

**Second Thoughts and Short Reviews - Spring 2018/2**  
**By Brian Wilson and Dan Morgan**

Reviews are by Brian Wilson unless signed [DM].

Spring 2018/1 is [here](#). Links there to earlier editions.

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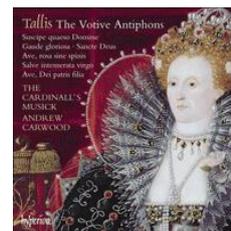


CD available from		
Reviewed in 24/96 sound with pdf booklet from		

I missed this when it was released in 2014 and, as with Gary Higginson's review in that year – link above – I've missed Lent and Holy Week this year. But, as GH writes, this beautiful music is suitable for any time of the year. These Tallis *Lamentations* were chosen as the top recommendation on BBC Radio 3 Building a Library. I have no problem with that, but be aware that they form only a small part of the programme, which also includes some beautiful singing of plainsong Compline in the medieval English Sarum (Salisbury) Rite and some of the Matins Responds for Holy Week.

Liturgically, this is a bit of a dog's dinner: the *Lamentations* settings were prescribed for Matins in Holy Week, not inserted into Compline. They actually go together with the Matins responds, but the whole programme is so beautifully presented that I'm not complaining. If it's Tallis's music, however, that you want, you may prefer his *Lamentations* in an album completely of his works: The Tallis Scholars (Gimell **CDGIM025**, with eight motets or better value in a 2-for-1 album *The Tallis Scholars sing Thomas Tallis*, **CDGIM203**), The Cardinal's Musick (Hyperion **CDA68121**, with Latin and English settings), or Chapelle du Roi (Brilliant Classics **93955**, budget-price, with Latin and English settings, or Complete Works Volume 8, **SIGCD036**, with English settings, or Regis **RRC1394**, budget-price, with *Spem in Alium*, etc.).

Hyperion are due to release on 27 April 2018 a selection of votive antiphons from their Cardinal's Musick's complete Tallis series: *Suscipe quaeso Domine* [9:14], *Gaude gloriosa* [17:30], *Sancte Deus* [6:15], *Ave, rosa sine spinis* [10:49], *Ave, Dei patris filia* [15:45], *Salve intemerata virgo* [16:06] and *O nata lux de lumine* [1:57]. If you can't run to the whole series or a substantial selection of it, or already own the complete Chapelle du Roi edition, this selection offers a wonderful alternative (**CDA68250** [77:36]).



### **Claudio MONTEVERDI (1567-1643) Lettera Amorosa**

*Se i languirdi miei sguardi (Lettera amorosa)* [9:26]  
*Ohimè, dov'è il mio ben (Romanesca)* [5:17]  
*Ohimè ch'io cado* [4:17]  
*Lasciate mi morire (Lamento d'Arianna)* [11:04]  
*Perché se m'odiavi* [3:51]  
*Disprezzata Regina (L'Incoronazione di Poppea, 1.5)* [5:20]  
*Et è pur dunque vero* [8:08]  
*Dal mio Permesso amato (L'Orfeo)* [4:43]  
*Non havea febo ancora (Lamento della Ninfa)* [6:30]  
*Voglio di vita uscir* [6:53]

Mariana Flores (soprano) with Julie Roset (soprano), Valerio Contaldo and Mathias Vidal (tenors), Philippe Favette (bass)

Cappella Mediterranea/Leonardo Garcia Alarcon (harpisichord, spinet and organ)

rec. Église Notre-Dame, Centeilles, October 2016 and August 2017

Texts and translations included

**RICERCAR RIC390** [64:49]



**Clorinda e Tancredi: Love scenes by Claudio MONTEVERDI**

*Bel pastor dal cui bel guardo* (Madrigals Book IX, 1651) [5:36]

*Ed è pur dunque vero* [7:51]

*Eri già tutta mia* [3:15]

*Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (Madrigals, Book VIII, 1638) [20:17]

*Voglio de vita uscir* [4:53]

*Lamento della ninfa* (Madrigals, Book VIII, 1638) [7:43]

*Maledetto sia l'aspetto* (*Scherzi musicali*) [1:22]

*Se i languidi miei sguardi* [7:34]

*Si dolc'è il tormento* (Madrigals Book IX, 1651) [3:23]

**Giovanni Felice SANCES (1600-1679)**

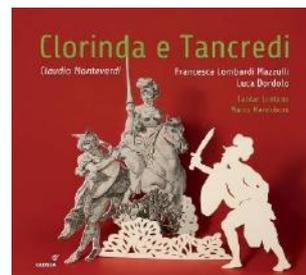
*Usurpator tiranno* [7:54]

Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli (soprano), Luca Dordolo, Riccardo Pisani (tenor), Davide Benetti (bass)  
Cantar Lontano/Marco Mencoboni (harpsichord)

rec. Pieve Vecchia di Ginestreto, Pesaro, 9-12 November 2016. DDD.

Texts and translations included.

**GLOSSA GCD923512** [69:48]



**Claudio MONTEVERDI**

**Night - Stories of Lovers and Warriors**

*L'Orfeo*: Sinfonia a7 (1609) [1:50]

*Hor che'l ciel e la terra* (Book VIII, 1638) [5:28]

*Così sol d'una chiara fonte viva* (Book VIII) [5:00]

Sinfonia (Book VIII) [0:43]

*Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (Book VIII) [23:02]

*Lamento: vivrò fra i miei tormenti e le mie cure* (Book III, 1592) [6:42]

*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*: Sinfonia (II,5) (1641) [0:46]

*Non havea Febo ancora* (Book VIII) [5:09]

*Al lume delle stele* (Book VI, 1619) [5:21]

*A Dio, Florida bella* (Book VI) [4:23]

Sinfonia (Book VI) [1:06]

*Ecco mormorar l'onde* (Book II, 1590) [2:48]

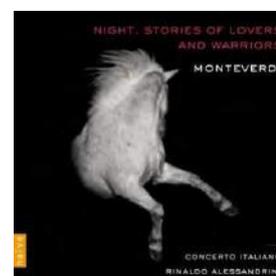
*Quando l'Alba in Oriente* (*Scherzi musicali*, 1607) [5:34]

Concerto Italiano/Rinaldo Alessandrini

rec. 8 to 12 April 2016, Teatro Real, Caserta. DDD.

Texts and translations included.

**NAÏVE OP30566** [68:14]



**Ricercar:** Reviewing an earlier recording of Monteverdi from these same performers, I expressed the hope of hearing more of them in this composer, perhaps the complete Book VIII madrigals – [review](#)<sup>1</sup>. We haven't got that, but this new release will do very nicely, with the *Nymph's Lament* taken from that book.

The burden of the singing is very well carried by Mariana Flores, ably assisted by the other singers and the excellent Capella Mediterranea. The tone is predominantly elegiac, but Monteverdi's music is pretty full of cries of *ohimè* and it's a beautiful melancholy, especially the *Lament of Ariadne*, so wonderful that it survived the destruction of the whole opera and was widely imitated, not least by Monteverdi himself, who recast it as a lament for the Virgin Mary.

**Glossa:** The substantial item here is the semi-dramatic encounter between Tancredi and Clorinda, as narrated in Tasso's epic *La Gerusalemme Liberata*<sup>2</sup>. It's a much-recorded piece, with several distinguished performances to its credit, not least Alessandro Rinaldi's complete recording on the Naïve label of Book VIII from which it comes (**OP30435**, 3 CDs, now inexplicably download only). That

remains my benchmark for this and the whole wonderful Book VIII, but Marco Mencoboni and his team come very close to challenging it; indeed, as with Capella Mediterranea, I'd like to be able to welcome a complete Book VIII (and IX) from them.

**Naïve:** This is my pick of a very fine bunch, offering as it does a selection mainly from the later Books of Madrigals in newer performances from Rinaldi and his team – not drawn from their earlier recordings but equally recommendable.

The information for some of the tracks as downloads is incorrect and confusing: follow the (accurate) details in the booklet.

<sup>1</sup> Dominy Clements was also impressed – [review](#). See also my [review](#) of Cavalli's *Elena* (**RIC346**) on which Marian Flores and Capella Mediterranea participate to very fine effect. Further pleasure is to be derived from another album of Cavalli, *Heroines of the Venetian Baroque*, again from the same team (**RIC359** – [DL News 2015/9](#))

<sup>2</sup> My copy has 8/6 pencilled inside the cover. One day, maybe, I'll read the whole poem and not just the snippets that I know. Fairfax's near-contemporary English translation entitled *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, can be found online.

