [review](#)). If you enjoyed that earlier recording as much as I did – [review](#) – you may like this dramatic setting even more; it’s also brought to life most persuasively.



It may seem perverse to follow the royalist *Requiem* with the revolutionary *La Marseillaise*, especially as it comes as a ‘hidden track’, not listed in the booklet, but it makes a rousing conclusion to a rousing work – not many of the terrors of Hell and Purgatory in Martini’s music until the brimstone-laden *Amen*. There’s no other current recording of the Martini and I don’t recall hearing the earlier version on Christophorus, but I doubt that it could have been any better than the new recording.

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1791)
 Symphony No.39 in E-flat, K543 [31:07]
 Symphony No.40 in g minor, K550 [35:33]
 Symphony No.41 in C, K551 ‘Jupiter’ [39:38]
 Ensemble Resonanz/Riccardo Minasi
 Rec. July 2019, Friedrich-Ebert-Halle, Hamburg. DDD.
 Reviewed as a 24/96 download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com.
HARMONIA MUNDI HMM902629.30 (2 CDs for the price of one) [1:46:23]
 For CD purchase and other details see [review](#) by Dominy Clements.



Is the new generation of conductors going out of the way to annoy those who, like me, absorbed Mozart and Haydn at the hands of Beecham, Walter and Colin Davis? So it would seem with, first, Barbara Hannigan telling her harpsichord to ‘stumble and fumble’ out of sync with the rest of the orchestra in Haydn’s Symphony No.49 (*La Passione*, Alpha 586 – [review](#)) and now Riccardo Minasi unsettling our view of Mozart’s last three symphonies.

Perhaps it was not ideal that immediately before listening to these recordings I had been hearing Herbert Blomstedt conduct the Bavarian Radio SO in No.39, a pretty straightforward performance. Minasi is anything but straightforward: the opening of No.39 is so powerful that you might think you were hearing Haydn’s ‘Surprise’ symphony on period instruments. In fact, I believe that Ensemble Resonanz plays on modern instruments, but with period-instrument awareness.

There's a great deal to enjoy here, including the concept that these three symphonies were designed as a trilogy, but there are also far too many hairpin accents underlining points – not always the right points, like newsreaders who annoyingly stress all the definite and indefinite articles and prepositions – and too many agogic stops, starts and pauses. The slow movements escape relatively unscathed, but overall I came away feeling that I'd been sitting too near to the percussion for comfort. The overall effect was to make me retreat to the comfort of my CBS 2-CD of Bruno Walter in Nos. 35, 36 and 38-41 (no longer available except as part of a 77-CD collection).

Perhaps Minasi and his team would have been better employed recording a set of Haydn's *Sturm und Drang* symphonies? Their Mozart, I fear, has to be my **Turkey of the Month**.

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART

Horn Concerto No.1 in D, K412¹ [8:19]

Horn Concerto No.2 in E-flat, K417¹ [13:46]

Paul HINDEMITH (1895-1963)

Horn Concerto² [14:53]

Richard STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Horn Concerto No.1 in E-flat, Op.11³ [15:02]

Horn Concerto No.2 in E-flat, AV132⁴ (TrV283) [18:15]

Dennis Brain (horn)

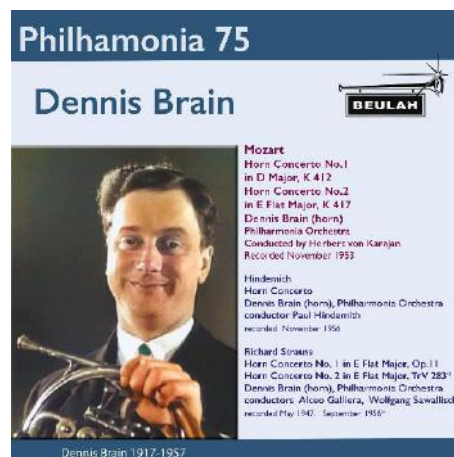
Philharmonia Orchestra/Herbert von Karajan¹; Paul

Hindemith; Alceo Galliera; Wolfgang Sawallisch

rec. November 1953¹, November 1956², May 1947³,

September 1956⁴. ADD/mono.

BEULAH 5PS58 [70:11] Available shortly from [Qobuz](#)



The Mozart Horn Concertos which Dennis Brain recorded with Herbert von Karajan in 1953 are abiding classics of the recorded repertoire, which continued selling at full price on LP and CD for many years longer than most recordings. Beulah have already given us Nos. 3 and 4 on an earlier Philharmonia 75 recording (**4PS58**). If you have that, you should find the addition of this album irresistible, with the addition of the Hindemith and Richard Strauss works a bonus.

Others may have equalled Brain in the Mozart, but never excelled him, and the rest of the programme is of much more than historical value. Even the 1947 recording of the Strauss Concerto No.1 has come up sounding as well as could be – after their accidental encounter with ffr in 1945 (Holst, below), HMV returned to their old ways, but the 1947 sound, the oldest here, is more than tolerable. This was the first historical recording to which I listened after upgrading from the Cyrus Soundkey to the Dragonfly Red DAC – at around £139, that's a small but significant improvement on the Soundkey and on the Dragonfly Mark I which preceded it. Plugging into a spare USB socket, it's not much larger than a USB stick. Younger ears than mine might consider the Dragonfly Cobalt for less than £100 more.

The ability to listen to the music via a decent DAC makes it all the more important to remind readers that [Qobuz](#) offer Beulah recordings in lossless flac, equivalent in quality to my press previews, rather than the mp3 offered by other suppliers. Even many portable players such as the Sony Walkman and the more expensive models from Astell and Kern support lossless sound, including even 24-bit; otherwise there are plenty of free programmes that will convert to mp3.

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1791)

Piano Sonata No.4, K282 [16:40]

Piano Sonata No.5, K283 [18:02]

Piano Sonata No.9, K311 [18:54]

Rondo in A, K511 [10:00]

Country Dances, K606 [3:07]

Wanda Landowska (piano)

rec. 1956. ADD.

