

Second Thoughts and Short Reviews Winter 2019-2020/2
By Brian Wilson, Dan Morgan and Johan van Veen

Reviews are by Brian Wilson unless otherwise stated.

Winter #1 is [here](#) and Autumn 2019 #2 [here](#).

Index [page numbers in brackets; later page numbers may be slightly displaced]

- BACH** Six Partitas for harpsichord (*Clavier Übung I*) - Ton Koopman_Challenge Classics [7]
- Cantatas Nos. 82, 84 and 199 – Christine Schäfer_Sony [7]
- BANTOCK** Violin Sonata No.3; **SCOTT** Viola Sonata; **SACHEVERELL COKE** Violin Sonata No.1 - Rupert Marshall-Luck; Matthew Rickard_EM Records [20]
- BARTH, GADE, KUHLAU** – 19th Century Danish Overtures - Aarhus Symphony Orchestra/Jean Thorel_DaCapo [14]
- BEETHOVEN 250** – new and old releases_Various performers and labels [10]
- Piano Concertos Nos. 1-5 – Rudolf Brautigam; Kölner Akademie/Michael Willens_BIS [12]
- Late String Quartets – Cypress Quartet_Avie [13]
- String Quartet No.14 – Jaspere Quartet_Sono Luminus [13]
- BERNARDI** *Lux aeterna* – Voces Suaves_Arcana [3]
- BRIDGE** Phantasie for string quartet; **HOLST** Phantasy on British Folksongs; **GOOSSENS** Phantasy Quartet for strings; **HOWELLS** Phantasy String Quartet; **HOLBROOKE** First Quartet Fantasie;
- HURLSTONE** Phantasie for string quartet - The Bridge Quartet_EM Records [19]
- BUXTEHUDE** *Membra Jesu Nostri* - RossoPorpora Ensemble/Testolin_Stradivarius[4]
- CIMAROSA** 21 Organ Sonatas – Andrea Chezzi_Brilliant Classics [10]
- COLONNA** *O splendida dies* – Scherzi Musicali/Achten_Ricercar [5]
- DUKAS** *L'Apprenti Sorcier*; *Polyeucte* Overture – Loire Orchestra/Pascal Rophé_BIS (with ROUSSEL) [17]
- ELGAR** Violin Sonata: see GURNEY
- GESUALDO** Madrigals – Exaudi Ensemble/Weeks_Winter and Winter [3]
- GOOSSENS** Phantasy Concerto for Violin and Orchestra; Symphony No.2 – Tasmin Little; Melbourne SO/Andrew Davis_Chandos [20]
- GÓRECKI** Symphony No.3 – Adeliade SO/Yuasa_ABC [22]
- GURNEY** Violin Sonata in E-flat; **SAINSBURY** Soliloquy for Solo Violin; **ELGAR** Violin Sonata - Rupert Marshall-Luck; Matthew Rickard (piano)_EM Records [19]
- HAYDN** Symphonies Nos. 28, 43 and 63 – Giardino Armonico/Antonini_Alpha [8]
- Symphonies Nos. 80 and 81; Piano Concerto in D - Lucas Blondeel; Le Concert d'Anvers/Bart Van Rey_Fuga Libera [8]
- Symphony No.99; *Harmoniemesse* – Handel and Haydn Society/Christophers [8]
- *Missa Cellensis* – Akademie für alte Musik/Justin Doyle_Harmonia Mundi [9]
- MAHLER** *Das klagende Lied* – ORF Vienna RSO/Cornelius Meister_Capriccio [16]
- Various works – Various performers_Now Spinning (download only) [16]
- RESPIGHI** The Essential Respighi (including Roman Trilogy) – Various_Decca [18]
- *Vetrata di chiesa*, *Metamorphoseon*, *Belkis* and *Impressioni brasiliane* and Roman Trilogy_Chandos [19]
- ROUSSEL** *Le Festin de l'Araignée* (The Spider's Feast) – Loire Orchestra/Pascal Rophé_BIS (with DUKAS) [17]
- SAINT-SAËNS** Piano Concertos Nos. 3 And 5_Louis Lortie; BBC Philharmonic/Edward Gardner_Chandos [15]
- SCHUBERT** Symphony No.9 - Scottish Chamber Orchestra/Maxim Emelyanychev_Linn [14]
- SHOSTAKOVICH** Symphony No. 13 – CSO/Riccardo Muti_CSO Resound [21]
- SIBELIUS** Symphony No.1 - Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal/Yannick Nézet-Séguin_Atma [17]

STRAUSS Family, etc: New Year's Concert – Vienna Philharmonic/Andris Nelsons [23]
- *Memories of Vienna* – LSO, NSO, VPO/Josef Krips_Decca Eloquence [24]
TCHAIKOVSKY *Swan Lake* - Russian State Symphony Orchestra/Dmitry Yablonsky_Naxos [15]

Arp-Schnitger-Organ Norden Vol. 2 - Agnes Luchterhandt, Thiemo Janssen MDG [5]
In Nomine II – Fretwork_Signum [2]
The Soldier – from Severn to Somme – Maltman/Middleton_Signum [22]

In Nomine II

Nico MUHLY (*1981)

Slow (In Nomine in 5 parts) [08:21]

Robert PARSONS (1535-1572)

In Nomine IV in 7 parts [02:29]

In Nomine V in 7 parts [03:03]

John BULL (c1562-1628)

In Nomine in 11/4 [05:37]

John BALDWIN (1560-1615)

Proportions to the minim [02:31]

Upon In Nomine 1592 [01:36]

In Nomine 1606 [02:19]

Alfonso FERRABOSCO II (1575-1628)

In Nomine in 6 parts, No. 1 [03:45]

In Nomine in 6 parts, No. 2 [04:07]

In Nomine through all the parts [05:47]

Gavin BRYARS (*1943)

In Nomine [09:16]

John WARD (c1589-1638)

In Nomine in 5 parts [03:19]

Christopher TYE (1505-c1573)

Reporte [01:43]

Howlde fast [01:09]

Re la re [01:22]

Henry PURCELL (1659-1695)

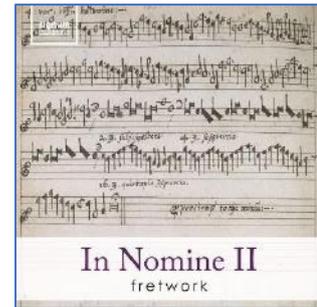
In Nomine in 7 parts (Z 747) [03:35]

Fretwork

rec. 2018, St Mary Magdalen Church, Sherborne, Gloucestershire, UK DDD

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

SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD576 [59:50] For purchase details see also review by BW in [Winter/1](#).



Few pieces are more characteristic of English consort music of the Renaissance than the *In nomine*. The name refers to a phrase from the plainchant *Gloria tibi Trinitas*, which became particularly famous through John Taverner's mass based on that chant. More than 300 pieces of this kind from the 16th and 17th centuries have been preserved. In 1987 Fretwork devoted its first release to this genre, and more than 30 years later it has recorded a sequel. Only one piece appears on both discs: Baldwin's setting dated 1592; otherwise we get other pieces here.

Despite having the identical subject, the pieces are very different. Obviously, that goes in particular for the two contemporary items. Nico Muhly's *Slow* is almost the opposite of the Renaissance items, due to its fast tempo (despite the piece's title), the strong dynamic contrasts and its stubborn rhythm.

In comparison, Gavin Bryars stays much closer to the style of the Renaissance. As these two pieces take almost a third of the programme, this disc is only suitable for those who have an open ear for modern music. Fretwork is one of the best ensembles of its kind, and delivers very fine and inciting performances. The scoring for six or seven viols lends some of the pieces an almost orchestral character. Even so, Fretwork manages to keep the sound transparent. It is also very responsive to the various rhythms. Lovers of music for viol consort should not miss this disc. **[Johan van Veen]**

Carlo GESUALDO (1566-1613)

Madrigali a cinque voci

Selections from Libro V and VI (1611) [60:31]

'Mercè!', grido piangendo (V) [4:22]

Io pur respiro in così gran dolore (VI) [3:03]

Itene, o miei sospiri (V) [2:58]

Gioite voi col canto (V) [3:16]

'Io parto' e non più dissi (VI) [3:21]

S'io non miro non moro (V) [2:55]

Deh, come invan sospiro (VI) [3:27]

Mille volte il dì moro (VI) [3:12]

Asciugate i begli occhi (V) [4:02]

O dolorosa gioia (V) [3:56]

Se la mia morte brami (VI) [3:45]

Ardita zanzaretta (VI) [3:17]

Volan quasi farfalle (VI) [2:32]

Al mio gioir il ciel si fa sereno (VI) [2:11]

Dolcissima mia vita (V) [2:45]

Tu piangi, o Filli mia (VI) [3:09]

Moro, lasso, al mio duolo (VI) [3:46]

Languisce al fin chi da la vita parte (V) [4:24]

Exaudi Vocal Ensemble/James Weeks

rec. 2019, St Bartholomew's Church, Oxford, UK

Texts included

WINTER & WINTER 910 259-2 [60:31] See [review by Dominy Clements](#).



CD from	
Stream	

The only thing that is drab about this recording is the cover. My other complaint is that the streamed version of the booklet comes without the insert on which the texts are included. Nor does there appear to be any opportunity to download this album. All that said, the CD – or the streamed version from Naxos Music Library – is as valuable as Dominy Clements says in his review.