### **Pelham HUMFREY (1647-1674) Symphony Anthems**

The King shall rejoice [10:19]

By the waters of Babylon [11:05]

Hear my prayer O God [6:24]

O Lord my God [10:22]

Hear my crying O God [10:54]

Haste Thee O God [7:32]

Like as the hart [8:44]

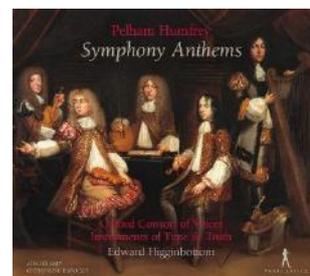
Oxford Consort of Voices [Elizabeth Makharinsky, Maria Valdmaa (soprano); Tristram Cooke (countertenor); David Lee, Jonathan Hanley (tenor); Nicholas Mogg (bass)]

Instruments of Time & Truth [Persephone Gibbs, Jean Paterson (violin); Rachel Byrt (viola) Gavin Kibble (bass gamba)]/Edward Higginbottom (organ). Pitch: A = 440

rec. Chapelle des Verriers, Vallerysthal, Moselle (France), 13-14 July 2017. DDD.

Texts included

**PAN CLASSICS PC10388** [65:23]



Pelham Humfrey's reputation has been overshadowed by that of Purcell, to whom he is often regarded as a kind of John the Baptist, and with whom he's combined on a recording made by St John's Choir, Cambridge, and Andrew Nethsingha (Chandos **CHAN0790** – [DL News 2012/23](#)). While his music is less varied and less inspired than Purcell at his best, it certainly deserves to be heard and this new release is most welcome. I've already praised the contribution of Edward Higginbottom and the Instruments of Time & Truth to a revelatory recording of the music of William Hayes (**CRD3534** – [Spring 2018/1](#)) but I believe this is the first outing of Consort of Voices on record: I hope to hear more of both and, of course, of Higginbottom in his 'retirement'.

Some of the anthems duplicate those on Nicholas McGegan's Cambridge collection (Harmonia Mundi **HMX2907053**, now download only) but, while I may continue to prefer that, I shall certainly be returning to the new Oxford recording too. Nor shall I forget another Oxford recording on which Humfrey's anthem *Hear, O Heavens* receives a distinguished performance: Chapel Royal Anthems (Christ Church/Stephen Darlington, Nimbus **NI5454** – [review](#))

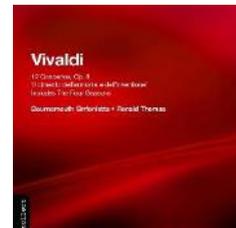
**Bargain Basement Recommendation****Antonio VIVALDI (1678-1741) Double Concertos**

Concerto for 2 violins in C, RV505 [10:33]  
 Concerto in d minor for two oboes, RV535 [8:35]  
 Concerto for oboe and 2 violins in C, RV554 [10:10]  
 Concerto in g minor for two cellos, RV531 [12:02]  
 Concerto in D for two violins, RV511 [10:44]  
 Collegium 90/Simon Standage  
 rec. St Peter's Church, Morden, London, 9-11 October 1991. DDD  
**CHANDOS CHACONNE CHAN0528** [64:58]



Hyperion have long had a regular 'please buy me' section for CDs that have not sold well – prices are £4.25 or £5.25 per disc. Now Chandos have an even better offer in the form of CDs where stock is almost depleted on offer at £2.50 – [here](#). The state of the jewel case is not guaranteed but the CD itself is. From the current selection this Vivaldi recording stands out. It remains available to download – [here](#) – which is how I obtained it, and I hope the disc will reappear on a less expensive label, as some of these orphans already have, but the current price makes it too good to miss: some of Vivaldi's most appealing music in excellent performances and recording.

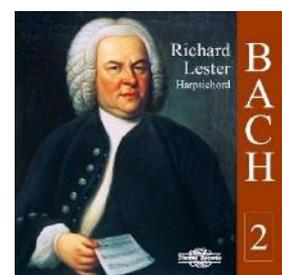
Chandos have another Vivaldi super-bargain worth considering: the complete **Op.8 concertos, *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione***, including not just the ubiquitous *Four Seasons* (Nos. 1-4) but the other eight works, performed by the Bournemouth Sinfonietta, directed from the violin by Ronald Thomas (**CHAN6697** – rec. 1979 and 1981 [61:45 + 61:48]). It's no longer available on CD but can be downloaded with pdf booklet from [chandos.net](http://chandos.net) for £4.99 (16-bit lossless). Don't go for the lower-quality mp3 at £7.20! (If you just want mp3, purchase the lossless and choose mp3 when you download.)



These performances don't have the character of my favourite recordings, from L'Arte dell'Arco and Federico Guglielmo (Brilliant Classics **95045: [Recording of the Month](#)**) and Fabio Biondi with Europa Galante (Virgin/Erato **6025032** or **6484082**, with Op.3/1-12 – [review](#)). Neither of these is quite as inexpensive as the Chandos download but both have rather more character. The Chandos, however, occasionally revelatory and never extreme, offers very acceptable middle-of-the-road performances on modern instruments for those who dislike period instruments and, like the Guglielmo set, two of the concertos, Nos. 9 and 12, take up Vivaldi's offer of the oboe as an alternative solo instrument.

**RECORDING OF THE MONTH****Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)****Keyboard Music: Volume 2**

English Suite No.3 in g minor, BWV808 [26.54]  
 Prelude & Fugue in E-flat, Book I No.7, BWV852 [7.12]  
 Prelude & Fugue in c minor, Book I No.2, BWV847 [4.02]  
 Two Part Invention No.8 in F, BWV779 [1.08]  
 Two Part Invention No.4 in d minor, BWV775 [1.10]  
 Prelude & Fugue in f minor, Book I No.12, BWV857 [6.46]  
 Prelude & Fugue in C, Book I No.1, BWV846 [4.40]  
 Partita No.5 in G, BWV829 [24.16]  
 French Suite No.5 in G, BWV816 [19.21]  
 Prelude & Fugue in g minor, Book I No.16, BWV861 [4.15]  
 Prelude & Fugue in G, Book I No.15, BWV860 [4.46]  
 Two Part Invention No.3 in D, BWV774 [1.23]  
 Two Part Invention No.12 in A, BWV783 [1.45]  
 Prelude & Fugue in f-sharp minor, Book I No.14, BWV859 [4.53]



Prelude & Fugue in C-sharp, Book I No.3, BWV848 [4.59]  
 Prelude & Fugue in A-flat, Book I No.17, BWV862 [4.22]  
 Three Part Sinfonia in E-flat, BWV791 [2.57]  
 Prelude & Fugue in b-flat minor, Book I No.22, BWV867 [6.50]  
 Partita No.1 in B-flat, BWV825 [23.04]  
 Richard Lester (harpsichord, pitch = 415Hz)  
 rec. Buckfastleigh, Devon, April and August 2017. DDD.  
 Reviewed as press preview.  
**NIMBUS RECORDS NI5948/49** [76:11 + 78:34]

<p>To order CD with 10% discount use the Wyastone link &amp; the code MusicWeb10</p>	
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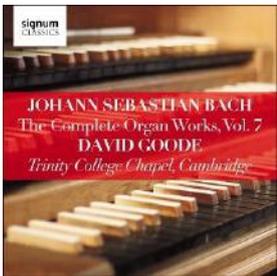
Dominy Clements recommended Volume 1 (**NI5946/7** – [review](#)) and I was, if anything, even more enthusiastic about the mp3 edition of Richard Lester’s recordings of Scarlatti (**NI1719** – [review](#)) and Frescobaldi (**NI5850** and **NI5870** – [review](#)). I’d recommend Volume 1 of the Bach first, as it contains the *Goldberg Variations*, *Italian Concerto* and *Capriccio on the Departure of a beloved Brother*, all better known than the music on Volume 2.

Though the music here is less familiar, the English Suite No.3, French Suite No.5 and Partitas Nos.1 and 5 are all substantial and rewarding. I was at first surprised to find these works apart from their siblings but, on reflection, it was probably better to vary the music by spreading the Suites and partitas across the series. Unless you cannot bear the harpsichord – and even then you may find this example, built in 2011 by Colin Booth<sup>1</sup>, more to your liking – this is a strong recommendation. Those still not prepared to countenance the harpsichord will find Angela Hewitt on Hyperion more amenable – her Bach is a rare exception to my own dislike of hearing his music on the piano.

<sup>1</sup> A beautiful instrument visually as well as aurally, as illustrated in the booklet.

**Johann Sebastian BACH Complete Organ Works Volume 7**

Prelude and Fugue (‘Toccatà’) in E, BWV566 [9:58]  
*Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV713 [5:25]  
 Chorale Prelude, BWV734 *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen gmein* [2:25]  
 Trio Sonata No.3 in d minor, BWV527 [14:10]  
 Fugue on a Theme by Legrenzi in c minor, BWV574 [6:18]  
 Chorale Prelude, BWV739 *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* [4:27]  
 Concerto after Vivaldi Op.3/11, BWV596 [10:36]  
*Fantasia super ‘Valet will ich dir geben’*, BWV735 [4:06]  
 Chorale Prelude, BWV737 *Vater unser im Himmelreich* [2:26]  
 Prelude and Fugue, BWV 541 [7:49]  
 David Goode (organ of Trinity College, Cambridge)  
 rec. 4-6 January 2015 and 18 August 2016. DDD.  
 Organ specification included in booklet  
**SIGNUM SIGCD807** [67:51] Download only.