BEULAH 1PS67 [66:41] Available shortly from [Qobuz](#)



Wanda Landowska was a pioneer harpsichordist, so it's surprising to hear her play Mozart on the modern concert grand – so much so that the Gramophone review of this LP (RCA RB16017) inadvertently attributed her playing to her usual instrument. That error apart, AP wrote a well-considered rave review of this recording.

Nowadays we might prefer to hear these sonatas on the fortepiano, as per Kristian Bezuidenhout's recordings for Harmonia Mundi, but Landowska on the piano reminds me of Angela Hewitt's Bach – never overdone, tastefully phrased, with a lightness of touch, and unobtrusively decorated, but still bringing out the strength of these early works.

There are not too many more recent alternatives; the best is available only as a 5-CD box set, from Mitsuko Uchida (**4683562**). Landowska's complete piano recordings are similarly imprisoned in a box set (**APR3705**, 3 CDs), so this Beulah single album selection is very welcome.

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

[Piano Concerto No.2](#) in B-flat [26:58]

[Piano Concerto No.5](#) in E-flat [36:26]

Kristian Bezuidenhout (fortepiano)

Freiburger Barockorchester/Pablo Heras-Casado

rec. 2017, Ensemblehaus, Freiburg, Germany

HARMONIA MUNDI HMM902411 [63:28]



Since I mentioned this in [Spring 2020/1A](#), two colleagues have reviewed it in detail and found it wanting in terms of the chosen fortepiano – rather later than the date of these concertos – and the recorded balance. [Review](#) – [review](#). I wrote that fans of historically informed performance might prefer the Bezuidenhout to the Brautigam recording (**BIS-2274**), and it's been described elsewhere in the highest terms, so I was a little surprised to see the criticism.

Listening again, I still found this to be a very fine recording for those seeking HIPP performance, but it seems wise now to recommend listening, if possible, before deciding. Both this recording and the Brautigam can be accessed from Naxos Music Library – [here](#) and [here](#).

Carl Maria von WEBER (1786-1826)

Konzertstück in f minor for piano and orchestra, Op.79, J282 [16:10]

Sergei RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)

Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op.43 [24:17]

Margrit Weber (piano)

Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra/Ferenc Fricsay

rec. 1962. ADD/stereo

Frédéric CHOPIN (1810-1849)

Rondo à la Krakowiak (Cracoviennne) in F, Op.14 [14:46]

Stefan Askenase (piano)

Haag Residentie Orchestra/Willem van Otterloo

Robert SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

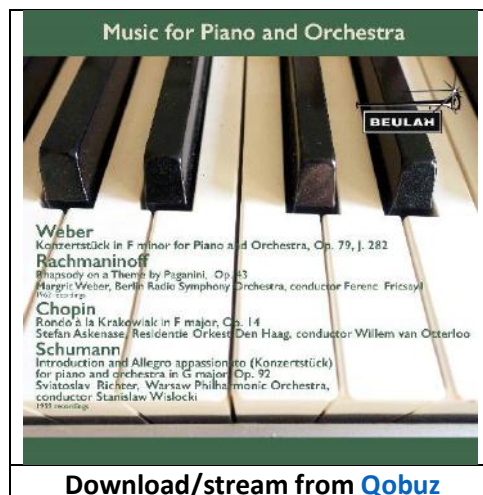
Introduction and Allegro appassionato (*Konzertstück*) for piano and orchestra in G, Op.92 [15:36]

Sviatoslav Richter (piano)

Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra/Stanislaw Wislocki

rec. 1959. ADD/stereo

BEULAH 1PS62 [70:51]



This recording of the Weber *Konzertstück* is also available on a DG recording, with Falla *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, and other works. That's available as a download only (**4630852**) and more expensive than the Beulah. Margrit Weber's Rachmaninov is available only in an 18-hour collection of Ferenc Fricsay's recordings (**4794043**). That's a tempting set for Fricsay's admirers – of which I'm one – but the Beulah comes in a more manageable form.

Askenase's Chopin was always, undeservedly, somewhat overshadowed by Rubinstein. The *Concert Rondo* here serves as a reminder of his recordings of the two piano concertos; that of No.2, with Leopold Ludwig from 1960, is available on Beulah **1PS9**, with solo Chopin works from Rubinstein and Paderewski – [review](#) – download/stream from [Qobuz](#). The *Rondo* originally appeared on LP with a recording of the first piano concerto which had the misfortune to appear at the same time as the now classic Pollini recording; I'm pleased that Beulah have at least rescued this free-wheeling performance.

Above all, this Beulah album is worth having for the Rachmaninov alone. Even with so many recordings to its name, the concerto comes over very enjoyably in this perky performance, and the 1962 sound has come up sounding very well. If the piano is recorded very prominently, that's appropriate in this music by a pianist composer; the balance is much less tilted in Weber's favour in the music by her namesake.

It's a bit of a mixed bag of a programme, but if the couplings appeal it's well worth obtaining or, at the very least, streaming.

Franz SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Symphonies - Volume 2

Symphony No.2 in B-flat, D125 (1814-15) [32:03]

Symphony No.6 in C, D589 'Little C Major' (1817-18) [29:11]

Overture in D 'In the Italian Style' D590 (1817-18) [7:21]

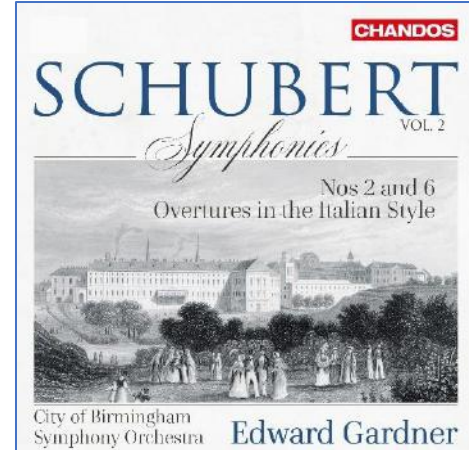
Overture in C 'In the Italian Style' D591 (1817) [6:51]

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra/Edward Gardner

rec. 2019 Town Hall, Birmingham, UK

CHANDOS CHSA5245 SACD [74:11] For SACD purchase and other details see [Recommended review](#) by Robert Cummings.