Stefano BERNARDI (1577 - 1637)

Lux aeterna - A Salzburg Requiem

Missa pro defunctis 6 vocom [41:50]

Sinfonia III concertata [03:04]

Ad te, Domine, levavi animam meam [02:47]

Sinfonia IV concertata [03:32]

Letanie a 4 concertate [08:51]

Sinfonia II concertata [02:33]

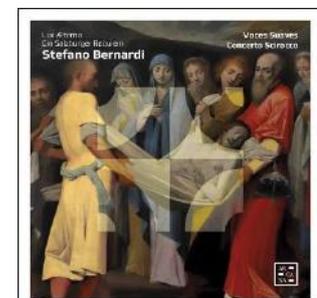
De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine [05:27]

Voces Suaves, Concertato Scirocco

rec. 2019 Stadtkirche St. Martin, Rheinfelden, Switzerland DDD

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as a stereo 16/44 download with pdf booklet from Outhere



CD from	
Stream	

ARCANA A 470 [68:15] See also [review by BW in Autumn 2019/2](#).

Music for Salzburg Cathedral is probably first and foremost associated with the sacred oeuvre of Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber, and especially his large-scale *Missa Salisburgensis*. One of his predecessors as *Kapellmeister* there was Stefano Bernardi who was appointed as such at the latest in 1627. The main aim of sacred music at Salzburg Cathedral was to reflect its importance, and this explains the splendour of the pieces Bernardi composed for the Cathedral. One of them is the *Missa pro defunctis*, included in the programme recorded by Voces Suaves and Concerto Scirocco. It is for six voices, but at some moments the ensemble is split into two choirs, high versus low. The new declamatory style, which emerged in Italy in the early 17th century, comes especially to the fore in the *Letanie a 4 voce concertate*.

The offertorio *Ad te, Domine, levate* and the setting of Psalm 129 (130), *De profundis clamavi*, are for eight voices and are very much like the *Requiem*. In the latter's *Sequentia (Dies irae)*, the even sections are sung in plainchant. The tempo is very slow, which I find questionable. However, that is the only issue here. The two ensembles deliver splendid, colourful performances; both the singing and the playing are excellent. Bernardi is not well represented on disc, and considering the quality of his music, this disc is an important addition to the discography. **[Johan van Veen]**

Dietrich BUXTEHUDE (1637-1707)

Membra Jesu Nostri, BuxWV75 (1680) [65:54]

RossoPorpora Ensemble/Walter Testolin

rec. 24-26 July 2013, Chiesa di S. Margherita a Campodoro, Italy. DDD

Texts and translations included

STRADIVARIUS STR37004 [65:54]



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ArkivMusic	
Download	PRESTO CLASSICAL

One might imagine that a series of cantatas devoted to the wounds of Jesus on the cross might have little appeal in this predominantly secular age, but that would be to reckon without the existence of so many recordings of the work – three appeared in 2019 alone; this one dates from a little earlier.

We know very little of Buxtehude's motivation in the composition of an exercise which might seem more appropriate to a South German or Italian composer of the counter-reformation, but conservative Lutheranism retained the crucifix, on the altar or otherwise on prominent display, when some other reformed churches preferred the empty cross. We do know that the music was dedicated to Buxtehude's Swedish friend Düben, and Swedish Lutheranism has always retained much pre-reformation symbolism. Whatever the motivation, the existence of so many recordings is testimony to the music's appeal. Stuart Sillitoe thought the most recent release, on Resonus, excellent – [review](#). There are also fine versions from The Sixteen (Coro **COR16082** – [March 2010](#), where it's wrongly attributed to Linn) and from Emma Kirkby and others on Chandos (**CHAN0775**, which has been generally liked more than by Johan van Veen – [review](#)).

There's a great deal to be said for this Italian recording, but it's not generally available in the UK on CD and those who do have it are asking a wide variety of prices: £10.40, £12.83 and £61.24 plus p&p – all from the same dealer. The download is devoid of booklet.

Giovanni Paolo COLONNA (1637-1695)

O splendida dies

- Salve Pretiosum (per il Santissimo) [05:16]
- Advolate fideles populi (per S. Andrea Apostolo) [07:08]
- Sonata VIII [02:53]
- O splendida dies (per ogni tempo) [08:08]

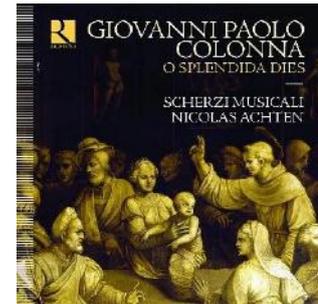
Giulio Cesare ARRESTI (1619-1701)

- Sonata XVI - Elevazione [02:34]

Giovanni Paolo COLONNA

- Pulcra es (per la Beata Vergine) [07:35]
- Sonata VII [02:58]
- E Libano caeli (per ogni tempo) [08:00]
- Sinfonia sopra Ride tellus [02:00]
- Esurientes (per l'Idria, ò per il Santissimo) [05:34]
- Sinfonia sopra lubilet caelum [01:03]
- Adeste superi (per il Santissimo) [05:31]
- Scherzi Musicali/Nicholas Achten
- rec. 2018, Church of St Jean l'Evangéliste, Beaufays, Belgium DDD
- Texts and translations included
- Reviewed as a stereo 16/44 download with pdf booklet from Outhere

RICERCAR RIC 406 [58:41] See also [review by BW in Autumn 2019/2.](#)



CD from	
Stream	

Nicholas Achten and his ensemble Scherzi Musicali like to explore unknown repertoire. Giovanni Paolo Colonna is not entirely unknown, but he is certainly not a household name. He was born and died in Bologna, and there he worked first as organist and then as *maestro di cappella* at the Basilica of San Petronio. He was a prolific composer who wrote liturgical music in the *stile antico*, but also sacred concertos for solo voices. The latter genre is the subject of the present disc. The vocal items are taken from his Op. 3, a collection of motets for two and three voices with basso continuo, which was printed in 1681. As one may expect, they include quite some textual expression and are largely of a declamatory character. That comes off very well in these performances. The three sopranos make a particularly good impression. The singing of Nicholas Achten may not be to everyone's taste (certainly not mine), especially because of a slight tremolo in his voice. He also lacks a degree of power in comparison with the sopranos. With regard to the line-up in the instrumental pieces, Achten has taken some liberties which are questionable. However, the main thing is here that this disc is a convincing demonstration of the quality of Colonna's music, which deserves much more attention. This recording offers a good opportunity to become acquainted with his oeuvre. **[Johan van Veen]**

Arp-Schnitger-Organ Norden Vol. 2

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

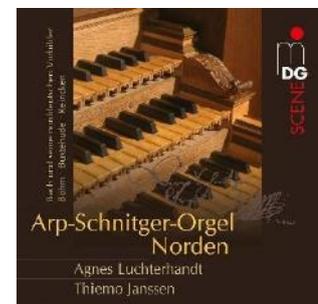
- Toccata in d (Dorian), BWV538/1 [5:35]

Dietrich BUXTEHUDE (1637-1707)

- Passacaglia in d minor, BuxWV161 [6:19]
- Von Gott will ich nicht lassen*, BuxWV 220 [2:34]
- Toccata in F, BuxWV156 [7:56]

Johann Sebastian BACH

- Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV599 [1:46]
- Lobt Gott ihr Christen*, BWV732 [1:34]
- O Lamm Gottes unschuldig*, BWV618 [3:57]
- Erschienen ist der herrlich Tag*, BWV629 [1:02]
- In dir ist Freude*, BWV615 [2:50]
- Wohl mir, dass ich Jesum habe / Jesus bleibet meine Freude* from BWV147 [5:57]



CD from	
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(Organ version for two players by Agnes Luchterhandt)

Toccatà (*Præludium*) in C, BWV566 [10:44]

Georg BÖHM (1661-1733)

Aria: *Jesu, du bist allzu schöne* (14 variations) [7:04]

Vater unser im Himmelreich [4:22]

Johann Adam REINCKEN (1643-1722)

Fuga in g minor [4:15]

Johann Sebastian BACH

Toccatà and Fugue in d minor BWV565 [9:27]

Agnes Luchterhandt

Thiemo Janssen (Arp-Schnitger organ, 1688-1692)

rec. 9-11 October 2007, Ludgerikirche, Norden, Germany. DDD/DSD

Reviewed from 2-channel SACD layer

Booklet includes organ specification and registration for each work.

MDG 906 1502-6 SACD [76:10]

I've 'sat' on this SACD for too long. My excuse is that I was waiting for it to be more widely available in the UK, but I appear to have waited in vain. Only Amazon seem to offer it, and at a rather expensive £20.05 when I checked. There's an mp3 download for £8.69, but it would be little short of sacrilege to listen to one of MDG's fine 2+2+2 SACDs in mp3 – and probably at less than the full 320kb/s.

Presto offer volumes 1 and 3 at £12.75 each, but not Volume 2. The other supplier to whom we regularly offer a purchase link, Arkivmusic, also have only volumes 1 and 3, at \$18.99 each. Don't let the problem of availability of Volume 2 deter you from Volume 1 – [review](#) – and Volume 3 – [review](#). The only small reservation in either case comes from Johan van Veen, who notes that it seems unlikely that organists in Bach's time had an assistant to help with the change of stops during an individual work. That's common practice nowadays, of course, along with tabs to allow changes to pre-selected couplings, and this is one instance where, for me, modern usage trumps period practice. It's hardly as heinous as Bach on the concert grand – Angela Hewitt and Glenn Gould honourably excepted.