<p>Reviewed in 24/96 sound with pdf booklet from</p>	
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This seventh and latest instalment in David Goode's ongoing survey of the whole of Bach's extant organ music arrived appositely as I was pulling together the threads of my thoughts on Konstantin Volostnov's 3-CD Melodiya set of Bach's organ works. I gave a very strong hint of my admiration for the latter some time ago (**MELCD1002523** – [Winter 2017/18\\_2](#)) and promised a fuller review in due course. As it happens, some problems have prevented me from sitting too long at the computer, so I'm criminally behind in completing that promise: my apologies all round, especially to Volostnov himself. I can, however, make partial amends by reporting that although that's download only from most dealers, the CDs can be obtained from [Amazon UK](#) for £21.90.



The Melodiya recording was made on a modern instrument based on a Silbermann design of the type common in North Germany in Bach's day and, as Marie Claire Alain showed in her Bach recordings on organs of this type, highly appropriate. Goode's Trinity College organ is also of modern (1976) construction, though preserving elements from a 'Father' Smith instrument from c.1700 and with a very similar array of stops at the organist's command to Volostnov's. Like the Marcussen organ on which Kevin Bowyer recorded Bach's complete organ music for Nimbus<sup>1</sup>, neither has anything bigger than a 16-foot stop. For which I'm very grateful – no temptation to show off growly sound – and both sound well on these recordings.

As it happens, three works on the new Signum release also appear on that Melodiya set and it's to these that I paid special attention. Goode's opening work, BWV566, is referred to by Signum as a *Prelude and Fugue ('Toccatà')* and by Melodiya as *Toccatà (Prelude)*. Though that might seem to imply that Volostnov plays only the Prelude, in fact he performs the whole work, which consists of a Prelude and two Fugues, with a short interlude, separately tracked by Melodiya but not by Signum, between the fugues.

It's a large-scale early work, probably dating from before 1708, like the better known BWV565 if, indeed, that is by Bach and not copied by him from an unknown composer. It's much quieter in tone than BWV565 and it receives an attractively lyrical performance from Goode. Though he takes each section slightly more slowly than Volostnov or Kevin Bowyer (Nimbus **NI5423**, also in the complete set, see below), this makes for a very attractive opening. Bowyer perhaps gets a shade nearer to the Buxtehude style in which this work is composed, but there's very little in it. Volostnov's chosen registration makes it seem a more serious work than either, unusually because his organ is potentially brighter than the others. More than with any other instrument, comparing one organ and one organist with another can make a piece sound quite different. Subscribers to Naxos Music Library can do so for these three recordings there; other readers will have to take my word that all three are convincing in different ways, though my own personal choice would have been closest to Bowyer's.

Trio Sonata No.3 also features on the Volostnov recording, on which he includes all the genuine works in this form. Once again, detailed comparison found me unable to choose one recording over the other: both are among the best that I have heard of this piece, though Goode takes a slightly faster view of the *andante* second movement than Volostnov.

Volostnov's three CDs feature Bach's Organ Concertos, Trios and Toccatas, one disc each. The Concerto after Vivaldi's Op.3/11, BWV596, is one of the works on his second disc and it features on Goode's new album. Again, both are very convincing in their own terms, despite Goode's taking noticeably longer than Volostnov for the opening movement – split between two tracks on Signum.

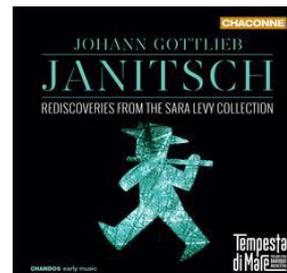
Both the Melodiya and Signum recordings are very good. Having downloaded Volostnov's set in mp3 before I obtained the CDs and having reviewed the Nimbus set in mp3, I also checked out the Signum in that format as well as in 24/96 flac. Like the 16-bit lossless versions, it costs £7.99 and it sounds very fine, though the 24-bit has a noticeable advantage.

The whole Signum series comes with scholarly and helpful notes on the music, including the specification of the Trinity organ and a detailed bibliography. Slightly annoying, however, is the omission of timings for individual works and any indication of composition dates, even if these are of necessity hazy in some cases. The shorter Melodiya notes, in Russian – and coherent English, for once with recordings emanating from outside the Anglophone world – do offer putative dates. Organists and even those who, like myself, once tried, would also have welcomed details of the registration for each piece.

<sup>1</sup> Most conveniently and economically obtained on the 8-CD mp3 edition, **NI1721** – [review](#): *Bargain of the Month* – [review](#). No longer available from MusicWeb: purchase from [Wyastone](#) (£29.99, with 10% discount using code MusicWeb10).

**Johann Gottlieb JANITSCH (1708-c.1762/3)**  
**Rediscoveries from the Sara Levy Collection**

- Sonata da chiesa* in a minor, Op.7/2 [10:14]
- Sonata da camera* in d minor, Op.3/14 [11:14]
- Sonata da camera* in E-flat 'con Stilo di Recitativo', Op.6/35 [14:36]
- Sonata da camera* in g minor 'col Melodia... O Haupt voll etc.', (Passionsquartett) Op.4/21 [18:10]
- Ouverture grosso* for double orchestra [13:03]

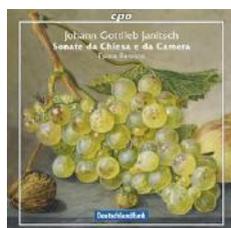


Tempesta di Mare Philadelphia Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Players/Gwyn Roberts, Richard Stone  
 rec. Gould Recital Hall, Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia, PA, 12 and 13 March 2017 and 22 May 2017. DDD.

**CHANDOS CHACONNE CHAN0820** [67:17] For CD purchase links see [review](#) by Stuart Sillitoe.

Reviewed in 24-bit sound with pdf booklet from	
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I haven't been alone in finding earlier recordings from Tempesta di Mare lacking in the qualities which their name implies – Storm at Sea, the title of two Vivaldi concertos – so I didn't have very high hopes for this latest release. Maybe it's because this time I didn't have an ideal performance of the music embedded in my unconscious, with far fewer recordings of Janitsch's music, but I enjoyed these sprightly performances much more. The documentation lists different playing times for these works: one set inside the booklet and a completely different set on the back cover. Those inside the booklet are more accurate.



All the performances on Chandos except the final *Ouverture grosso* involve the flute. There's a different collection of Janitsch sonatas with prominent oboe parts, performed by Epoca Barocca on CPO (**777910-2**). Having downloaded that in lossless sound with pdf booklet from [eclassical.com](#), I share Johan van Veen's enjoyment of it – [review](#).

CPO don't list the opus numbers, as Chandos do, and as Atma do for their three Janitsch recordings of *Sonate da camera* from Notturna. Volume III contains Op.4/1, Op.3/1, Op.7/5, Op.1/5 and Op.5/1 (**ACD22626** – [review](#)). That enjoyable album is also available in 16-bit lossless sound with pdf booklet from [eclassical.com](#).



**Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)**

Triple Concerto for violin, cello and piano in C, Op. 56<sup>1</sup> [36:56]

**Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897)**

Double Concerto for violin and cello in a minor, Op.102<sup>2</sup> [34:21]

Géza Anda (piano)<sup>1</sup>, Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin)<sup>1,2</sup>, Pierre Fournier (cello)<sup>1</sup>, Janos Starker (cello)<sup>2</sup>

Radio-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin/Ferenc Fricsay

rec. 1961, 1962. ADD.

**DG ORIGINALS 4775341 [71:17]**



CD available from			
Reviewed as streamed, without booklet, from Naxos Music Library			

Though I've never reviewed it separately, I referred to this recording in a [review](#) of a very fine recording of the Brahms Double Concerto from Joshua Bell and Steven Isserlis. The Brahms is not quite as fine as the Beethoven – Fricsay was terminally ill when it was recorded – but the Beethoven remains my first choice for this under-valued work despite formidable competition. The ADD recordings are not ideal – a little over-bright and with the soloists very forward in Beethoven – but more than tolerable.

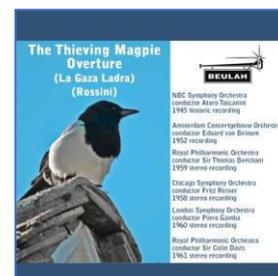
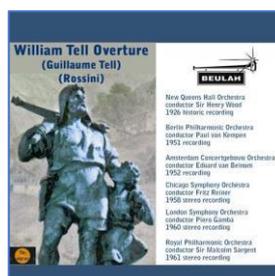
I also have a very warm regard for the EMI recording with the Oistrakh Trio and Sir Malcolm Sargent (1958), formerly available at super-budget price, also coupled with the Brahms under Alceo Galliera (1956), last available on a Gemini twofer, now download only.