Regular readers will doubtless be tired of my comparisons with Beecham, but Sir Thomas's recordings of these two symphonies, plus Nos. 3 and 5, from his *Later Tradition* set, are indelibly lodged in my mind (**9186112** – [review](#)). That set, now download only, is full of good things and the Schubert is not the least of them. At around £29 in lossless sound for 9¼ hours of superb music-making, that's excellent value. If you just want his Schubert, Beulah have the answer, with his recordings of Nos. 1, 2 and 6 (**4PDR4** – [DL News 2016/6](#)). Those mono recordings have come up well, especially if you choose the lossless version from [Qobuz](#) – at the same price that others charge for mp3 – and though Beecham often tinkered with the music, his performances remain my benchmark.



Download (16- and 24-bit stereo)
from
chandos.net

Edward Gardner's touch in the new recordings is light and dancing and other reviewers have been as impressed as MWI's Robert Cummings (link above), though one reviewer queried the fast tempo in the outer movement of No.2. Perhaps Thomas Dausgaard makes a better case for a similarly fast tempo – just a shade slower than Gardner – with the smaller forces of the Swedish Chamber Orchestra (**BIS-1989-SACD**, Nos. 1 and 2, *Zauberharfe* Overture – [review](#)). That's one of the albums in the series that I missed, so I took the opportunity to stream it in 24-bit sound from eclassical.com, where, for the same price, 5.0 surround sound is also available. Dausgaard's tempos are on the fast side throughout, but he makes them work; I especially enjoyed his account of No.8, the 'Unfinished', one of the few recordings not to take the first movement at almost the same slow tempo as the second (**BIS-1656 SACD** – [DL News 2013/10](#)).

Gardner is slightly faster in No.6 than Dausgaard but here, again, I thought there was little to choose between the two; you may prefer the BIS coupling, the complete *Rosamunde* music, but minus the *Zauberharfe* Overture which went with it (**BIS-1987 SACD** – [2013/10](#) again).

The two Italian-style overtures, inspired by the popularity of Rossini in Vienna, round off a fine album – but would they not have been better placed first, or between the symphonies?

Franck by Franck

César FRANCK (1822-1890)

Symphonie en Ré Mineur (Symphony in d minor, FWV48, 1888/9) [38:57]

Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne, poème symphonique (c.1833) [28:20]

Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France/Mikko Franck rec. March 2018, June 2019, Auditorium de Radio France. DDD.

Reviewed as lossless (wav) press preview.

ALPHA ALPHA561 [67:19]

Is 'Franck by Franck' anything other than a gimmick? And did we need another recording of the symphony? Older readers will probably have and be happy with Pierre



CD available from
amazon.co.uk PRESTO CLASSICAL

Monteux's Chicago recording in one of its manifestations (RCA Living Stereo **09026633032**, download only, with another classic recording, of Stravinsky's *Petrushka* – [review](#) of earlier reissue). More recently Marek Janowski with the revived Suisse Romande Orchestra has rung many bells (Pentatone **PTC5186078**, with Chausson Symphony: *Recording of the Month* – review). The Pentatone SACD seems to have been deleted, but there's a 24-bit download for around £14.

Somewhere in the back of my mind, too, are recordings by Paray (1953, Naxos Classical Archives **980530**, download), Beecham (Warner **5629482**, with Lalo and Fauré, download only, or *French Music* – [review](#)) and Yan Pascal Tortelier (Chandos **CHAN9875**, with *Symphonic Variations, Les Éolides*, **9099322**, download only – [review](#) – [review](#)). The Beulah reissue of the Barbirolli recording, coupled with his account of VW's *Antartica* Symphony, is a rare misfire for this label – [Independent Labels 2017](#). There's even a recording transcribed for the organ which, of course, is the instrument most associated with Franck. I liked that, but not in preference to the Tortelier account of the original.

The new recording joins that elite group of its precursors without actually ousting any of them, though the mono Paray needs some tolerance, nowhere the sound quality of the Alpha, or the Chandos and the Pentatone both of which can be obtained in 24-bit sound.

The symphonic nature poem *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* – possibly the first work of its kind, pre-dating the Liszt with the same title – was abandoned and not discovered until 1946. Inspired as it is by a Kaspar David Friedrich-like view from the top of a mountain, and the sounds heard there, dare I say that it's a more musical work than Richard Strauss's *Alpine Symphony*? The performance and recording make a good case for it – but would it not have been better to have placed it before the symphony? There seems to be only one other recording, also with the Symphony, and the ballet *Hulda*, from Christian Arming in Liège (Fuga Libera **FUG596** – [review](#)).

RECOMMENDED

Sergei RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)

Piano Concerto No.2 in c minor, Op.18¹ [35:13]

Pyotr Ilyich TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Piano Concerto No.1 in b-flat minor, Op.23² [33:18]

John Ogdon (piano)

Philharmonia Orchestra/John Pritchard

rec. 29-31 January 1962, Studio 1 Abbey Road. ADD/stereo¹

Philharmonia Orchestra/Sir John Barbirolli²

rec. 17-18 December 1962, Studio 1 Abbey Road. ADD/stereo

BEULAH 6PS58 [68:32] Available shortly from [Qobuz](#).



This is another very desirable reissue in Beulah's Philharmonia 75 series. John Ogdon and Vladimir Ashkenazy famously drew in the Moscow Piano Competition; Ogdon played Liszt Piano Concerto No.1 and *Mephisto* Waltz, and Ashkenazy Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No.1 and *Dumka* in e minor. The occasion was recorded by Melodiya – still available as a download (**G0100016430360**).

Both these recordings are available as part of a 5¼-hour Warner set, *John Ogdon – 70th Anniversary Edition* (**3927472**, download only), but Beulah give us two of the finest performances in that set in a more manageable form. Like all the best interpreters of the Rachmaninov – including Katin, Ashkenazy, Hough and, most recently, Trifonov (DG **4835335**, Nos. 2 and 4: *Recommended* – [review](#): *Recording of the Month* – [review](#) – Autumn 2018/2), Ogdon lets the music speak for itself without over-‘interpretation’.