Like its predecessor and successor, this volume contains a framework of Bach with music by his precursors interpolated. There's nothing later than Bach, thus obviating the anomaly of Mozart played in meantone temperament on one of the other volumes. As with the other volumes, too, the Agnes Luchterhandt and Thiemo Janssen pairing works really well. As for the organ, just enjoy it and forget the speculation in the booklet that Bach 'may' have played this instrument; that adds not one jot to our appreciation of its wonderful sound.

Long ago, in October 1959, I spent two weeks at a course on the East Frisian island of Juist, with time to spare at the port of Norddeich because the tidal ferry to the island had left and I had wait till the next day. Had I known then of this fine instrument, Norden is just a few kilometres inland from Norddeich – the next train stop. What a missed opportunity. *Si jeunesse savait ...*

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

Six Partitas for harpsichord (*Clavier Übung I*) BWV825-830

Ton Koopman (harpsichord)

rec. Waalse Kerk, Amsterdam, December 2011. DDD.

CHALLENGE CLASSICS CC72574 [71:02 + 73:44]



CD from	
Stream	

I mentioned this recording many moons ago among the comparisons in my [review](#) of the Teldec complete Bach edition in mp3 on USB. That's no longer available, which is a shame because it made the ideal inexpensive introduction to Bach's music and was valuable even for those who already had some of his music in their collection. The 60CD Harnoncourt-Leonhardt set of the sacred cantatas, for around £68, is partial recompense, together with the 'bite-size' downloads, each around 6 hours for about £11, though these come without texts.

Most of the best recordings of these partitas have been made on the piano: András Schiff (ECM and Decca Originals), Igor Levitt (Sony), Glenn Gould (Sony) and Angela Hewitt (her second Hyperion recording: **Recommended** – [review](#)) among them. There's also a recording of the quiet-voiced clavichord (Resonus) but my own preference is for the harpsichord and there's none I like better than Ton Koopman. If, very occasionally, he goes a little over the top in stressing the great variety in the music, that's far better than understatement.

This is one of those inexplicable examples where the price of the lossless download exceeds that of the CDs from some dealers, at around £22, yet Qobuz offer it in lossless sound for £7.99. No-one seems to offer the very worthwhile booklet with the download, but Naxos Music Library have it. Confusing?

Johann Sebastian BACH

Cantata No.82, BWV82 'Ich habe genug' [21:04]

Fuge Dorisch (Dorian Fugue for strings and continuo) arr. from BWV538 [5:59]

Cantata No.199, BWV199 'Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut' [21:50]

Musical Offering, BWV1079: Ricercar a 6 [6:46]

Cantata No.84, BWV84 'Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke' [13:55]

Christine Schäfer (soprano),

RIAS Kammerchor

Berlin Barock Solisten/Bernhard Forck (concertmaster)

Period instruments at modern pitch.

rec. 16-18, 23-24 September 2012, Jesus-Christus-Kirche, Berlin. DDD.

Texts and translations included

SONY CLASSICAL 88765444782 [70:11]



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Download	
Stream	

Another recording from the deep-ish back catalogue that we seem to have passed over. Competition in No.82 is fierce, with prime recordings of both the male and female solo versions from Iestyn Davies (Hyperion **CDA68111**, with Nos. 82 and 170: **Recording of the Month** – [review](#)), Philippe Jaroussky (Erato **9029592533**, with Cantata No.170 and Telemann), Matthias Goerne (Harmonia Mundi **HMM902323**, with Nos. 21 and 56 – [Autumn 2017/1*](#)) and John Shirley-Quirk (Decca Eloquence **4762684**, with No.170, Janet Baker, and No.159, Robert Tear, download only). I would have enjoyed Christine Schäfer's version if those other recordings had not been in the back of my mind.

The other two cantatas, where competition is less intense, are much more enjoyable, as are the two instrumental interludes. From most dealers this has already become download only, without the booklet.

* I promised a review on the main pages, with possible Recording of the Month status, which never materialised.

Franz Joseph HAYDN (1732-1809)

Symphony No.63 in C, Hob.I:63 'La Roxolana' [20:14]
Symphony No.43 in E-Flat, Hob.I:43 'Mercury' [26:55]

Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945)

Romanian Folk Dances, Sz.68, BB76 [5:22]

Anonymous

Sonata Jucunda (Ms Kroměříž, c.1673-1680) [6:06]

Franz Joseph HAYDN

Symphony No.28 in A, Hob.I:28 [17:57]

Il Giardino Armonico/Giovanni Antonini

rec. Euregio Kulturzentrum Gustav Mahler, Toblach (BZ), Italy, 18-22 May 2018. DDD.

Reviewed as press preview.

ALPHA682 [76:42]

Symphony No. 80 in d minor, Hob. I:80 (1784) [21:20]

Piano concerto in D, Hob. XVIII:11 (1784) [18:23]

(cadenzas by Lucas Blondeel)

Symphony No. 81 in G, Hob. I:81 (1784) [22:04]

Lucas Blondeel (fortepiano by Chris Maene after Anton Walter, 1795)

Le Concert d'Anvers/Bart Van Rey

rec. St. Margaretkirche, Brühl, Germany, 27–28 August 2016. DDD.

Reviewed as press preview.

FUGA LIBERA FUG755 [62:04]

Symphony No. 99 in E-flat, Hob.I:99 [26:25]

Mass in B-Flat, Hob. XXII:14 *Harmoniemesse* [41:53]

Mireille Asselin (soprano)

Catherine Wyn-Rogers (mezzo)

Jeremy Budd (tenor)

Sumner Thompson (baritone)

Handel and Haydn Society Chorus

Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra/Harry Christophers

rec. Symphony Hall, Boston, USA, 25 & 27 January 2019. DDD.

Texts and translations included

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

CORO COR16176 [68:23]

The Beethoven year seems also to be bringing us some fine recordings from his rejected mentor Haydn. All three of these new releases have much to offer.

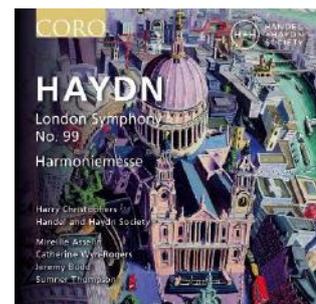
With **ALPHA682**, Alpha's project *Haydn 2032* reaches Volume 8. As before, Giovanni Antonini does the honours, reverting from Kammerorchester Basel to his own Giardino Armonico, with whom he began the series. As before, too, he blends Haydn with music by a contemporary, in this case the



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prolific Anon, but he also adds Bartók's *Folk Dances* to illustrate what the booklet calls 'The Birth of Crossover', examining the influence of folk music on classical composers.

I didn't think that the 'crossover' worked, but it didn't spoil my enjoyment of the Haydn, which receives predictably lively and persuasive performances. The booklet calls them 'intensely vivid', with which I'm not going to argue, and 'contemporary', which means nothing. It's not so much that Antonini takes the music helter-skelter – some of his tempi are slower than Trevor Pinnock's (DG), the timings not easy to compare because Antonini is more generous with repeats than most, but the slow movement of No.43 is really stately. Bright, forward recording is part of the picture. It's somehow appropriate that it was made in a German-speaking part of Italy.

The covers for this series have tended to be unfathomable, but that's how Alpha seem to like things these days – I greatly preferred their use of art illustrations in the past. None of that really matters; just enjoy the music.

FUG755: Three works from the year just prior to Haydn's visit to Paris, all neglected by period-instrument ensembles until recently. Though the two symphonies have now received other fine historically-informed performances, it's good to have them together on a recording which, if anything, surpasses previous offerings (Nos.80 and 81 on **ALPHA676**, with No.19 and music by Kraus – [review – Autumn 2017/3](#)). The perennial question of coupling presents the usual problems: the other Haydn symphony and the Kraus on Alpha or the keyboard concerto on Fuga Libera? You can't go wrong with either, unless you can't stand the fortepiano, in this case an instrument with a very light touch, almost like a harpsichord. Those who prefer the modern instrument should investigate Leif Ove Andsnes and the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra (Concertos Nos. 3, 4 and 11, Warner **5569602**).

The **Coro** recording also marks a milestone in Harry Christophers' recordings of Haydn: having completed the 'Paris' symphonies, he now moves on to one from the second 'London' series with equal success. Those seeking historically informed performances which are equally unlikely to disturb those whose ideal Haydn is something more like the classic Colin Davis series of the 'London' symphonies are likely to appreciate this the most. Much the same applies to the *Harmoniemesse*, a good compromise between big-band Haydn and the ultra-hipp.