If you like Schneiderhan's contribution to the Beethoven Triple, you may also wish to try his recording of the Violin Concerto, on another DG Originals, with Mozart Violin Concerto No.5, both with the Berlin Philharmonic and Eugen Jochum (**4474032**). That's also available to subscribers from [Naxos Music Library](#).

Another DG Originals CD enshrines Wilhelm Kempff's account of Beethoven Piano Concertos Nos. 4 and 5 (**4474022** – stream from [Naxos Music Library](#)) and a DG twofer (**E4594002**) offers Nos. 1-4, both in the stereo recordings with Ferdinand Leitner, both well worth having despite the duplication of No.4. The complete set of Nos. 1-5 with Piano Sonata No.32 is now download only (**4272372** – stream from [Naxos Music Library](#)).

**Gioachino ROSSINI (1792-1834)**

Two recent releases from Beulah offer recordings of Rossini overtures from various conductors. **La Gazza Ladra** (The thieving magpie) comes from the NBC Symphony Orchestra/Arturo Toscanini (1945), the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra/Eduard van Beinum (1952), the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Sir Thomas Beecham (1959), the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Fritz Reiner (1958), the London Symphony Orchestra/Piero Gamba (1960) and the RPO again with Sir Colin Davis (1961). (**2PD78**, download from [Qobuz](#) or stream from [Spotify](#)).



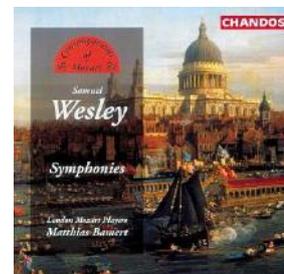
Recordings of the overture **Guillaume Tell** (William Tell) span an even longer time-scale, from Sir Henry Wood with the New Queens Hall Orchestra (1926), via Paul van Kempen with the Berlin Phil (1951), van Beinum, Reiner and Gamba again, to Sir Malcolm Sargent with the RPO (1961) on **3PD78**. Stream from [Spotify](#); watch for download from Qobuz in due course.

If, like me, you find the Gamba recordings the most idiomatic, you may wish also to explore the nine Rossini overtures on a 2-CD reissue of his recordings of *Romantic Overtures Volume 2* (Eloquence **4803899**).

For modern recordings of Rossini overtures don't overlook the four Naxos blu-ray audio releases with Christian Benda at the helm: *Ladra* and *Tell* are on Volume 1, the contents of two CDs, which you should still be able to find for £10 (**NBD0028** – [review](#)).

**Samuel WESLEY (1766–1837)**

Symphony in D 'Sinfonia obligato' (1781) [11:08]  
 Symphony in A (1784 or after) [14:42]  
 Symphony in D (1784) [13:15]  
 Symphony in E-flat (1784) [13:09]  
 Symphony in B-flat (1802) [18:28]  
 London Mozart Players/Matthias Bamert  
 rec. St Silas The Martyr, Kentish Town, London, 10–11 May 1999. DDD.  
**CHANDOS CHAN9823** [71:05] See 5-star [review](#).



CD available from			
Reviewed in 24-bit sound with pdf booklet from			

Also available in *Contemporaries of Mozart* USB set, [Volume 1](#) or [Complete set](#). (NB: despite what the link may say, this is Samuel Wesley, NOT Samuel Sebastian).

**Samuel Sebastian WESLEY (1810-1876)**

***Ascribe unto the Lord - Sacred choral works***

Choir of St John's College, Cambridge/Andrew Nethsingha; John Challenger (organ)  
 rec. 20-22 April 2012, chapel of St John's College, Cambridge, UK. DDD  
 Texts included  
**CHANDOS CHAN10751** [77:10] For full details: see [review by Johan van Veen](#).

CD available from			
Reviewed in 24-bit sound with pdf booklet from			

I've linked these two recordings because they represent music by father and son: Samuel, the son of Charles Wesley the Methodist hymn writer, and his son Samuel Sebastian, the latter ill at ease throughout most of his career with the Anglican Church in which he nevertheless became a musical cornerstone.

Wesley senior was dubbed by Boyce an 'English Mozart', so the inclusion of his music in the Chandos series of *Contemporaries of Mozart* is well justified. I haven't reviewed the single CD before, though I have recommended the USB set several times: at £155 (£80 for each separate half if you choose that option), it may seem a large outlay, but it enshrines the equivalent of 24 CDs and comes with the music in lossless and mp3 formats. The single album, one of the latest in the series (rec. 1999), can be downloaded in mp3 (£7.99), 16- (£9.99) and 24-bit lossless (£11.99) as well as on CD.

I could say that the Wesley recording was the best of the series, but that would be to deny the quality of the whole very fine enterprise.

The Chandos USB family has grown quite considerably since I last mentioned it, but I wonder how many they sell, since they hardly publicise it. Find the whole series [here](#).

**Franz LISZT (1811-1886)**

*A Faust Symphony*, S.108 (1857)

Steve Davislim (tenor)

Chorus Sine Nomine

Orchester Wiener Akademie/Martin Haselböck

rec. 2014/16, Franz Liszt Hall, Lisztzentrum Raiding, Austria

**ALPHA 475** [68:20] Reviewed as a 16-bit press download. Previous review:

[Richard Kraus](#)



I've long admired Liszt's piano music, his transcriptions especially, but I find his orchestral output much harder to enjoy. Which is probably why I've not listened to any since 2007, when I [reviewed](#) Vol. 3 of his symphonic poems with Gianandrea Noseda and the BBC Philharmonic. However, reading Richard Kraus's thoughts on Martin Haselböck's *Faust Symphony*, I felt it was time to have another go. I had to chuckle at his comment about Liszt's orchestra being 'weaponised' and used against him, because I know *exactly* what he means. Speaking of which, Leonard Bernstein's blockbusting Boston performance has been remastered and is now available as a high-res download from [Qobuz](#).

To me, these 'three character sketches' have always seemed clumsily drawn, although Haselböck's are quite carefully – even cautiously – done. I was struck by the transparency of both the playing and the sound, particularly in the questing music of 'Faust'. The fine stereo spread also helps to 'open out' the score, allowing one to perceive more detail and colour than usual. That said, even Haselböck can't disguise the symphony's threadbare patches or minimise its *longueurs*, notably in 'Gretchen'. But, as always, the devil has the best tunes, with tenor Steve Davislim and Chorus Sine Nomine undeniably thrilling in 'Mephistopheles'.

I'm still not convinced; this version is worth a listen, though. [DM]

Beecham made the *Faust Symphony* special, as he did with almost everything he turned his hand to. His recording remains available as Warner downloads: on a budget-price 2-CD set with symphonic poems and Psalm XIII (4769272) or as part of *Sir Thomas Beecham – The Later Tradition* (9186112, 9 hours – [review](#) – review – around £22 in mp3 or £29 in lossless sound).

**Anton BRUCKNER (1824-1896)**

Symphony No. 3 (1890 version, ed. Schalk)

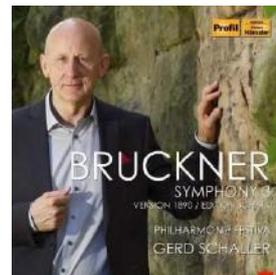
Philharmonie Festiva/Gerd Schaller

rec. live, 23 September 2017, Abteikirche Ebrach, Franconia, Germany

**PROFIL PH18002** [57:24] Reviewed as a 16-bit press download. No booklet. Previous review: [Ralph Moore](#)



I've always been unimpressed by Bruckner's early symphonies, preferring instead to focus on the *Romantic* and beyond. However, given Ralph Moore's very positive response to this new Third, I felt compelled to try it. Also, it was an opportunity to sample Gerd Schaller's Philharmonie Festiva cycle, which has garnered so much praise here and elsewhere. I first heard this symphony as recorded by Karl Böhm and the Wiener Philharmoniker in 1970 (Decca). I didn't care for the music then, and I don't much now, which makes me what Ralph would call a 'disdainer'. No such qualms about their fabulous Fourth, a genuine classic.



First impressions of the Schaller are entirely favourable. In particular, I like the very prominent pulse – it makes others seem terribly diffuse by comparison – and the fact that the performance has a real spring in its step. The latter is emphasised by the ever-pliant playing. Climaxes are nicely judged and only once or twice does the conductor apply the brakes a little too sharply. Otherwise, this is a fluent and well-shaped reading, HIPpish in its lightness and transparency; it's also full of lovely touches and, as so often with Bruckner, there are powerful pre-echoes of what was still to come (the nimble and propulsive *Scherzo*, for example).