The Tchaikovsky was released at the same time as Ashkenazy's first recording, with Lorin Maazel, just reissued as a short-value Decca download (**4850839**). Ogdon won by a head, if only by including the Franck *Symphonic Variations* – the Ashkenazy came on its own. The Philharmonia playing under Barbirolli offers an extra incentive, and the recording of both concertos has come up sounding fresh.

Boult at the BBC

Engelbert HUMPERDINCK (1854-1921)

Hänsel und Gretel: Overture [7:27]

rec. Abbey Road Studio, 25 July 1932. ADD/mono

Pyotr Ilyich TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Serenade in C, Op.48 [25:12]

rec. Colston hall, Bristol, 9 April 1940. ADD/mono

Gustav HOLST (1874-1934)

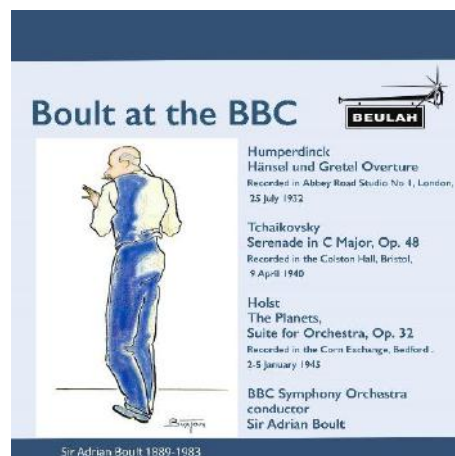
The Planets: Suite for orchestra [47:07]

rec. Corn Exchange, Bradford, 2-5 January 1945.

ADD/mono

BBC Symphony Orchestra/Sir Adrian Boult

BEULAH 9PD12 [79:48] Due shortly from [Qobuz](#).



The main item of interest here is the recording of *The Planets*. It was Boult who first made them to shine, in 1919, according to the composer, and he recorded the music many times. Many of those recordings remain in the catalogue, including his 1978 version, made at the age of 90 with the LPO, coupled with Elgar *Enigma Variations* on Warner Masters **6317832** (download only) or with other music by Holst on Twentieth Century Classics **6278982**. The latter, formerly a 2-for-1 offering on CD – [review](#) – is also download only. Bob Briggs thought the twofer too good to miss, but the Beulah recording offers a very worthwhile adjunct, in a startlingly good transfer which sounds more like mid-1950s mono than something from ten years earlier. The quality is due to the fact that the recording engineer forgot to turn off the limitation of the upper frequency range: thus HMV accidentally produced their first ffr recording. No wonder that AR thought the recording ‘more actual than anything we have had before and should almost cause heart failure from excitement’.

It's interesting to note that, while most of Boult's chosen tempi remained constant over the 33-year span, some movements became slightly faster over the years; this was one conductor whom age did not weary. Equally noteworthy: though there are slight differences, both recordings do the music proud.

RECOMMENDED

Antonín DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Cello Concerto in b minor, Op.104 [38:01]

Pierre Fournier (cello)

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra/George Szell

rec. 1961. ADD/stereo

Robert SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Cello Concert in a minor, Op.129 [25:05]

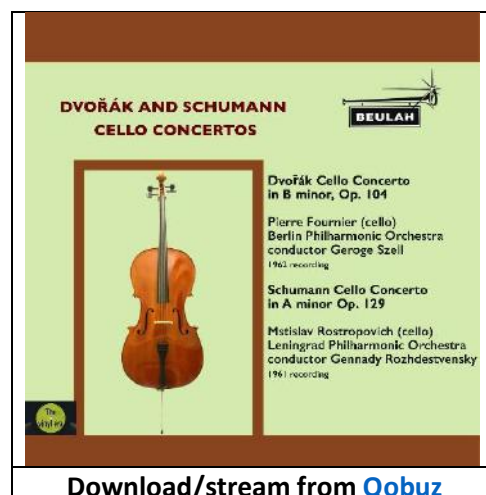
Mstislav Rostropovich (cello)

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra/Gennady

Rozhdesvensky

rec. 1961. ADD/stereo

BEULAH 1PS66 [63:03]



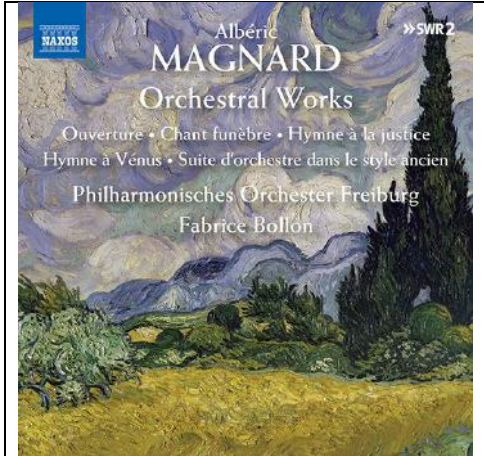
Download/stream from [Qobuz](#)




Very little is required in recommending these classic recordings. The Dvořák is one of my favourite recordings – somewhere at the back of the cupboard I have the DG reissue, still available as download, with Bloch and Bruch, though more expensive than when it was a budget-price CD, and more expensive than this Beulah reissue, which sounds hardly inferior to that official transfer.

Recommendable as the DG coupling is, Beulah go one better with the Schumann. That, too, remains available on a Regis CD, with music by Britten and Debussy (**RRC1406** – [review](#)), but, again, the Beulah coupling has the edge and, though the Regis CD sells for around the same price as the Beulah download, the Regis download costs more in lossless sound. With very good Beulah transfers of both concertos, why hesitate?