Franz Joseph HAYDN (1732-1809)

Missa Cellensis (H XXII,5)

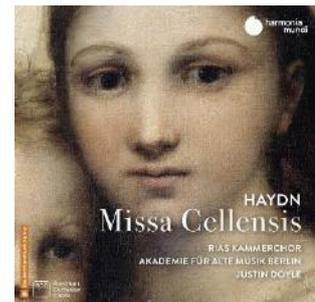
Johanna Winkel (soprano), Sophie Harmsen (contralto), Benjamin Bruns (tenor), Wolf Matthias Friedrich (bass), RIAS Kammerchor, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin/Justin Doyle

rec. live 2018, Konzerthaus Berlin, Germany DDD

Texts and translations included

Reviewed as 24/44 FLAC download with pdf booklet from [eclassical.com](#)

HARMONIA MUNDI HMM 902300 [65:42] For details see review by BW in [Winter/1](#)



Haydn's masses are quite popular, especially among choirs, and that is understandable, as large parts of these works are scored for choir. Most of them date from the latest stage of Haydn's career, but the *Missa Cellensis* is an exception. The first sections, *Kyrie* and *Gloria*, seem to have been written in the late 1760s, whereas the *Agnus Dei* was probably composed in 1773. The mass is separated into a number of sections, either for one or several soloists or for choir; the latter include sometimes short solo interventions. The RIAS Kammerchor is a top-class ensemble; no wonder that the *tutti* sections are brilliantly sung. Listen to the opening *Kyrie*, with its rhythmic suppleness and well-judged dynamic shading. Overall the contributions of the soloists are very good too, and that goes in particular for

Sophie Harmsen and Wolf Matthias Friedrich. Johanna Winkel and especially Benjamin Bruns sometimes use a bit too much vibrato; as a result, the end of the *Domine Deus* is not entirely satisfying, as the voices don't blend that well. The *Crucifixus* is one of the most impressive parts of this performance. The Akademie für Alte Musik is its brilliant and vibrant self. Despite some issues, this performance is a most attractive proposition for any Haydn lover. [Johan van Veen]

Domenico CIMAROSA (1749-1801) 21 Organ Sonatas

- Sonata in C - *Allegro* C54, F54 [4:04]
- Sonata in a minor - *Largo* C55, F55 [4:22]
- Sonata in C - *Allegro* C50, F50 [2:56]
- Sonata in g minor - *Andantino* C33, F33 [1:41]
- Sonata in G - *Allegro* C32, F32 [2:30]
- Sonata in d minor - *Andante con moto* C79, F79 [3:13]
- Sonata in D - *Allegretto* C30, F30 [3:35]
- Sonata in A - [*Allegro*] C19, F19 [2:43]
- Sonata in a minor - *Andantino grazioso* C58, F58 [1:47]
- Sonata in A - *Allegro* C21, F21 [1:39]
- Sonata in d minor - *Andantino* C42, F42 [1:14]
- Sonata in F - *Allegro* C51, F51; orig. G [3:21]
- Sonata in b-flat minor/B-flat - *Andantino, Allegro assai* C70, F70 [3:24]
- Sonata in g minor - *Largo* C61, F61 [3:06]
- Sonata in B-flat - *Allegro* C1, F1 [3:38]
- Sonata in g minor - *Andantino* C52, F52 [3:54]
- Sonata in G - *Allegro* C53, F53 [3:13]
- Sonata in c minor - *Larghetto* C49, F49 [2:27]
- Sonata in c minor - [*Allegro*] C28, F28 [3:30]
- Sonata in E-flat - *Andantino* C37, F37 [2:16]
- Sonata in c minor - *Allegro* C68, F68 [2:15]

Andrea Chezzi (organ)

Organ by Andrea Boschini (before 1755) and Giovanni Cavalletti (1814), of the Sanctuary of the Beata Vergine dello Spino, Brugnato di Reggiolo (RE), Italy.

Restored by Silvio Micheli Organi a Canne (2018)

Pitch = 449 Hz Temperament: Valotti – Barca

rec. 1 May 2019, Parish Church of St. Maria Annunciata Sanctuary of the Beata Vergine dello Spino, Brugnato di Reggiolo (RE), Italy

Organ specification included in booklet

BRILLIANT CLASSICS 95781 [60:23]



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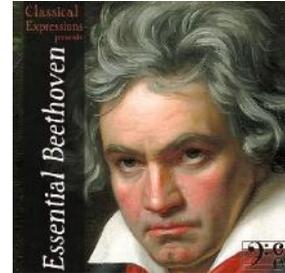
Brilliant Classics have done much to project the music of Cimarosa, still best known for a handful of overtures and for little else. They have already given us his *Farsa per musica*, *L'Impresario in angustie* – [review](#) – and his complete (88) keyboard sonatas on the fortepiano (**95207**, 2 CDs) and arrangements of 30 of them on the guitar (**94172**). The 21 selected here sound equally at home on the organ, making a good case for the slightly controversial decision. The organ chosen is comparatively simple, so there's no temptation to over-register the music, though some of the sonatas have been slightly modified to suit the instrument. At its modest price – around £7.50 on CD or £6.50 as a lossless download – this is an interesting byway of eighteenth-century music worth exploring.

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827): Beethoven 250 – new and old releases

There's plenty yet to come this year, no doubt, but some of the commemorative sets have already appeared. A stock-taking before the flood begins might not be amiss.

Beginners should think hard before being tempted by an offering from Decca: **Essential Beethoven: 24 of his Greatest Masterpieces (4685302)**. There are no turkeys here, but it's bitty, download-only and costs much more than when it was available as a 2-for-1 bargain.

If it's value that you are looking for, much more tempting is a 13-hour collection of the same name, with all the symphonies, from Otto Klemperer (Nos. 1 and 4), Pierre Monteux (Nos. 2 and 7), Leonard Bernstein (No.3) and Lorin Maazel (Nos. 5 and 6), but Eugene Duvier with Philharmonia Slavica (Nos. 8 and 9) may evoke a 'who that?' response. Emil Gilels in Piano Concerto No.1, Glenn Gould (No.2), Claudio Arrau (No.3) and Van Cliburn (Nos. 4 and 5) bring us back to better-known territory, as do Jascha Heifetz and Charles Munch in the Violin Concerto.



There's Milstein in the 'Kreutzer' Sonata and Schnabel in Piano Sonata No.30, but the rest of the chamber and instrumental music features mostly less-known performers.

The first LPs that I bought of Beethoven symphonies, for 10 shillings, from performers no-one had heard of, on labels that were far from household names and on pressings which were far from silent if played on decent equipment, nevertheless gave me the chance to get to know this wonderful music. This **Classical Expressions** offering will certainly do that and, at £3.99 in lossless sound from [Qobuz](#), for far less than those 10-shilling LPs, the modern equivalent of which would be around £15 each.

I presume that the transfers come from LPs – I can't imagine the companies licensing them at this price – and mostly sound resolutely one-dimensional. Take (P) 2013 and ©2012 with a large pinch of salt; the Klemperer Symphony No.1 is a (live) mono recording, with an unnamed orchestra, with tempi faster than on his stereo recordings; a trifle dry and shrill, but not sounding too bad for its age.

Nor are these Monteux's better-known LSO recordings; these are (live) with the French National Radio Symphony Orchestra – I can't trace the provenance and the sound is decidedly thinner, though just about tolerable.

For the Bernstein items the orchestra is not even named, but for the Maazel Fifth the orchestra is the Berlin Phil, in genuine and decent stereo, as released on SLPM138008 in 1958, with the *Consecration of the House Overture*, also included on the Classical Expressions collection. It received a panning from Trevor Harvey when it appeared and Maazel would go on to better things, but I enjoyed this recording, even though I found it a little over-emphatic in places, with 'meaningful' *rallentandi*.

Maazel's Sixth was also recorded with the BPO, again in decent stereo (from SLPM138642). It wouldn't be my first recommendation, but it gives a fair account of a work which I always found makes new friends for Beethoven when played to Sixth Formers in General Studies classes.

Having dipped into this set, I'd rate it decent value at £3.99. Most other offerings in this price range are best avoided apart, perhaps, from a set of the symphonies with Eugen Jochum conducting the Bavarian RSO and Berlin Philharmonic on **The Golden Legacy of Music** for around £5.50, albeit in rather thin-sounding but serviceable transfers. The recordings were made in the 1950s, some in mono, though more care seems to have gone into the transfers than into the rough-and-ready cover design. The DG Original Masters download of these would set you back much more – £39.63 is the



least expensive that I can find in lossless sound. Collectors of large boxes will find a 16-CD set of Jochum's Beethoven, Brahms and Bruckner on DG **48201299** (around £30, no download).

At the other end of the price scale, for those willing to splash out on a really big box set, DG's **Beethoven 2020** is now available: 118 CDs + 2 DVD videos + 3 blu-ray audios (**4836767**, around £300, but some special offers available).



The complete offering has been broken down into more manageable chunks for download or streaming. The **Symphonies and Overtures** can be found in lossless sound for around £23 (**4837562**). Leonard Bernstein and the Vienna Phil perform Nos. 1 and 2 (rec. 1978), the BPO and Claudio Abbado No.3 (2001), Riccardo Chailly with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra offer No.4 (2009), Los Angeles/Carlo Maria Giulini No.5 (1981), VPO/Karl Böhm in No.6 (1971), the classic VPO/Carlo Kleiber No.7 (1976) and Herbert von Karajan with the BPO in No.8 (1962) and No.9 (1976). That's only a fraction of what's included in the complete set, where the complete Karajan symphonies come on the blu-ray audios and there are alternative accounts of some of the symphonies, but it does offer a good starting point, with over 7 hours of music.

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Piano Concerto No.1 in C, Op.15 [30:55]
 Piano Concerto No.2 in B-flat, Op.19 [25:59]
 Piano Concerto No.4 in G, Op.58 [30:57]
 Piano Concerto No.3 in c minor, Op.37 [33:10]
 Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat, Op.57 'Emperor' [36:03]
 Ronald Brautigam (fortepiano)
 Kölner Akademie/Michael Alexander Willens
 rec. July 2017 (Nos 1 & 3) and July 2018 (Nos 2, 4 & 5), Deutschlandfunk
 Kammermusiksaal, Cologne. DDD.
 Reviewed as 24/96 stereo download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com. Also available in 5.0 surround and on SACD
BIS-2274 SACD [157:13]



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Ronald Brautigam originally recorded the Beethoven concertos on the piano, with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, on albums released between 2008 and 2010. The fortepiano remake with the Kölner Akademie and Michael Willens follows his complete Mozart concertos with these forces, recordings which were generally well received – including by me – though the fortepiano raised hackles in some quarters.