This may be a live recording, with all its attendant perils, but the Philharmonie Festiva remain strong and steady from start to finish. The all-important brass are sensibly balanced and beautifully blended, and the lower strings provide firm footings on which to build this most appealing structure. And what a wonderfully supple and affectionate finale! Yes, the sound is a bit bright at times, but at least the bass is satisfyingly taut. Yes, there are a few grunts from the podium, but they're not too distracting. The applause has been edited out. No, the only significant downside – as always with Profil downloads – is the lack of a booklet. When will they get the message?

Disdainers really need to hear this; indeed, it makes the rest of Schaller's cycle seem very tempting. [DM]

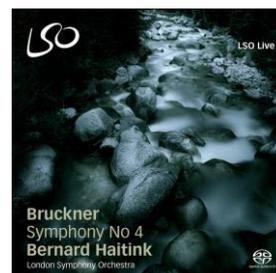
(Subscribers to [Naxos Music Library](#) will find the booklet for the earlier Schaller 3-CD set of Symphonies 1-3, with the 1874 version of No.3, **PH12022** – [review](#)) [BW]

### Anton BRUCKNER (1824-1896)

Symphony No. 4 in E-flat 'Romantic' (second version of 1877/8 Nowak edition, published 1953, with 1880 Finale) [69:06]

London Symphony Orchestra/Bernard Haitink  
rec. live Barbican, London, June 2011. DDD/DSD.

**LSO LIVE LSO0716** [69:10] Download only.



Reviewed in 24/96 sound with pdf booklet from



This has just been reissued on CD by Alto at budget-price (**ALC1358**) but the Hyperion download continues to be recommendable: the 16-bit costs only pence more than the CD (£6.50) and it's also available in 24-bit, equivalent to the deleted SACD, for only a little extra (£9.75). It received a mixed reception when it appeared, with those who like their Bruckner on the weighty side the most enthusiastic, which is, perhaps, why it's now been licensed to Alto.

The chief competition comes from Karl Böhm's equally weighty mid-price recording with the VPO (Decca Originals **4758403** or Double Decca **4480982**, with No.3, download only or Presto special CD). Those prepared to pay over £25 for two LPs will find the Böhm on **4788559**. Günter Wand's various recordings – all well worth considering – are download only. Indeed, Wand's live Berlin recording remains my first choice, but Haitink offers a very good substitute. Having been introduced to this

symphony by Klemperer on Vox in the days when he was a speed merchant<sup>1</sup> – hard as it is to believe – I now tend to prefer Bruckner in more measured performances.

Haitink's VPO recording, formerly available with No.5 on a budget twofer, is unavailable in any format but his earlier Concertgebouw recording remains available as a download only (Decca Virtuoso).

<sup>1</sup> So fast that his was the first recording to fit on one LP, but the sound was execrable.

**Félix Alexandre GUILMANT (1837-1911)**

Sonata No.1 in d minor for organ, Op.42 [22:06]

**Charles-Marie WIDOR (1844-1937)**

Organ Symphony No.5 in f minor, Op.42/1 [34:39]

**Francis POULENC (1899-1963)**

Concerto in g minor for organ, strings & timpani [23:06]

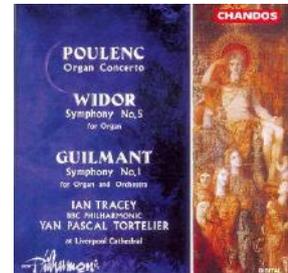
Ian Tracey (organ)

BBC Philharmonic/Yan Pascal Tortelier

rec. Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, 26-27 October 1993. DDD.

Organ specification included.

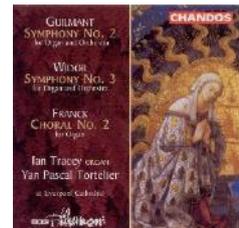
**CHANDOS CHAN9271** [79:51]



CD available from			
Reviewed in lossless sound with pdf booklet from			

We may have referred to this recording *en passant*, but its release predates MusicWeb. I'm pleased to have caught up with it now in the wake of the Widor having been recommended as runner-up on BBC Radio 3 Building a Library. I haven't been able to hear the 'winner', Kåre Nordstaga (Simax **PSC1073**, with No.6), but this will do very nicely as far as I'm concerned, and it comes with equally recommendable couplings: one of the best recordings of the Poulenc while the Guilmant, a work of such power that it threatens almost to dwarf the Widor, doesn't receive too many outings.

We did review another Ian Tracey Chandos recording from Liverpool Cathedral when it appeared: Guilmant's Organ Symphony No.2, with Widor's Organ Symphony No.3 (not to be confused with his Symphony No.3 for solo organ), both with the BBC Philharmonic and Yan Pascal Tortelier, and Franck's Choral No.2 (**CHAN9785** – [4/5-star review](#) – downloaded in 24-bit sound with pdf booklet from [chandos.net](#)). if anything, this is even more spectacular than CHAN9271.



If that isn't enough, there's a third album of shorter but equally powerful French organ music from Ian Tracey at the Liverpool organ, again with the BBC Philharmonic but conducted by Rumon Gamba: **Fantaisie Triomphale** – **Gigout Grand Choeur dialogué**; **Saint-Saëns: Cyprès et Lauriers**, Op. 156; **Gounod: Fantaisie sur l'hymne national russe**; **Dupré: 4 pieces**, Op.19/4. *Cortege et litanie*; **Guilmant Allegro**, Op.81; *Méditation sur le Stabat Mater*, Op.63; *Final alla Schumann sur un Noël Languedocien*, Op.83; *Marche-fantaisie*, Op.44; **Dubois: Fantaisie triomphale**. (**CHSA5048**, SACD or download, rec. 2006 [72:02] – [review](#)). Surprisingly, in view of the existence of the SACD, the download from [chandos.net](#) is in 16-bit only.



For Ian Tracey at the organ only, please see my [review](#) of another Chandos SACD, **Grandes Pièces Symphoniques (CHSA5056)**. The SACD from which I made that review having disappeared into the recess at the back of the cupboard, I also re-made the acquaintance of that recording as a download from [chandos.net](#), again, surprisingly, in 16-bit only, but sounding very well even so. Surely, it cannot be that Chandos took the download from the CD layer of these two SACDs?



Wallowy this music may be, but I've really greatly enjoyed revisiting it all.

**Franz Xaver SCHARWENKA (1850-1924)**

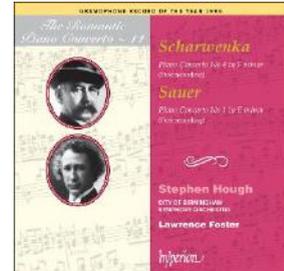
Piano Concerto No.4 in f minor Op 82 [39:18]

**Emil von SAUER (1862-1942)**

Piano Concerto No.1 in e minor [29:53]

Stephen Hough (piano)

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra/Lawrence Foster  
rec. December 1994, Dudley Town Hall, Warwickshire. DDD  
**HYPERION CDA66790** [69:11] See [review by Rob Barnett](#).



CD available from			
Reviewed in lossless sound with pdf booklet from			

Though voted Gramophone Recording of the Year as long ago as 1996, this album remains for many the jewel in the crown of Hyperion's distinguished *Romantic Piano Concerto* series. The smaller-scale Sauer concerto makes an excellent foil to Scharwenka's more flamboyant warhorse and both receive excellent performances and recording. Try the third movement, *cavatina*, of the Sauer.

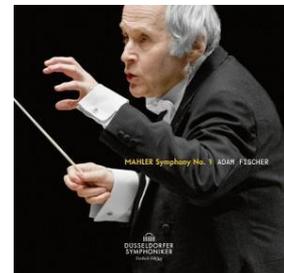


**RECORDING OF THE MONTH**

**Gustav MAHLER (1860-1911)**

Symphony No. 1 in D, 'Titan' [53:01]

Düsseldorfer Symphoniker/Ádám Fischer  
rec. live 10-12 February 2017, Tonhalle Düsseldorf. DDD.  
**CAVI MUSIC AVI8553390** [53:01]



CD available from		
Stream with pdf booklet from		

Dan Morgan was by no means the only reviewer to be impressed by Ádám Fischer's Mahler Fourth – [review](#) – and his First has already received praise in various quarters. Usually any conductor who can cope with No.4 can do well with No.1, too, so I started with high hopes.

For me any new recording needs to compete with Rafael Kubelík's classic account with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, still sounding fresh on DG Originals and with the great benefit of a considerable filler in the form of *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, sung by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, no less (**4497352**). My only reservation is that my copy is on the former budget-price Privilege label, costing £4.99, whereas now it comes at mid-price, around £8. You can obtain it for less by downloading (mp3 for £4.99, lossless £7.99) but the new C-Avi can also be downloaded inexpensively: [7digital.com](#) have mp3 for £3.16 and 24-bit for £4.76, with 16-bit lossless in-between. There's no booklet, but Naxos Music Library offer that (link above).