Albéric MAGNARD (1865-1914)

Ouverture Op.10 (1895) [11:41]
Chant Funèbre Op.9 (1895) [12:06]
Hymne à la Justice Op.14 (1910) [13:37]
Hymne à Vénus Op.17 (1904) [13:33]
Suite dans le style ancien Op.2 (1892) [14:24]
 Philharmonisches Orchester Freiburg/Fabrice Bollon
 rec. 2-3 October 2017, 18-19 June, 7 July 2018, 8 March 2019, Rolf Böhme Saal, Konzerthaus, Freiburg and SWR Studio, Baden Baden. DDD.
 Reviewed as streamed from [Naxos Music Library](#).
NAXOS 8.574084 [65:30]



CD available from	
	
	
Stream from Naxos Music Library	

Thus far, only Magnard’s four symphonies have received much attention on record: Fabrice Bollon and the Freiburg Philharmonic have recorded them for Naxos (1 and 2 **8.574083**; 3 and 4 **8.574082**) and Hyperion has a 2-for-1 set (**CDD22068** – [review](#) – [review](#)). Michel Plasson’s older EMI set, which ran to three CDs, is also available as a very inexpensive download (Warner **5723642**, £3.19 from [Presto](#)). The Plasson set also includes some of the shorter pieces on the new Naxos CD. I reviewed that as my *Bargain of the Month* in [DL News 2014/8](#), at £2.29 from Amazon, but the mp3 download which I reviewed, at a rather mean 232kb/s, is trumped by the Presto lossless version for less than £1 more.

If you don’t have a recording of the symphonies and are prepared to download, the Presto offering of the Plasson set is too good to miss. If you chose the earlier Naxos recordings or the Hyperion twofer, the new CD offers a very worthwhile supplement. As you might expect from a composer named Albéric, some of the music is Wagner-influenced; it’s none the worse for that, but even Wagner-haters should give Magnard’s colourful music a try.

My usual warning about shopping around is especially relevant in the case of the new Naxos recording: as I write, the CD is available from one dealer for £6.30 and from another it’s ‘reduced’ from £9.63 to £8.81, with ‘one used’ for £15.51. Logic? Downloaders should expect to pay around £5 for lossless sound.

Claude DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Suite bergamasque [16:38]

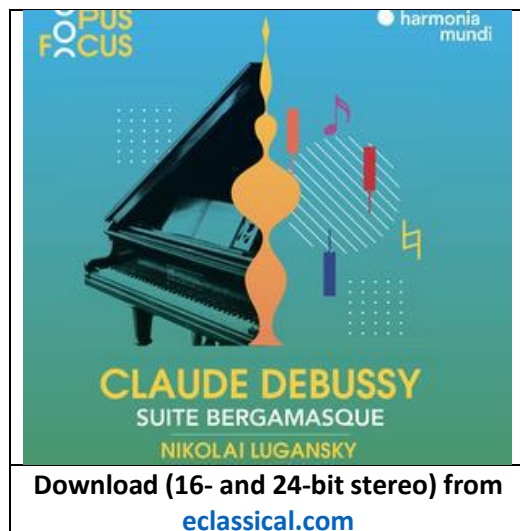
Nikolai Lugansky (piano)

rec. 2018.

Reviewed as 16-bit download from eclassical.com. No booklet. Download only?

HARMONIA MUNDI 902309DI2 [16:38]

Like the Bach Orchestral Suite No.3 (above, p.17), this is a single excerpt from a longer album – in this case Nikolai Lugansky's contribution to the Debussy centenary on **HMM902309** – [review](#). Robert Beattie, who thought the album very fine, singled out the *Suite bergamasque*, which, of course, contains *Clair de Lune*, as especially superb, as indeed it is.



All in all, this makes much more sense as a single than the Bach.

The Victorian and Edwardian Anthem

Sir Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)

Give unto the Lord (Psalm XXIX), Op.74 [8:16]

Ave Verum Corpus [2:44]

Charles Hubert Hastings PARRY (1848-1918)

Lord, let me know mine end (No. 6 from *Songs of Farewell*) [10:38]

John STAINER (1840-1901)

I saw the Lord [7:40]

Charles WOOD (1866-1926)

Hail, gladdening Light [3:35]

Charles Hubert Hastings PARRY

My soul, there is a country (No. 1 from *Songs of Farewell*) [3:45]

Alan GRAY (1855-1931)

Magnificat [5:46]

Nunc Dimittis [3:29]

Sir Edward ELGAR

The Spirit of the Lord [6:50]

O Hearken Thou [3:38]

Charles WOOD

O thou the central orb [3:48]

Frederick BRIDGE (1844-1924)

Happy is the Man [3:14]

Charles Hubert Hastings PARRY

I was glad [5:19]

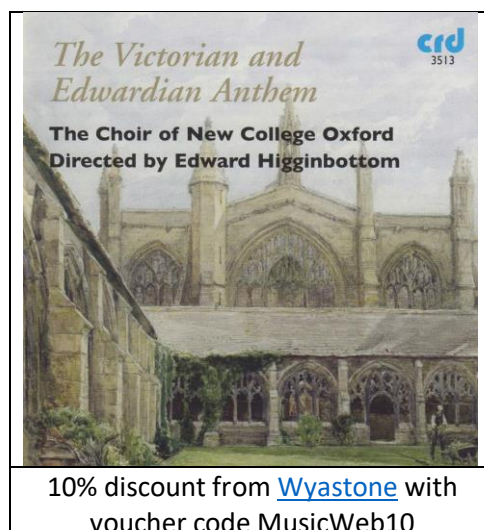
Nicholas Wearne (organ), David Newsholme (organ)

The Choir of New College Oxford/Edward Higginbottom

rec. Chapel of New College Oxford. (P) and © 2008.

Texts included.

CRD CRD3513 [68:49]



Reviewing a new recording of Parry's *Songs of Farewell*, with music by Stanford, Wood and Gray, for the main pages of MusicWeb, I noticed that we didn't seem to have reviewed this CRD recording. Indeed, it doesn't seem to have received much attention anywhere. The neglect is undeserved; there's plenty here to dispel the notion that, Elgar apart, the church music of the Victorian and Edwardian periods is of little value. The Parry and Elgar items are the highlights – it's especially apt that Parry's *I was glad* should round off the programme – but listen with an unprejudiced ear to this recording and you may be pleasantly surprised.

At the time of writing, I was still awaiting a lossless download from Wyastone, but streaming the album from Naxos Music Library, with booklet, served to convince me that this is another of the many very worthwhile albums made by Edward Higginbottom during his tenure at New College – listed in the booklet.