Those earlier recordings came on four discs, with the concerto WoO4, the piano version of the Violin Concerto and the Fantasia for piano, chorus and orchestra – [DL News 2014/7](#). I miss those extras, but most will prefer the new arrangement on two well-filled SACDs. There can never be a 'best buy' for these concertos as a whole, but this new set is very good of its kind. Those totally averse to the fortepiano could do worse than start where I began so many years ago, with Wilhelm Kempff's stereo recordings with Ferdinand Leitner (Nos. 4 and 5 DG Originals **4474022**; Nos. 3 and 4 DG **4194672**, Presto CD; Nos. 1-5 DG Collectors Edition **4272372**, download only).

UK purchasers may find the 24/96 download slightly less expensively elsewhere, but those seeking 5.0 surround can obtain that only from eclassical.com, for the same price as stereo.

Brautigam's 9-SACD set of the sonatas is already available on **BIS-2000**, currently on offer from Presto for £55 – the download from eclassical.com is very expensive – and the complete piano variations and bagatelles comes on **BIS-2403**, 6 SACDs, on offer for £43.60 – [review](#) – download from eclassical.com.

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Late String Quartets

String Quartet No.12 in E-flat, Op.127 [36:28]

String Quartet No.15 in a minor, Op.132 [43:16]

String Quartet No.13 in B-flat, Op.130, with *Große Fuge*, Op.133 [49:44] and alternative finale [10:48]

String Quartet No.14 in c-sharp minor, Op.131 [38:26]

String Quartet No.16 in F, Op.135 [24:12]

Cypress String Quartet

AVIE AV2356 [3 CDs]



CD from	amazon.co.uk
PRESTO CLASSICAL	ArkivMusic

It's some time since I [reviewed](#) Volume 2, containing Op.130 and Op.133.

Released then on the Cypress Quartet's own label, I found it hard to track the catalogue number – there was none on my review CD. The three volumes of the late quartets, Op.127-135, have now been release as a set by Avie – target price £16.97; beware that the same dealer is also asking £68.94, or £73 for the original set, and some download sites price the lossless download at over £33, when others are asking less than £9.

I rated these performances among the best of music which stands at the spiritual pinnacle of the chamber repertoire. Guy Aron was a little less positive about the 3-CD set – [review](#) – but acknowledged its 'numerous virtues ... beauty of tone and unanimity of ensemble'. If you buy at my target price, it's one of the least expensive ways to obtain these wonderful quartets. Some dealers have these CDs both at the lower and higher prices – buy with care.

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

String Quartet No.14 in c-sharp minor, Op.131 [36:28]

The Jasper String Quartet

Reviewed from press preview.

SONO LUMINUS SL-D-77203 [36:28]

Download only, with pdf booklet.



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This is a very odd release. It came to me on a press preview CD in a simple paper sleeve, coupled with an even shorter recording of Hindemith's *Hérodiade*. Short as it is – even shorter than the claimed 37:40 – it sells for the equivalent of a full-price download, just under £10 in lossless sound. All of which will make it uncompetitive for most readers.

Concertos from 19th-Century Denmark

Friedrich KUHLAU (1786–1832)

Concertino for two French Horns and Orchestra, Op.45 (c.1822) [22:03]

Christian Frederik BARTH (1787–1861)

Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, Op.12 (c.1823) * [12:28]

Niels W. GADE (1817–1890)

Capriccio in a minor for Violin and Orchestra (1878) [9:06]

Friedrich KUHLAU

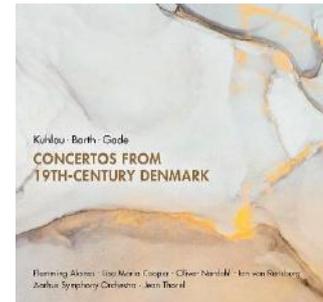
Overture to *William Shakespeare*, Op.74 (1825–26) [10:19]

* World premiere recording

Flemming Aksnes & Lisa Maria Cooper (French horns); Oliver Nordahl (oboe); Ian van Rensburg (violin) Aarhus Symphony Orchestra/Jean Thorel

rec. Symfonisk Sal, Musikhuset Aarhus, 4–5 April (Concertino), 29 May (Capriccio), 31 May (William Shakespeare), 19–20 June 2018 (Oboe Concerto). DDD/DSD

DACAPO 6.220664 SACD [53:56]



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There are no astounding discoveries to be made here, just well-wrought and enjoyable music for a variety of soloists, well performed, recorded and presented. I hadn't knowingly encountered anything by Barth before, but that's hardly surprising given that this is the first recording of this work and that the only other recordings of his music are of chamber music for oboe and piano, his *pot-pourri concertant* and his *sonata brillante*.

Franz SCHUBERT (1797–1828)

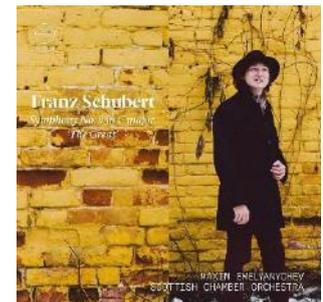
Symphony No. 9 in C, D944, 'The Great'

Scottish Chamber Orchestra/Maxim Emelyanychev

rec. Caird Hall, Dundee, 11–13 February 2019. DDD.

Reviewed as press preview.

LINN CKD619 [54:28]



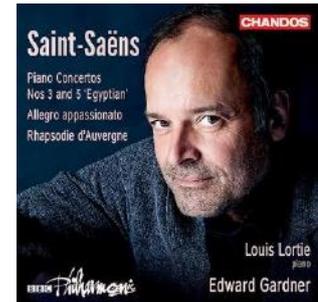
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Setting aside the question of whether the 'Great C major' symphony is No.7, as in German-speaking countries, or No.8 as some would have it, or No.9, as mostly in the Anglophone world, this new recording from the SCO with their new director is up against strong competition. How often I write that, with such a wealth of fine recordings of the major repertoire now available. In this case, there's Claudio Abbado's remarkable DG recording, live with Orchestra Mozart, to name only one of the most recent contenders (**4794652: *Recording of the Month*** – [review](#) – [review](#)).

Look at the timings and you might think that Maxim Emelyanychev eschewed the repeats. Not so; he includes them and still manages to come in some eight minutes faster than Abbado. Already in some quarters this has been hailed as a fleet-footed account of the symphony, and there is much to enjoy, but surely there is also more depth in the slow movement than he gives us. OK, so the *con moto* part of the marking means that Schubert doesn't want us to linger over this movement – it's not the equivalent of that other C major slow movement, from the String Quintet – but it surely needs a little more time to think than we get here. And the notes in the third movement seem almost to tumble over one another, as if to prove the first players, who laughed at the music, correct. Also, while we don't feel short-changed by having just the symphony from Abbado, without a filler, 54 minutes from Linn does seem a trifle mean.

Camille SAINT-SAËNS (1835 – 1921)

Rhapsodie d’Auvergne in C, Op. 73 (1884) [9:25]
 Piano Concerto No.3 in E-flat, Op.29 (1869) [25:42]
Allegro appassionato in c-sharp minor, Op.70 (1884) [5:39]
 Piano Concerto No.5 in F, Op.103 ‘Egyptian’ (1896) [25:39]
 Louis Lortie (piano)
 BBC Philharmonic/Edward Gardner
 rec. MediaCityUK, Salford; 13 January 2018 (*Rhapsodie d’Auvergne*) & 20
 and 25 February 2019 (other works). DDD.
CHANDOS CHAN20038 [66:51]



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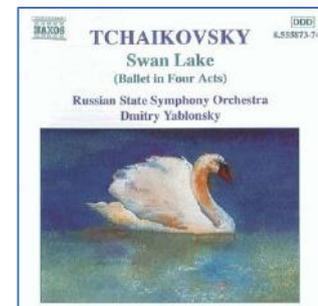
This completes Louis Lortie’s series of the Saint-Saëns piano concertos. Leslie Wright enjoyed the earlier release of concertos Nos. 1, 2 and 4, though not necessarily in preference to other recordings (**CHAN20031** – [review](#)).

Some time ago I reviewed Jean-Yves Thibaudet in the popular combination of No.2 and the exotic No.5 (Decca **4758764**, with Franck Symphonic Variations). Comparing that with various recordings then available, I thought it one of the best, so it becomes my natural benchmark for No.5.

No.3 is less often recorded, but there is the award-laden Hyperion 2-CD set of all the concertos (**CDA67331/2**), with the shorter pieces, including the two on the new Chandos, where there would have been room for the others, too. As with my colleague’s review of the previous release, I enjoyed this recording, especially of No.5, but I’d still recommend Thibaudet in Nos. 2 and 5 or Hough’s complete set on Hyperion. That can be obtained on CD for £20 and as a lossless download for £16.99 from hyperion-records.co.uk. Then there’s Louis Schwizgebel (piano) with the BBC Symphony Orchestra/Fabien Gabel and Martyn Brabbins on Aparté in Nos.2 and 5 – a **Recording of the Month** – [review](#) – [DL News 2016/2](#) – so there are plenty of fine alternatives.