I was pleased with Iván Fischer’s Mahler First (**CCSSA33112** – [DL Roundup September 2012/2](#)), but I have enjoyed brother Ádám’s account even more and it presents even more of a challenge to the Kubelík. Everything seems just right, and the recording captures the live performance excellently. The booklet says ‘based on live performances’, so I imagine that some passages were spliced in unobtrusively afterwards.

Symphony No.4 in G [60:58]  
 Symphony No.5 in c-sharp minor [75:15]  
 Symphony No.6 in a minor [89:07]  
 Sarah Fox (soprano)  
 Philharmonia Orchestra/Lorin Maazel  
 rec. live 28 April 2011 (No.4), 5 May 2011 (No.5), 19 April 2011 (No.6), Royal Festival Hall, London. DDD  
**SIGNUM SIGCD361** [60:58 + 75:15 + 25:58 + 63:11] See [review by Stephen Francis Vasta](#) (SFV) and [review by John Quinn](#) (JQ).



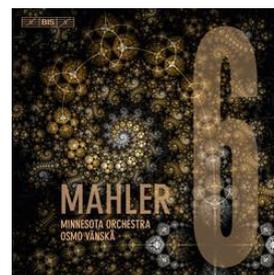
CD available from			
Reviewed in 24/44.1 sound with pdf booklet from			

Mahler is perhaps the single most difficult composer for reviewers to agree about. In the opening movement of No.4, for example, which SFV liked more than the later symphonies, I found myself siding with JQ over the rather blatant point-making. And whereas JQ thought No.6 the best of the bunch, SFV esteemed it the least.

Similarly, I thought the recording throughout considerably more than adequate considering its live provenance, and JQ praised it, but SFV wanted better sound.

Overall, I find myself now in agreement with one colleague, now with the other, but overall, while these recordings will give a very good idea of each symphony and there is much to enjoy, they cannot quite compete with the best of the opposition. I see that other reviewers have been as divided about this set as my two colleagues and myself. One to try first if you can; subscribers can do that from [Naxos Music Library](#).

Symphony No. 6 in a minor (1903–04) [86:46]  
 Minnesota Orchestra/Osmo Vänskä  
 rec. November 2016, Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis. DDD/DSD  
 Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [eclassical.com](#)  
**BIS BIS-2266 SACD** [86:46]



My colleagues and I were less than enamoured of Osmo Vänskä’s previous Mahler recording, of Symphony No.5 (**BIS-2226**). John Quinn was the least critical – [review](#) – though he shared my serious reservations – [review](#) – about the very slow tempo for the *adagietto*. For Dan Morgan, who thought the tempo for that movement ‘misguided’, it came as a terrible disappointment – [review](#).

Could the new recording of No.6 redeem Vänskä’s Mahler? Jeremy Barham observes in the notes that ‘none of Mahler’s works paints the human condition’s potential for irrevocable (self) destruction more vividly than the Sixth’, but does the performance match that observation? In particular, for me, does it match George Szell’s powerful recording (Sony **88697008132** or **G010001401533B**, both download only)?

This time, I fear, disappointment strikes early, with an opening movement, at seven minutes longer than Szell, which only sporadically captures the tension. It's not simply a matter of tempo – though Szell takes just 74 minutes, other conductors who exceed 80 minutes can be equally effective. I'm thinking, for example of Michael Tilson Thomas on SFS Media, whose live performance was recorded just days after 9/11 – [review](#).

If the Tilson Thomas recording has an Achilles heel, it's in the slow tempo for the *andante*, which he places third, though overall he comes close to shaking my preference for Szell – [DL News 2014/1](#). Vänskä places it second and though the clock says that he's slightly faster than MTT, the effect is still more like an *adagio* than an *andante*. Beautiful as is Vänskä's performance, this movement outstays its welcome for me. Szell, who takes three minutes less and places it third, gets the forward impetus more effectively.

### British Music for Violin and Piano

**Sir Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)** Violin Sonata in e minor, Op.82

**Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941)** *Romanze*; *Serenade*; *Con moto*; *Country dance*; *Gondoliera*; *Meditation*; *Moto perpetuo*; *Une lamentation d'amour*

**Frederick DELIUS (1862-1934)** *Serenade from Hassan* (arr. **Lionel Tertis**); *Lullaby for a Modern Baby*; *Romance for violin and piano*

**Cyril SCOTT (1879-1970)** *Vesperale* Op.40/2 (W401) (arr. **Richard Lange**); *Bumblebees*; *Sonnets Nos. 1 and 2*; *The Gentle Maiden*

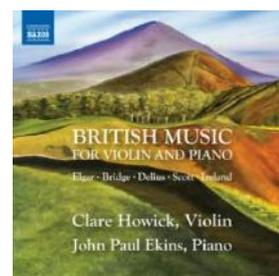
**John IRELAND (18790-1962)** *Bagatelle*; *Cavatina*

**Sir Edward ELGAR** *Mazurka*, Op.10/1

Clare Howick (violin), John Paul Ekins (piano)

rec. Wathen Hall, St Paul's Boys School, Barnes, London, 7-8 January 2017. DDD.

**NAXOS 8.573790** [79:55] See [review by Stuart Sillitoe](#).



Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from		Stream with pdf booklet from	
CD available from			

This recital stands or falls on the basis of the longest work, the Elgar Violin Sonata, most of the recommendable recordings of which come as part of all-Elgar collections: for example, from members of the Nash Ensemble on Hyperion, with the Piano Quintet in a minor (**CDH55301** – [DL Roundup July 2011/2](#)). As that's a budget-price CD or download with pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#), I've used it as my benchmark. It's an intense work and it receives an idiomatic performance on Naxos, even if not quite the equal of the Hyperion.

There's another very fine recording from Lydia Mordkovitch and Julian Milford on Chandos, which would be more competitive were it to be reissued at mid-price, as *Sospiri* already has been. There's compensation for downloaders in search of 24-bit sound in that it can be obtained for £11.99 instead of the usual £13.99. Mp3 (£17.99) and 16-bit (£9.99) remain at the usual prices. (**CHAN9624**, with shorter Elgar pieces – from [chandos.net](#)).

### Ferruccio BUSONI (1866-1924)

Orchestral Suite No. 2, Op.34a, *Geharnischte Suite* (1895, revised 1902–03) [21:38]

*Berceuse élégiaque*, Op.42 (1909) [7:43]

Concertino for clarinet and small orchestra, Op.48 (1918) [10:10]

*Sarabande and Cortège*, Op.51 (1918-19) [17:25]

*Tanzwalzer*, Op.53 (1920) [12:32]



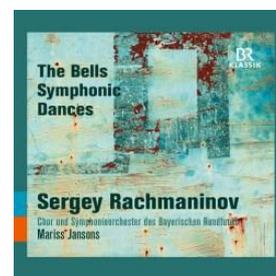
*Lustspiel-Ouvertüre*, Op.38 (1897, revised 1904) [6:28]  
*Indianische Fantasie*, Op.44 (1913-14) [23:19]  
*Gesang vom Reigen der Geister*, Op.47 (1915) [7:14]  
*Die Brautwahl*, Op.45 (1912) [27:17]  
 John Bradbury (clarinet), Nelson Goerner (piano)  
 BBC Philharmonic/Neeme Järvi  
 rec. Studio 7, New Broadcasting House, Manchester, 2001/4. DDD.  
**CHANDOS 241 CHAN241-57** [69:54 + 64:34] See [review by Rob Barnett](#).

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Reviewed in 24-bit sound with pdf booklet from		

At the time of writing CD2 of this set was on sale in Chandos's £2.50 Bargain Basement – see Vivaldi, above – but the 2-for-1 reissue is a bargain in its own right and a splendid opportunity to get to know the music of a composer well known only for his transcriptions of the music of Bach and others.

**Sergei RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)**

*The Bells*, Op.35 (1913) [39:05]  
 Symphonic Dances, Op.45 (1940) [35:11]  
 Tatiana Pavlovskaya (soprano), Oleg Dolgov (tenor), Alexey Markov (baritone)  
 Bavarian Radio Symphony Choir  
 Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra/Mariss Jansons  
 rec. 14-15 January 2016 and 26-27 January 2017, Herkulesaal, Munich. DDD.  
**BR KLASSIK 900154** [74:17] See review by [Michael Cookson](#)



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Comparative version (*The Bells*) Chandos **CHAN10706** BBC Philharmonic/Gianandrea Noseda (with *Spring*, Three Russian Songs – [review](#) – [DL Roundup December 2011/1](#)). Ignore link to theclassicalshop.net – replaced by [chandos.net](#), but still available only in mp3 and 16-bit, with no 24-bit equivalent.

(Symphonic Dances) Avie **AV2188** RLPO/Vasily Petrenko (with *Isle of the Dead*, *The Rock* – **Recording of the Month**: [review](#) – [review](#)).