Leonard BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

Symphony No.1 'Jeremiah' [24:01]

Symphony No.2 'The Age of Anxiety' [35:38]

Anna Larsson (mezzo)

Roland Pöntinen (piano)

Arctic Philharmonic/Christian Lindberg

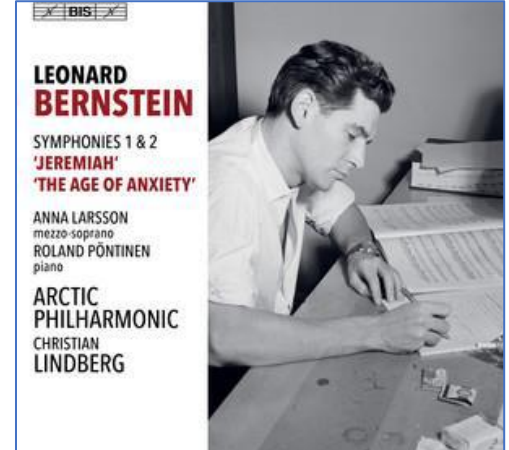
rec. 2017, Stormen, Bodö, Norway. DSD

Text and English translation included

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from

eclassical.com.

BIS BIS-2298 SACD [59:43] For SACD purchase and other details see [review by John Quinn](#).



LEONARD BERNSTEIN
 SYMPHONIES 1 & 2
 'JEREMIAH'
 'THE AGE OF ANXIETY'
 ANNA LARSSON
 mezzo-soprano
 ROLAND PÖNTINEN
 piano
 ARCTIC
 PHILHARMONIC
 CHRISTIAN
 LINDBERG

Download (16- and 24-bit stereo and 5.0 surround) from eclassical.com

If you know only the easily approachable side of Bernstein's music, handle these symphonies with extreme caution. I must have known these two works and their successor, the *Kaddish* Symphony, for over 50 years, and I'm still only on the outer verges of getting to know them. The *Mass* is even tougher. That's not for lack of some very fine recordings of the symphonies, from the composer himself (Sony and DG) and his star pupil Marin Alsop (Naxos – [review – Independent Labels Feb 2017](#)). The Naxos comes at an attractive price, especially as a download (lossless sound around £5) and the DG Originals is also good value: at mid-price it contains the two symphonies and *Chichester Psalms* (**4577572**). **Warning:** some dealers are still offering a download of the original full-price release, just the two symphonies, more expensively. Bernstein completists will find his own recordings of his symphonies on *The Complete Works*, all his DG recordings on 26 CDs and three DVD videos for around £98 (**4829228**).

You would hardly expect a symphony entitled 'Jeremiah' to make for comfortable listening – not for nothing did the early Christian church latch on to his book of Lamentations as the music for Holy Week – and the same applies to Auden's despairing poetry of the late 1930s, from which the title of Symphony No.2 is taken, but I'm still persevering with both symphonies.

The DG and Naxos recordings take some beating, but the new BIS comes very close to rivalling them. 24-bit fans can download the Naxos in that format for less than £8, but BIS have the only SACD and 24-bit surround-sound version; fans of hi-def who go for it will have first-rate sound quality and a performance which actually endeared me more to the music – or is it that, having long exceeded the biblical three-score-and-twenty, I'm becoming more amenable? The jazz elements of No.2 and its optimistic ending are especially well defined in the BIS recording.

Those in search of just No.2 will find a fine recording coupled with William Bolcom's Piano Concerto from Marc-André Hamelin, the Ulster Orchestra and Dmitry Sitkovetsky on Hyperion **CDA67170**. That was available at half price when I reviewed it in [October 2011/2](#), but it's still good value as a download for £7.99 from hyperion-records.co.uk.

Nicholas MAW (1935-2009)

- Three Hymns* (1989)¹ [13:07]
 - Five Epigrams* (1960) [6:40]
 - The Angel Gabriel* (1963) [2:24]
 - Our Lady's song* (1961) [2:34]
 - Balulalow* (1964) [2:20]
 - Corpus Christi Carol* (1964)² [3:25]
 - Swete Jesu* (1992) [3:25]
 - Five Irish Songs* (1972) [15:13]
 - One Foot in Eden still, I stand* (1990) [7:52]
- Schola Cantorum of Oxford/Mark Shepherd
Jeremy Filsell (organ)¹
Simon Jones (piano)²

rec. Chapel of Exeter College, Oxford, 12-14 March 2000.
DDD.

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

HYPERION CDA67615 [58:04]

For CD purchase details please see [review](#) by Robert Hugill.

- Spring music* (1982 rev. 1984) [14:38]
 - Voices of Memory: Variations for orchestra* (1995) [27:01]
 - Sonata for Solo Violin* (1996-97) [31:04]
- Harriet Mackenzie (violin)
BBC National Orchestra of Wales/William Boughton
rec. 2019, Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff; Wyastone Leys,
Monmouth, UK. DDD.

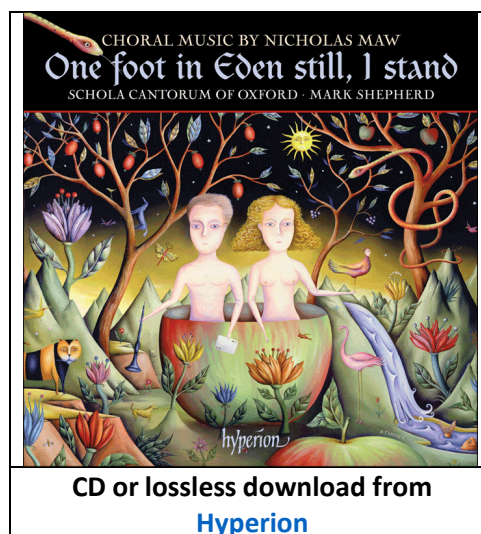
Reviewed as lossless (wav) press preview.

LYRITA SRCD.385 [72:45]

For CD purchase details please see [review](#) by Gary Higginson.

I'm always looking for music of recent date that isn't calculated to upset old fogies like myself – or young fogies, if that's not a category error – and Nicholas Maw fits the bill nicely. That doesn't mean that it's easy or undemanding.

If you haven't yet got to know the music on the earlier recording – somehow it seems to have slipped my attention – that should be your first port of call. That's on offer as I write from Hyperion for just £5, CD or download, but you will soon want to follow up with the new Lyrita. The updated Brueghel *Earthly Paradise* on the Hyperion cover is most apt – modern music with a sense of the past, and that applies to both recordings.