Pyotr Il’yich TCHAIKOVSKY (1850-1893)

Swan Lake, Op. 20 - complete (1877)
 Russian State Symphony Orchestra/Dmitry Yablonsky
 rec. 2001, Studio 5, Moscow State Broadcasting and Recording House,
NAXOS 8.555873-874 [2CDs: 147:56] Reviewed as a 16-bit download; pdf
 booklet included. Previous review: [John France](#)



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One of the joys of reviewing is delving into the back catalogue and unearthing albums that, for some reason, have passed me by. Dmitry Yablonsky’s 2002 recording of Prokofiev’s great cantata, *Alexander Nevsky*, which I [reviewed](#) in 2019, is a case in point. To be fair, it was the result of reading Ralph Moore’s recent *Nevsky survey*, rather than any sleuthing on my part. And what a pleasure it was to find such a rewarding performance that focuses so resolutely on musical values without compromising drama and excitement.

Which is why I downloaded his *Swan Lake*, recorded in 2001. As ever, there’s plenty of competition, including the late lamented André Previn’s 1976 performance with the LSO, which I [reviewed](#) in its recently remastered form. (I’m also inordinately fond of the much-truncated Ernest Ansermet/OSR version; that’s probably because it was the first recording of the piece that I owned.) That said, my current top choice is Evgeny Svetlanov’s, made with the USSR State Academic Symphony Orchestra in 1988 ([review](#)).

As expected, Yablonsky delivers a thoughtful, very original account of *Swan Lake* that may not capture the imagination on first hearing. It's certainly not as exciting as some, but after a while I came to appreciate the conductor's attention to small details, especially in the woodwinds. Also, there's a rhythmic give and take that belongs more to the pit than the concert hall. Vladimir Jurowski's recent, ultra-refined *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker* (Pentatone) are extreme examples of an overly symphonic approach. By contrast, what Yablonsky may lack in high gloss he more than makes up for with an earthy, 'real world' reading that's very much to my taste. The sound is pretty good too, with a wide stereo spread; at first, I longed for more percussive bite - the delicious, rat-a-tatty side-drum excepted - but, really, this did not lessen my enjoyment of the performance as a whole.

Indeed, I was constantly beguiled by Yablonsky's individual - and often revealing - way with a familiar phrase or rhythm, although some may feel his tempi are a bit too measured at times. I can live with that, too. Make no mistake, Yablonsky knows exactly when to turn up the wick, metaphorically setting the stage alight. As for the solo spots, they're idiomatically done - the violin warmly expressive - and I love the very tactile harp sound. In fact, the entire orchestra acquit themselves so well, with Yablonsky inspiring them at every turn. And what a finale, the shy percussionists out of hiding at last!

Yablonsky's *Swan Lake* can't hold a candle to Svetlanov's, but his performance still has much to commend it; in short, a most rewarding find. [DM]

Gustav MAHLER (1860-1911)

Das klagende Lied (1878-1880, rev. 1899)

Simone Schneider (soprano); Tanja Ariane Baumgartner (mezzo);
Torsten Kerl (tenor); Adrian Eröd (baritone); Oskar Stadler, Laurenz Ströbl (boy altos, Tölzer Knabenchor); Camil Diaz Delegado (tenor);
Juyoung Kim (bass)

Wiener Singakademie

ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra/Cornelius Meister

rec. live, 1-2 December 2016, Konzerthaus, Vienna. DDD.

CAPRICCIO C5316 [60:24] Previous review: [Ralph Moore](#) (Recording of the Month)



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Dan Morgan and I gave a brief welcome to this back in Autumn 2018/1

after first hearings. Listening again has confirmed my high opinion and my disappointment that Pierre Boulez's LSO recording is imprisoned in a 57-hour, download-only box set from Sony – you can't even select *Das klagende Lied* or the three tracks which comprise it other than as 'complete album only', for around £75 in lossless sound (**88843013332**). His remake for DG omits Part I – [review](#).

At least Simon Rattle's recording has been made available separately again (Warner **5664062**, download only); but, with some download sites asking £12.07 for mp3 and others £15.69 or £16.99 for 16-bit lossless – without booklet in both cases – this is one to stream rather than to purchase. If you are prepared to accept decent, rather than good, mp3 at the low bit-rate of 241kb/s, [Amazon UK](#) offer a digital collection *#Nowspinning Mahler*, which includes Rattle's *Klagende Lied*. The whole collection costs £7.99 and the three tracks of *Klagende Lied* can be obtained separately for £0.99 each. The recordings, which have been licensed – I presume – from Warner to X5 Music Group, contain Paul Kletzki's *Das Lied von der Erde*, Janet Baker and Sir John Barbirolli in extracts from *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and *Kindertotenlieder*, plus recordings of Symphonies Nos. 1 (with *Blumine*, Mehta), 2 (Rattle), 4 (finale, Previn), 5 (Barbirolli) and Symphony No.6/finale (Barbirolli).



Jean SIBELIUS (1865-1957)

Symphony No. 1 in e minor, Op.39 (1899) [41:08]
 Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal/Yannick Nézet-Séguin
 rec. Maison Symphonique de Montréal, Québec, Canada, October 2018.
 DDD.
ATMA ACD22452 [41:08]



Even though I had only recently recommended a recording of this symphony, I had to listen to this new Atma recording because Yannick Nézet-Séguin casts such light on everything that he conducts. To take just one example, John Quinn thought his recording of Prokofiev, with Lisa Batiashvili and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe outstanding (*Visions of Prokofiev* DG 4798529 – [review](#)).

Could he outdo the Gothenburg Symphony and Santtu-Matis Rouvali (Alpha ALPHA440) in the symphony that Tchaikovsky might have written had he lived a few years longer? I was not alone in liking that recording – [review](#); EJW added the ‘Recommended’ sticker that I could and should have attached – [review](#) – and MC agreed that it took a place near the top – [review](#). And in a rare show of unanimity, Dan Morgan endorsed it in [Spring 2019/2](#). There’s at the very least a very decent account of *En Saga* to complete the album, whereas the new Atma recording offers one of the shortest playing times seen for quite a while.

Nor is the Alpha recording the only one well worth considering: there are too many fine versions to list, but Osmo Vänskä (BIS, twice, with the Lahti and Minnesota orchestras), Okko Kamu (also in Lahti) and John Storgårds’ complete 3-CD set for Chandos would be high on most lists. Rather than repeat what I wrote about these and Sir Mark Elder, I refer you to my thoughts on the Rouvali – [review](#).

Having started with the hope that Nézet-Séguin had fully lived up to expectations, I’m sorry to report that this recording is a real turkey – and not one you might want for Christmas dinner. I can only imagine that the Montréal orchestra just didn’t understand what the composer and conductor wanted of them. Renowned for their handling of the French repertoire, they have only one other Sibelius recording in the catalogue and that, I think is the problem – or else, for once, one of my favourite conductors was caught nodding like Palinurus at the helm.

Unable, quite to put my finger on why this recording left me cold, other than that the very fine Alpha recording and the others mentioned set the bar so high, I asked my colleague Dan Morgan for a second opinion, and he agreed that this short-value recording is one to avoid in terms of the overall concept – in fact, there doesn’t seem to be one, with Nézet-Séguin living from moment to moment.

Paul DUKAS (1865—1935)

Polyeucte, Overture to the tragedy by Pierre Corneille (1891) [14:23]

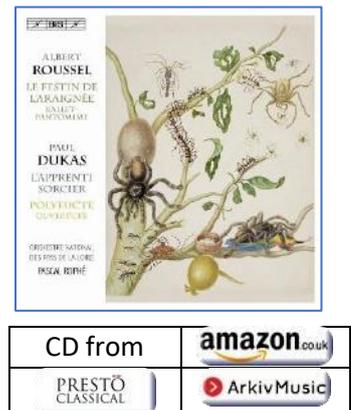
Albert ROUSSEL (1869—1937)

Le Festin de l’Araignée (The Spider’s Feast), Op.17, Pantomime ballet in one act to a libretto by Gilbert de Voisins (1912—13) [32:45]

Paul DUKAS

L’Apprenti Sorcier (The Sorcerer’s Apprentice) Scherzo for orchestra after a ballad by Goethe (1897) [11:48]

Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire/Pascal Rophé



rec. July 2018, La Cité des Congrès, Nantes, France. DDD/DSD
 Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from eclassical.com.
BIS-2432 SACD [59:46]

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We already had more than enough fine recordings of *L'Apprenti Sorcier*, but that made by Ansermet with his Suisse Romande Orchestra remains my benchmark. The Eloquence 2-CD reissue also contains Dukas' *La Péri* and Roussel's *Le festin de l'araignée*, along with his Symphonies Nos. 3 and 4 and the Chausson Symphony (**4800041**). These recordings are preferable to his earlier, mono, accounts, also available on Eloquence – [review](#).

There are fewer versions of the *Polyeucte* overture, but two couple it, as here, with the Sorcerer: *The Essential Dukas* (**Chandos 2-for-1 241-32** – [review](#)) and a recording on period instruments from Les Siècles and Xavier Roth (**Actes Sud ASM12** – [review](#)). Most dealers have the Roth for download only; the CD, where available, is expensive at over £20.