**BIS-1751 SACD** Bergen PO/Andrew Litton (with *Isle of the Dead*, *The Rock* – [Download News 2012/23](#)). The eclassical.com 24-bit download now costs \$14.75; the 16-bit remains at \$10.54.  
 Chandos **CHAN10234** LSO/Neeme Järvi (mid-price, with Symphony No.3 – reviewed as lossless download with pdf booklet from [chandos.net](#)). Also available as full-price download: Symphonic Dances, Dances from *Aleko* and *Capriccio bohémien*, **CHAN9081**.

Reviewing the Noseda recording on Chandos, I liked *The Bells* but was much less taken with the other music on that album. Now that minor masterpiece is coupled with music much more worthy of inclusion in performances which compare with the best and will be hard to beat.

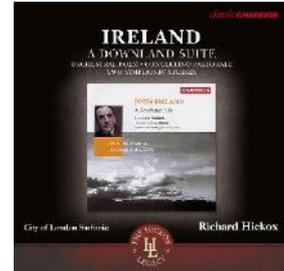
Mariss Jansons already had a winning performances of the *Dances* on an EMI 3-for-1 offer, now Warner, with the three symphonies, etc. – [DL Roundup December 2011/1](#) (**5008852**, also now in 5-CD budget box Warner **2564627827**). That's well worth having at the attractive price but superseded by the new recording.

Järvi's up-front recording of Symphony No.3 may not be quite in the top flight, and though it's a more attractive proposition in its reissued form, with the *Dances*, than at full price with a much shorter Kalinnikov coupling, it's no match for Petrenko, Litton or either Jansons version (EMI/Warner or the new BR Klassik). Any one of those would do very well for the *Dances*, but the new BR Klassik coupling, with the equally winning performance of *The Bells*, is now first choice.

I note that LSO Live are due to reissue their Valery Gergiev recordings of Rachmaninov's Symphonies, with fillers including *Symphonic Dances*, in a 3-SACD box set (**LSO0816**, around £20).

**John IRELAND (1879–1962)**

A Downland Suite (1932, arr. Geoffrey BUSH) [18:19]  
 Orchestral Poem (1903-4) [13:28]  
 Concertino Pastorale (1939) [19:53]  
 Two Symphonic Studies (1946-7, arr. Geoffrey BUSH) [11:38]  
 City of London Sinfonia/Richard Hickox  
 rec. Church of St Jude-on-the-Hill, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, 31  
 October and 1 November 1994. DDD  
**CHANDOS CHAN10912X** [63:50] See [review](#) – [review](#) – [review](#).



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I mentioned this alongside a Naxos recording of the *Downland Suite* in [DL News 2016/8](#), when it was still full price, but I haven't subsequently reviewed the inexpensive reissue. I can remedy that now by referring you to the three reviews listed above and adding that this wonderful late-romantic English music receives first-rate performances and, though the recording is 16/44.1 only, it still sounds fine.

The original orchestral version of the *Downland Suite* can be found performed by the ECO and David Garforth on Chandos **CHAN8390** (with *The Holy Boy*, etc and *Bridge Suite* for String Orchestra) and on the Naxos recording mentioned above. The Chandos would be more recommendable at mid-price – indeed some dealers have it for about £8 but the 16-bit lossless [chandos.net](#) download costs the full-price £9.99.

**JOHN IRELAND (1879-1962)**

*Mai-Dun* [11:04]  
 The Forgotten Rite [7:09]  
*Satyricon* Overture [8:45]  
*Overlanders*: Suite [20:07]  
 A London Overture [12:14]  
 Epic March [8:18]  
 Hallé Orchestra/John Wilson  
 rec. March 2007, BBC New Broadcasting House, Manchester.  
**HALLÉ CDHLL7523** [67:41] See [Recording of the Month review](#) – [review](#).

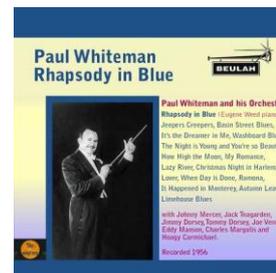


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When I reviewed this excellent album of Ireland’s music previously, it was from an mp3 download. The lossless download from Hyperion brings out the quality of the performances and recording even more. Strongly recommended alongside the Chandos: buy both and there is no overlap.

**George GERSHWIN (1899-1937)**

Gershwin’s **Rhapsody in Blue** opens a Beulah reissue of music by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra (**1PS26** – from [Qobuz](#) or stream from [Spotify](#)). Whiteman, of course, had a major input in *Rhapsody*, in that he helped Gershwin to orchestrate the work, and I found this recording with the unfortunately named Eugene (*aka Buddy*) Weed (piano) very enjoyable, as I did the rest of this programme of light music: *Jeepers Creepers*, *Basin Street Blues*, *It’s the Dreamer in me*, *Washboard Blues*, *The Night is Young*, *How High the Moon*, *My Romance*, *Lazy River*, *Christmas Night in Harlem*, *Lover*, *When Day is done*, *Ramona*, *It happened in Monterey*, *Autumn Leaves* and *Limehouse Blues*. Such luminaries as Johnny Mercer, Jack Teagarden, Johnny and Tommy Dorsey and Hoagy Carmichael offer first-class assistance.



The recordings, from 1956, have been clearly and convincingly transferred.

**Sir Michael TIPPETT (1905–1998)**

Symphony No.1 (1944/5) [39:02]  
 Symphony No.2 (1956/7) [35:38]  
 BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Martyn Brabbins  
 rec. February 2017, City Halls, Candler, Glasgow. DDD.  
**HYPERION CDA68203** [74:40] See [review by Stephen Barber](#).

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Comparative version: Symphonies Nos. 1-4, Suite from *New Year*: Bournemouth SO/Richard Hicks **CHAN10330X** (rec. 2005, 3 CDs, super-budget price).

Symphony No.1 from above set **CHAN9333** (full price, with Piano Concerto).

The Hickox complete set is now less expensive as a lossless download from [chandos.net](#)<sup>1</sup>, at £7.99, than when I recommended it in [DL News 2013/1](#). That may be an error – the lower quality mp3, paradoxically, is more expensive, at £10 – but the CD set can be found for around £11.



I’ll begin with an admission: much as I readily warm to some of Tippett’s music, such as the *Concerto for Double String Orchestra* and the *Fantasia on a Theme of Corelli*, recorded with other works on mid-price Decca Eloquence **4767960** – formerly half of a 2-CD set ([review](#)) – I find his symphonies tougher fare. The Hickox set on Chandos helps to convince me and it offers formidable competition in that it comes with another two hours of Tippett’s music, including the more mature later symphonies, all for around the price of the new single disc.

Fans of HD downloads, however, will not be disappointed by the new Hyperion and I found the performances as helpful as Hickox’s in helping to come to terms with the music. The 24-bit version of the Chandos which I have seems no longer to be available: it’s now 16-bit only. The Hyperion is advertised as the beginning of a cycle and I shall look out with interest for its successors.

<sup>1</sup> chandos.net replaces theclassicalshop.net as the Chandos download site.

**Mats LIDSTRÖM (b.1959)**

*Rigoletto* Fantasy for cello and orchestra [30:13]

**Dmitry SHOSTAKOVICH**

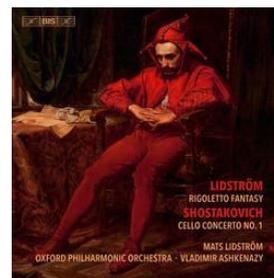
Cello Concerto No.1, Op.107 (1959) [29:41]

Mats Lidström (cello)

Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra/Vladimir Ashkenazy

rec. December 2016, Abbey Road Studios, London. DSD.

**BIS BIS-2289 SACD** [60:02]



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Having distinguished himself alongside Vladimir Ashkenazy in the two very different Shostakovich piano trios, Mats Lidström appears alongside him in the same composer's Cello Concerto No.1 and his own *Rigoletto Fantasia*. If for no other reason, this new release breaks the mould of coupling the two Shostakovich cello concertos, gives Lidström the chance to shine in his own composition, and introduces the Oxford Philharmonic to a new label, having recorded Nimrod Borenstein's Violin Concerto and other works, also with Ashkenazy, for Chandos (**CHSA5209: *Recording of the Month*** – [review](#) – [review](#): see below).

The *Rigoletto Fantasia* consists of eleven movements, each based on an aria from the opera, from the opening *Questa o quella via Caro nome, La donna è mobile*, etc., to the closing *O tu che la festa audace hai turbato*. Don't expect anything too novel from this pleasant but unadventurous work, just sit back and enjoy Lidström's take on some familiar music, much in the manner of Shchedrin's *Carmen Suite*.