Sir Richard Rodney BENNETT (1936 – 2012)


Orchestral Works, Volume 4

Troubadour Music (2006) [4:24]
 Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1968)* [24:20]
Aubade for Orchestra (1964) [9:03]
 Country Dances for Orchestra (Book 1) (2000 – 01) [10:45]
 Anniversaries for Orchestra (1982) [16:59]
 Michael McHale (piano)*
 BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/John Wilson
 rec. City Halls, Glasgow; 22 – 24 July 2019. DDD/DSD.
CHANDOS CHSA5244 [65:52]

See also [review](#) by Marc Rochester.

If you tend to think of Richard Rodney Bennett as the composer of music that's easy to assimilate, this fourth volume in the Chandos series, built around the uncompromising Piano Concerto of 1968, will make you think again. If it's only the easy-going music that appeals, best stay away from this volume, or try it out from [Naxos Music Library](#) before buying. I must admit that it sounds a little too like Pierre Boulez's more way-out music, such as *Pli selon Pli* and *Le Marteau sans Maître*, which means that it's hardly likely ever to become my favourite bedtime listening, short of some unlikely Damascene conversion. My contact at Chandos must have a crystal ball, because I never received a press preview and, having tried it as streamed from NML, I didn't ask.

The *Country Dances* provide lighter relief – not unlike Malcolm Arnold's sets of dances – but I doubt that you would buy the album just for their 11-minute span.



CD available from

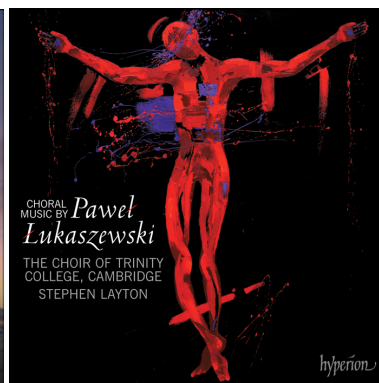
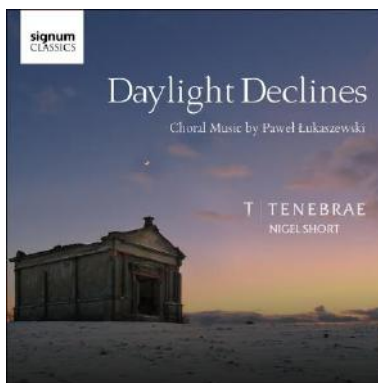
[amazon.co.uk](#) | [ArkivMusic](#)

PRESTO CLASSICAL

Stream from [Naxos Music Library](#)

Paweł ŁUKASZEWSKI (b.1968)

Stephen Barber was a little late off the mark in reviewing recently the 2018 release of Łukaszewski's *Daylight declines* and other music, recorded by Tenebrae and Nigel Short (Signum **SIGCD521** [69:45] – [review](#)). I've been even slower in getting to that, as downloaded from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#) in 24/96 sound, with pdf booklet.



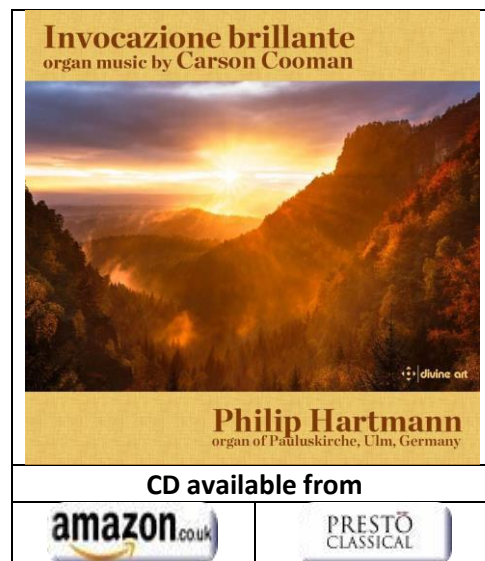
I also seem to have missed a Hyperion recording of his music which John Quinn made a **Recording of the Month** some time ago, from the choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Steven Layton (**CDA67639** – [review](#)). That too can be obtained from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#), for £8.00 on CD or as a lossless download with pdf booklet.

I've been a fan of Łukaszewski's music since I reviewed a Dux recording of his *Lenten Music* and other works, coupled with music by Mikolaj Górecki – son of the composer of the *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* – in [Spring 2019/1](#). I'm very pleased to add these two choral recordings to my knowledge of his music. All I need add at this late juncture is a recommendation to obtain one or both of these recordings.

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 series of 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 as recently as 2019. 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.

The Art of Peter Katin

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, BWV903 [12:00]

Domenico SCARLATTI (1685-1757)

Sonata in E, L23 (K380) [4:57]

Sonata in d minor, L423 (K32) [3:56]

Robert SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Romance, Op.28 [4:27]

Novelette in E, Op.21/7 [2:54]

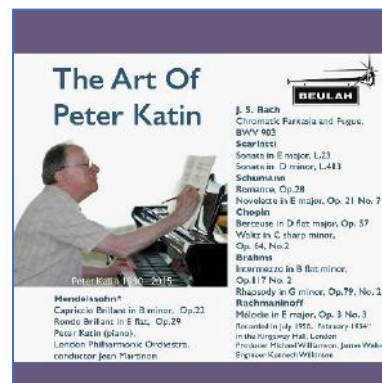
Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Intermezzo in b-flat minor, Op.117/2 [5:00]

Rhapsody in g minor, Op.79/2 [3:02]

Sergei RACHMANINOV (1873-1944)

Mélodie in E, Op.3/3 [5:36]



rec. July 1958, Kingsway Hall, London. ADD. (from Decca LXT5516).

Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)

Capriccio brillant in b minor, Op.22 [10:35]

Rondo brilliant in E-flat, Op.29 [9:48]

Peter Katin (piano)

London Philharmonic Orchestra/Jean Martinon

rec. February 1954. ADD/mono.

BEULAH 1PS71 [72:08] Coming shortly from [Qobuz](#).