For the Roussel, the main competition comes from another Chandos recording conducted by Yan-Pascal Tortelier (**CHAN9494**, with *Bacchus et Ariane*), a Naxos recording (**8.572243**, RSNO/Stéphane Denève, with *Padmâvatî Suites*), and an elderly Jean Martinon recording (Erato **5046661012**, budget price, currently out of stock – [review](#) of earlier release – or 11-CD set **9029548916**, a notable bargain – [Spring 2019/2](#)). By comparison with all these, I found both the major works on the new BIS slightly under-characterised and a little disappointing, but the fine quality of the playing and recording does a good deal to compensate.

Ottorino RESPIGHI (1879-1936): Essential Respighi
Fontane di Roma (Fountains of Rome) [14:42]

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande/Ernest Ansermet
 rec. January 1963, Victoria Hall, Geneva. ADD.

Gli Uccelli (The Birds) [19:19]

William Bennett (flute); London Symphony Orchestra/Istvan Kertesz
 rec. 14 May 1968, Kingsway Hall, London, ADD.

Trittico Botticelliano [19:15]

The Argo Chamber Orchestra/Laszlo Heltay
 rec. 18 April 1978, Kingsway Hall, London, ADD.

Feste Romane (Roman Festivals) [24:52]

Montreal Symphony Orchestra/Charles Dutoit
 rec. 25 June 1982, L'Église de St. Eustache, Montréal, DDD.

Ancient Airs and Dances, Suite No. 1, P. 109 [16:51]

Ancient Airs and Dances, Suite No. 2, P. 138 [18:56]

Ancient Airs and Dances, Suite No. 3, P. 172 [18:38]

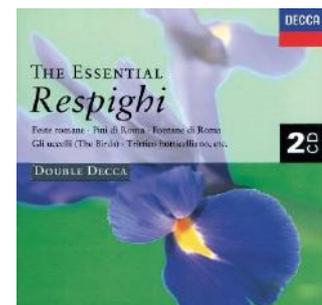
London Philharmonic Orchestra/Jesús López Cobos
 rec. November 1978, Kingsway Hall, London

Pini di Roma (Pines of Rome) [21:09]

Cleveland Orchestra/Lorin Maazel

Rec. 14 May 1976, Masonic Auditorium, Cleveland

DOUBLE DECCA E4437592 [2:33:44]

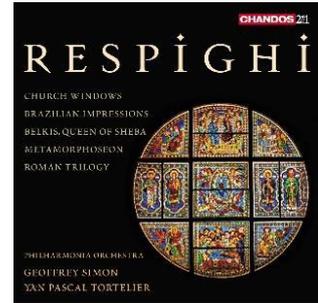


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I mentioned above (s.v. Beethoven) that several of the *Decca Essential* ... series were now download only and, in many cases, more expensive than when available on two CDs. Happily, this representative selection of Respighi's best-known works, though hard to come by on disc, remains available at a reasonable £9.91 in lossless sound (£7.49 in mp3). Even here, however, beware of those who are

asking £11.99 for the lossless version; one dealer has the CDs for £19.99. No download or streamed version comes with the booklet.

All that notwithstanding, I can't think of a better introduction to the composer. It can be supplemented by recordings from Chandos and BIS. There's some overlap with, for example, a similar 2-for-1 set conducted by Geoffrey Simon and Yan Pascal Tortelier (**CHAN241-45** – [review](#)) but, as both are inexpensive and the Chandos offers *Vetrate di chiesa* (Church Windows), *Metamorphoseon*, *Belkis* and *Impressioni brasiliane* in addition to the Roman Trilogy on the Decca menu, it's well worth having both. Guide price for the Chandos: £10.50 (CD direct from [Chandos](#)), lossless download £9.75 (from [Presto](#)). Do NOT pay £17.77 being asked for the CD and £18.49 for mp3 by one dealer!



The Ansermet recording of *Pini* and *Fontane* has also been reissued by Decca on mid-price Eloquence, together with his brilliant account of the Rossini/Respighi confection *La Boutique fantasque* – [review](#).

I haven't yet had time properly to evaluate a new recording of Schchedrin's *Carmen* Suite from the Bavarian RSO and Mariss Jansons, but the coupling of *Pines of Rome* sounds very good. (BR Klassik 900183).

Ivor GURNEY (1890-1937)

Violin Sonata in E-flat (1918/1919) [34:38]

Lionel SAINSBURY (b.1958)

Soliloquy for Solo Violin, Op.21 (1993) [7:24]

Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)

Violin Sonata in e minor, Op.82 (1918) [26:22]

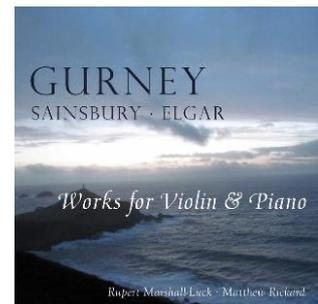
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin)

Matthew Rickard (piano)

rec. 28-29 September 2012, Wyastone Concert Hall, Wyastone Leys, Monmouth

EM RECORDS EMRCD011 [68:24]

For CD purchase details see reviews by [John Quinn: Recording of the Month](#) and [David Jennings](#).



The English Phantasy

Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941)

Phantasie for string quartet (1905) [11:11]

Gustav HOLST (1878-1934)

Phantasy on British Folksongs, Op.36 (1916) [10:29]

Eugene GOOSSENS (1893-1962)

Phantasy Quartet for strings, Op.12 (1915) [11:23]

Herbert HOWELLS (1892-1983)

Phantasy String Quartet, Op.25 (1917) [12:43]

Joseph HOLBROOKE (1878-1958)

First Quartet Fantasie in D minor, Op.17b (1906) [14:59]

William HURLSTONE (1876-1906)

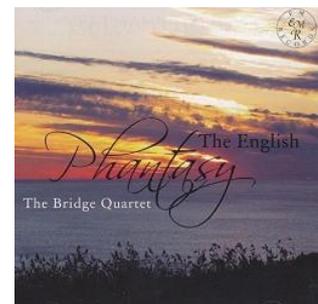
Phantasie for string quartet (1905) [8:36]

The Bridge Quartet

rec. May 2014, St George's Church, Chesterton, UK

EM RECORDS EMRCD025 [69:21]

See review by [Jonathan Woolf](#).



Granville BANTOCK (1868-1946)

Violin Sonata No.3 in C (1940) [22:19]

Cyril SCOTT (1879-1970)

Viola Sonata (1953) [23:57]

Roger SACHEVERELL COKE (1912-1972)

Violin Sonata No.1 in d minor (1940-42) [29:07]

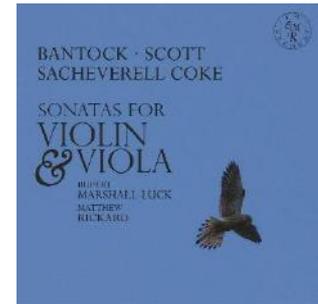
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin/viola)

Matthew Rickard (piano)

rec. August 2011 (Bantock) and July 2013 (remainder), Concert Hall, Wyastone Leys, Monmouth. DDD.

EM RECORDS EMRCD018 [75:21]

See [review by Jonathan Woolf](#) and [editorial note by Rob Barnett](#)



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EMRCD011: Valuable as this is for the Elgar, it's for the premiere – and still the only – recording of the Gurney Sonata that this album remains very important. Regular readers will know that I have been monitoring the value of a monthly subscription to emusic.com, but almost the sole remaining jewel there is the EM Records catalogue; this recording comes in full-cream mp3 (320 kb/s) for £3.36 (or less, depending on your subscription). The EM Records catalogue is enough to keep me on board for a month or so more – but after that I can't see much future in it unless some of the major labels can be persuaded to return, which now seems very unlikely.

EMRCD025: Another very valuable recording of English music – and this one is even less expensive, at £2.52 in 320 kb/s mp3 from emusic.com. If only they had included the booklets, these two downloads would have been near-ideal, and even the more expensive downloads from Presto or the streamed versions from Naxos Music Library don't provide those.

EMRCD018: Another very worthwhile and inexpensive full-bit-rate mp3 download from emusic.com, this time for £4.20. At this rate, a month's membership is worth taking out just for these EM recordings. Again, however, there's no booklet from any streaming or download source, but the review and Rob Barnett's editorial note amply compensate.

Sir Eugene GOOSSENS (1893-1962)

Phantasy Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op.63 (1946-48, rec. 1958) [28:52]

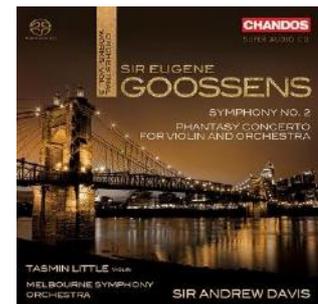
Symphony No.2, Op.62 (1942-45) [39:26]

Tasmin Little (violin)

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra/Sir Andrew Davis

rec. Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia; 27 – 29 March 2018 (Phantasy Concerto) and 9 – 10 July 2019 (Symphony No. 2) DDD/DSD.

CHANDOS CHSA5193 SACD [68:21]



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This is Volume 3 of the Chandos series of Sir Eugene Goossens' Orchestral Works. Volume One started the series with performances directed by Richard Hickox (**CHSA5068** – [review](#)) and a recording of shorter pieces followed on **CHSA5119**, this time with Sir Andrew Davis at the helm – [review](#) – [review](#) – as on the latest, third release. Like Volume 1, the latest opens with a 'Phantasy' concerto, this time for violin. Like so many of his contemporary composers, Goossens wrote a number of pieces with that title – as, for example, his *Phantasy Quartet*, recorded by EM Records with other such works (above).