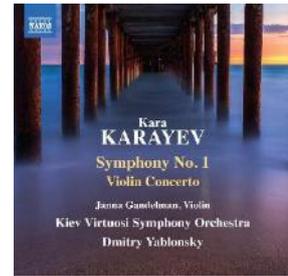
The novelty of the coupling makes the Shostakovich more competitive than it might otherwise seem: could a comparatively little-known soloist and orchestra, even with such an accomplished Shostakovich conductor as Ashkenazy compete with the best? Of these, my benchmark is the Rostropovich/Ormandy classic, coupled with Violin Concerto No.1 (Oistrakh and Mravinsky) on budget-price Regis **RRC1385** – [review](#) – [May 2012/1 DL Roundup](#). Without quite ousting the Rostropovich from my affection, the new BIS comes very close and, of course, is much better recorded, especially in 24-bit or from the HD layers of the SACD. Only in the finale do Lidström and Ashkenazy adopt a controversially slow tempo – a minute slower than Rostropovich or Truls Mørk (below) but without missing any of the power of the movement. They may not be quite as *allegro* as other recordings, but it's certainly *con moto*.

If you like the idea of these two unlikely bedfellows, you won't be disappointed with the Shostakovich, but it is possible to download the Lidström separately if you already have a recording of its companion or intend to obtain, say, the Rostropovich or another modern recording such as that by Truls Mørk and Vasily Petrenko, also available in 24-bit sound from eclassical.com (Ondine **ODE1218-2** – [review](#) – [DL News 2014/5](#)).

For a limited period, the 24-bit download is available for the same price as 16-bit, at \$8.99, and the surround version comes at the same price as 24-bit stereo, even after that offer concludes. Other providers, who charge considerably more for surround downloads than for the SACD, please take note.

**Kara Abdul'faz-ogli KARAYEV (1918–1982)**

Symphony No.1 in b minor (1943) [33:40]  
 Violin Concerto (1967) [20:59]  
 Janna Gandelman (violin)  
 Kiev Virtuosi Symphony Orchestra/Dmitry Yablonsky  
 rec. 10-15 September 2016, NRCU Recording House, Kiev, Ukraine. DDD.  
**NAXOS 8.573722** [54:43]



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*The Seven Beauties*, Orchestral Suite [32:39]  
*Don Quixote*, Symphonic Engravings [20:29]  
*Leyla and Mejnun*, Symphonic Poem [15:17]  
 Lullaby from the Ballet *The Path of Thunder* [4:02]  
 Listed as premiere recordings  
 Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra/Kirill Karabits  
 rec. 21-22 January 2017, The Lighthouse, Poole, Dorset. DSD.  
**CHANDOS CHSA5203 SACD** [73:10] For SACD purchase details see reviews  
 by [Dan Morgan](#) (*Recording of the Month*), [Ian Lace](#) and [Rob Barnett](#).



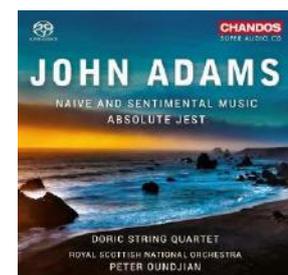
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The music of Azerbaijani composer and polymath Kara Karayev (also, confusingly, transliterated as Gara Garayev) is becoming much better known thanks to Naxos and Chandos. Three of my colleagues have already reviewed the Chandos – links above – but, having heard the new Naxos recording, I had to try it myself as a 24-bit download from chandos.net.

None of this is great or demanding music, but it's all very enjoyable, if not particularly memorable, and it receives persuasive advocacy on both these recordings: between them they make me want to explore Karayev further and that's easily possible if you subscribe to [Naxos Music Library](#), who also have two earlier Naxos releases conducted by Yablonsky.

**John ADAMS (b. 1947)**

*Absolute Jest* for String Quartet and Orchestra (2011, revised 2012)\* [25:15]  
*Naive and Sentimental Music* for Orchestra (1997–98)\*\* [45:57]  
 Doric String Quartet [Alex Redington (violin), Jonathan Stone (violin), Hélène Clément (viola), John Myerscough (cello)]\*  
 Sean Shibe (steel-string guitar)\*\*  
 Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Peter Oundjian  
 rec. Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow; 28 August 2017\* and 29-30 August 2017\*\*  
**CHANDOS CHSA5199 SACD** [71:25]



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We now have two fine recordings of *Absolute Jest*; Michael Tilson Thomas and John Adams made the earlier recording with the San Francisco Orchestra on their own SFS Media label (**SFS0063: *Recording of the Month*** – [review](#) – [review](#)). There it was coupled with *Grand Pianola Music*, here with *Naive and Sentimental Music*, of which there is only one other recording, on its own on a short-value Nonesuch

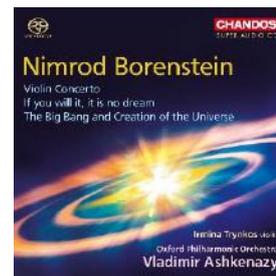
album (7559796362, download only). Your choice of coupling will be decisive; with either you will obtain a fine version of *Absolute Jest*.

**Nimrod BORENSTEIN (b. 1969)**

Violin Concerto, Op.60 (2013) [27:53]  
*The Big Bang and Creation of the Universe*, Op.52 (2008-09) [19:46]  
*If you will it, it is no Dream*, Op.58 (2012) [8:39]

Irmina Trynkos (violin)  
 Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra/Vladimir Ashkenazy  
 rec. 2016, Henry Wood Hall, London

**CHANDOS CHSA5209 SACD** [56:45] See reviews by [Rob Barnett](#) and [Michael Wilkinson](#) (*Recording of the Month*)



Streamed with pdf booklet from Naxos Music Library	
Reviewed in 24-bit stereo sound with pdf booklet from	

Full marks to this contemporary music that doesn't put the listener off with unfathomable crashes and bangs, yet doesn't sound saccharine. It's all of that and very enjoyable to boot, so, having streamed the album from Naxos Music Library, I downloaded the 24/96 version from Chandos, where it's also available in mp3, 16-bit and 24-bit surround. My only reservation is that the latter is rather expensive at £19.99 when the SACD can be found for much less (guide price £12.50). I really would like to hear justification for charging more for a download – a one-off cost for the producer – than for preparing the physical product.

**Vito PALUMBO (b.1972)**

*Concerto Barocco* for harpsichord and strings (2006) [16:05]  
 Cello Concerto (2007) [37:21]  
 Recorder Concerto for 'Eagle' recorder and large orchestra (2013) [28:52]  
 Anna Paradiso (harpsichord), Mats Olofsson (cello), Dan Laurin (recorder)  
 String Ensemble [Peter Olofsson, Per Öman and Åsa Wirdefeldt (violins),  
 Tony Bauer (viola), Mats Olofsson (cello), Tomas Wahlund (double bass)]  
 Gävle Symphony Orchestra/Jaime Martín

**BIS BIS-2255 SACD** [83:16]



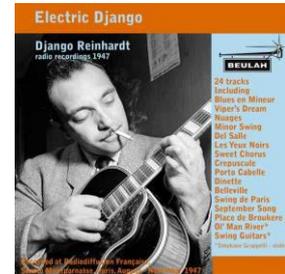
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My first encounter with a contemporary composer all too often turns out to be my last, but Vito Palumbo seems set to become an exception. His *Concerto barocco*, for harpsichord with small-scale string ensemble, owes much to Bach and to Stravinsky's updated version of the Brandenburg concertos, *Dumbarton Oaks*. The overall tone is also not unlike Respighi's *Ancient Airs and Dances* or Warlock's *Capriol Suite* – music for an earlier age reimagined, though in this case there are no baroque originals that I'm aware of. If that makes it sound dated for a 2006 composition, I say 'bring it on'.

The *Cello Concerto* is a more demanding work, with a rhapsodic slow movement. It's dedicated to Shostakovich, so very different from *Concerto barocco*. Nor should you expect the *Recorder Concerto* to sound like a work for that instrument by Vivaldi or Telemann; written for a more powerful version of the instrument, it combines a quirky lyricism, often redolent of Messiaen's birdcall inspiration, with strength. Unlike Messiaen, however, we end not with a transfiguration but with visions of an

impending apocalypse. It's performed by its dedicatee and, as with all the other works, the performance is good enough to make me listen again. Add very good recording – the HD layer of the SACD should be comparable with the 24/96 download, which is available in stereo and surround – and this turns out to be a very pleasant surprise.

***Electric Django*** is an album of radio recordings of Django Reinhardt from November 1947. The 24 tracks include *Blues en mineur*, *Viper's Dream*, *Nuages*, *Minor Swing*, *Del Salle*, *Les Yeux noirs*, *Sweet Chorus*, *Crepuscule*, *Porto Cabelle*, *Dinette*, *Belleville*, *Swing de Paris*, *September Song*, *Place de Broukere*, *Ol' Man River* and *Swing Guitars*, with Stéphane Grappelli (violin) in the last two numbers. I presume that the backing was provided by the Hot Club de France. (**BEULAH 2PS22** [77:07] – from [Qobuz](#) or stream from [Spotify](#)).



The new reissue takes us on from the earlier album of performances from 1935 to 1946 and the sound quality is very good for radio recordings. Everything here is self-recommending but regular readers will not be surprised if I single out the collaborations with Grappelli.