The solo part of this recital contains all but two Chopin pieces from an album of what appear to have been random personal favourites, released in 1959 and still well worth hearing. Katin was such a fine and versatile pianist that, while the Bach and Scarlatti are hardly authentic as played on the piano, they emerge as very fine pieces, if somewhat different from how they sound on the harpsichord. The two Scarlatti works in particular feature the kind of sensitive playing that makes Angela Hewitt's Bach on the piano such worthwhile alternatives. Beulah, like Decca in 1959, give us the Longo numbers, then the current system for Scarlatti before their replacement by the Kirkpatrick catalogue. I've added the K equivalents. If your appetite is whetted by these two pieces, Claudio have a blu-ray audio disc of Katin's Scarlatti from 1985 (**CR35026**, also download, or **CR35022** CD – [review](#) – [review](#)).

The Schumann, Brahms and Rachmaninov, too, were well worth reissuing, while the Mendelssohn works which conclude the programme were staples of the Decca catalogue for many years; there's an inexpensive download, complete with nostalgic cover shot, coupled with the Mendelssohn piano concertos, with the LSO and Anthony Collins (**4834047**). The two shorter *concertante* pieces were originally coupled with Liszt *Totentanz* on an LP which the great Trevor Harvey strongly recommended. Who am I to demur? The 1954 sound has worn extremely well.

Katin's Chopin, in the form of Nocturnes 1-10, can be found on Beulah **1PD85** – [DL News 2013/17](#), now best obtained from [Qobuz](#) if you prefer lossless sound. The new Katin album, too, will be best obtained from [Qobuz](#) when it appears.

Star Dust

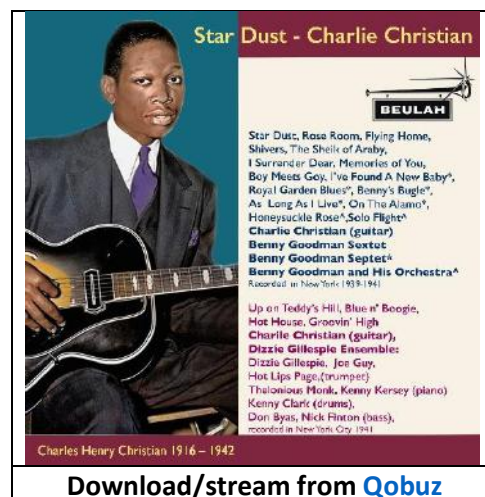
Star Dust; Rose Room; Flying Home; Shivers; The Sheik of Araby; I surrender Dear; Memories of you; Boy meets Goy; I've found a new Baby; Royal garden Blues; Benny's Bugle; As long as I live; On the Alamo; Honeysuckle Rose; Solo Flight

Charlie Christian (guitar); Benny Goodman Sextet; Benny Goodman Septet; Benny Goodman and his Orchestra
rec. New York, 1939-41. ADD/mono

Up on Teddy's Hill; Blue n' Boogie; Hot House; Groovin' high

Charlie Christian (guitar); Dizzie Gillespie Ensemble
rec. New York, 1941. ADD/mono

BEULAH 1PS65 [62:41]



Writing these reviews often brings me into unfamiliar territory; this recording of Charlie Christian's music is a case in point – I don't think I had ever heard anything by this early pioneer of the electric guitar as a solo instrument, though, of course, the groups that he played with, led by Benny Goodman and Dizzie Gillespie are familiar enough. So, too, is much of the music, including the title track, *Star Dust*, and I like Christian's take on that and the other familiar tunes. Had he not died young, aged 25

from tuberculosis, soon after these recordings were made, he would surely have become more famous; as it was, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as an early influence.

Inevitably, the 78s originals of these recordings are not of the highest fi, but the Beulah transfer has made them eminently listenable. Give it a try, even if you have never heard of Charlie Christian.

Late News

Sir Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)

Violin Concerto in b minor, Op.61 (1910)¹ [47:46]

Sospiri, Op.70 (arr. violin and piano, unknown arranger)²
[4:10]

Nicola Benedetti (violin)¹⁻²

London Philharmonic Orchestra/Vladimir Jurowski¹

Petr Limonov (piano)²

rec. 1 December 2019, Henry Wood Hall, London; 26
February 2020, AIR Studio 1, London. DDD

DECCA 4850949 [58:45]



The good news: having streamed this from Qobuz, hot off the press, I'm very pleased that Nicola Benedetti has added the Elgar concerto to her repertoire. I've had time to listen only twice, but I like what I hear. Elgar poured his soul into this concerto – perhaps that's what he meant by the mysterious epigram, *Aquí está encerrada el alma de* (Herein is enshrined the soul of) – and Benedetti and Jurowski respond with a soulful performance. (I've never seen it suggested, but the five dots could represent 'Elgar'.)

Benedetti and Jurowski take the slow movement at quite a pace: 11:36 overall against the youthful Yehudi Menuhin with Elgar himself in 1932, who take 13:00 (Warner Great Recordings **5669792**, download only). Kennedy and Handley (see below) take slightly longer, at 13.25; Kennedy and Simon Rattle are slower still at 14:29. And yet ... Benedetti offers one of the most soulful interpretations of this movement, without the sentiment quite tipping over into sentimentality, as, perhaps, it does in *Sospiri*, but that's more to do with Elgar than with the performance. Arguably, the new Decca represents an *andante* tempo better than the other recordings.

The bad news is that you are paying full price for what would once have fitted on a reasonably well-filled LP, but represents short value on CD. Nigel Kennedy's very well-liked recording, with Vernon Handley, comes at mid-price and adds the *Introduction and Allegro* for good measure. (Warner **4332872**, with *Enigma Variations*).

The new Decca is over-priced as a download: the least expensive lossless version that I can find, from Presto, costs £10.54 and the 24-bit £17.21. (£11.99 and £16.99 respectively from Qobuz.) Benedetti's may be a celebrity name, but that doesn't excuse the lack of a booklet with the streamed or download version. The provision of a booklet from Decca seems to be an arbitrary affair; they include one, for example, with Benedetti's recording of the Wynton Marsalis Violin Concerto (**4850013**), released in July 2019. Perhaps they think that we all know the Elgar, but some will buy or stream this recording to hear it for the first time.

Once again, too, the minor work is placed as an anti-climax after the main course.