I don't recall hearing any other performances of the concerto or the wartime symphony. They aren't the easiest music to come to terms with, but they repay the effort, especially from hearing these dedicated performances. A glitch in my press access to Chandos meant that I had to listen in mp3 via Naxos Music Library; even in that format the recording sounds fine, but 24-bit should be better still – there's even surround download on offer, albeit at a price (£19.99). When eclassical.com offer BIS surround for the same price as 24-bit stereo, I wonder why the premium?

Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

[Symphony No. 13 in B flat minor, 'Babi Yar', Op. 113](#) (1962) [68:29]

Alexey Tikhomirov (bass)

Men of the Chicago Symphony Chorus

Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Riccardo Muti

rec. live, September 2018, Orchestra Hall, Chicago

CSO RESOUND CSOR 901 1901 [68:29] Reviewed as a 16-bit press preview; no booklet provided



How's that for serendipity? Exactly a year ago I welcomed the Muti/CSO recording, [Italian Masterworks](#), an opera-themed album whose musical and technical excellence combined to make it one of my top picks for 2019. Then again, this fine partnership seldom disappoints, their Berlioz [Symphonie fantastique/Lélio](#) and Prokofiev [Romeo and Juliet suites](#) just as impressive in both respects. I've not heard them in Shostakovich before, although [John Quinn](#) made their *Suite on Verses of Michelangelo Buonarroti* a Recording of the Month.

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Shostakovich's Symphony No. 13 'Babi Yar', based on eponymous texts by Yevgeni Yevtushenko, proved controversial from the very start. Khrushchev denounced it, Yevgeny Mravinsky declined to conduct the premiere - Kiril Kondrashin did the honours - and three bass soloists pulled out before Vitaly Gromadsky agreed to sing the part. Apart from the subsequent Melodiya recording, which I have in the excellent Aulos remastering, Praga Digitalis have released a live recording of what they claim was the work's second performance; however, as John Quinn points out in his thoughtful and thorough [review](#), there are some doubts about the album's provenance.

I first came to Op. 113 via André Previn's 1979 performance with the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus - the latter led by Richard Hickox - at their electric best (EMI-Warner); this sounds even more thrilling in its remastered form ([review](#)). As desirable as that version is, my loyalty to Bernard Haitink's Concertgebouw one, set down five years later, remains unshakable (Decca). Superbly played, sung and recorded, this is one of the very best things the Dutchman has ever done. I also admire Mark Wigglesworth's fine BIS cycle, but I've never warmed to his take on 'Babi Yar'. Perhaps I'm too easily persuaded by Haitink's grimly granitic approach, but Wigglesworth, who usually digs deep in these symphonies, seems comparatively lightweight here.

And that, I'm afraid, is the problem with this CSO performance. As expected, the orchestra are on top form, and the recording itself is quite outstanding. What a pity, then, that Muti blunts the score's edges, robbing it of essential dynamism and declamatory power. In fact, he prettifies the music in a way that undermines its dark literary and musical content; also, his rather streamlined chorus lack the raw idiom of Kondrashin's, the incisiveness and passion of Previn's, or the crushing weight of Haitink's. Similarly, his soloist, Alexey Tikhomirov, is outclassed by Gromadsky (Kondrashin), Marius Rintzler (Haitink), and, my go-to guy, Previn's Dimiter Petkov. Alas, returning to Muti's performance highlights its interpretive flaws; for instance, 'Humour', just too jolly, doesn't begin to acknowledge the bitter subtext here. Most disappointing, 'Fears' and 'Career' seem curiously low key, the symphony's closing bars pale rather than poignant.

A rare misstep for Muti and his fine forces; stunning sonics, though. [DM]

Note: the Melodiya Kondrashin recording is now download only and you have to buy all the symphonies, with a mix of conductors – Kondrashin in No.13 – for around £110 in lossless sound (**MELCD1002431** – [review](#) of earlier reissue). The Praga Digitals recording which Dan mentions is on **DSD350089**, with excerpts from the Cantata for the 20th Anniversary of the Revolution – [review](#). The Previn recording seems to be available on an expensive import from Japan or on an EMI twofer with No.10, now download only. Alto have reissued some of Rozhdestvensky’s Melodiya recordings: perhaps they may get around to No.13, formerly available on Olympia’s very valuable series of CDs (**OCD132**). Bargain hunters should be happy with the Naxos recording with Petrenko and the RLPO (**Recording of the Month**: [review](#) – [review](#) – [DL News 2014/13](#)). [BW]

Henryk Mikołaj GÓRECKI (1933-2010)

Symphony No.3, Op.36 ‘Symphony of Sorrowful Songs’ (*Symfonia pieśni żałosnych*) (1976) [50:53]
 Yvonne Kenny (soprano)
 Adelaide Symphony Orchestra/Takuo Yuasa
 rec. Adelaide Town Hall, 4-6 September 2000. DDD
 Texts and translations included
ABC 4812523 [50:53]

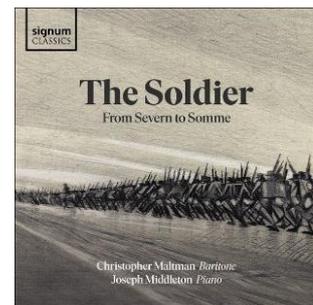


Just a short update here on a recording which I thought equal to any of this hypnotic work when I reviewed a mid-price reissue in 2016 (**4812523** – [review](#)). That mid-price CD remains available, though costing a little more than when I reviewed it – around £9.50 – and the download, with booklet, now costs an unfeasible £12.40. Either way, this is still a competitive recording, just slightly less so than before. The Dawn Upshaw version (Nonesuch) remains at full price and the download again costs more than the CD, at around £13.50 for lossless and without booklet.

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The Soldier - From Severn to Somme

George BUTTERWORTH; Ivor GURNEY; Arthur SOMERVELL; George BUTTERWORTH; Gustav MAHLER; Gabriel FAURÉ; Charles IVES; Modest MUSSORGSKY; Robert SCHUMANN; Hugo WOLF; Gerald FINZI; Francis POULENC and John IRELAND
 Christopher Maltman (baritone), Joseph Middleton (piano)
 rec. 2018, Potton Hall, Westleton, UK. DDD.
 Texts and English translations included
 Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#)
SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD592 [73:54] For CD purchase details see **Recording of the Month** [review by John Quinn](#).



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Most of the music here sets words from Housman’s *A Shropshire Lad*, so it begs comparison with the complete recording of that cycle, read by Alan Bates and with settings by Butterworth, Orr, Ireland, Moreland, Horder, Barber and Lennox Berkeley, performed by the two Johnsons, Anthony Rolfe and Graham (Hyperion 2-for-1 Dyad **CDD22044**: [Bargain of the Month](#), £10.50 on CD or £8.99 as lossless download from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#)). Another Hyperion recording brings settings by Vaughan Williams (*On Wenlock Edge*), Ivor Gurney (*The Western Playland* and *Ludlow and Teme*) (**CDH55187** – [review](#) - £5 on CD or lossless download with pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](#)).

Those two inexpensive recordings remain well worthwhile – the Helios especially valuable for the Gurney – but the thematic layout of the new recording, while spreading five of the six Butterworth settings across the various sections (Home, Journey, Battle and Epitaph) makes good sense. The 24-bit download will be a must for audiophiles, but the rest of us will probably remain content with the earlier recordings. On balance, the new Signum is the one to have, but I shan't be getting rid of the older Hyperions or, indeed, the Butterworth and Gurney recording by Benjamin Luxon and David Willison on Chandos **CHAN8831** – [DL News 2014/14](#). If you like the three short Gurney items on Signum, the Helios or the Chandos will be an essential extra purchase.

Neujahrskonzert – New Year's Day Concert 2020

Carl Michael ZIEHRER

Overture *Die Landstreicher* (The vagabonds) [5:09]

Josef STRAUß

Liebesgrüße. (Love's greetings) Waltz, Op.56 [8:10]

Liechtenstein-Marsch, Op.36 [3:15]

Johann STRAUß II

Blumenfest (Flower festival) Polka. Op.111 [2:51]

Wo die Citronen blüh'n. (Where the lemon trees bloom) Waltz, Op.364 [9:37]

Eduard STRAUß

Knall und Fall. (Without warning) Polka schnell, Op.132 [2:35]

Franz von SUPPÉ

Overture *Leichte Kavallerie* (Light Cavalry) [7:10]

Josef STRAUß

Cupido. Polka française, Op.81 [3:29]

Johann STRAUß II

Seid umschlungen, Millionen. (Be embraced, you millions) Waltz, Op.443 [10:18]

Eduard STRAUß

Eisblume. (Ice flower) Polka mazurka, Op.55 (arr. W. Dörner) [4:54]

Josef HELLMESBERGER II

Gavotte [5:07]

Hans Christian LUMBYE

Postillon-Galopp, Op.16/2 (arr. W. Dörner) [2:30]

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

Zwölf Contretänze, (12 Contredanses, WoO14/1-3, 7, 8, 10) [4:36]

Johann STRAUß II

Freuet euch des Lebens. (Enjoy life) Waltz, Op.340 [7:55]

Tritsch-Tratsch. Polka schnell, Op.214 [2:44]

Josef STRAUß

Dynamiden. Waltz, Op.173 [10:35]

Encores:

Josef STRAUß

Im Flügel [2:09]

Johann STRAUß II

An der schönen blauen Donau, Op.314 [10:32]

Johann STRAUß I

Radetzky March, Op.228 [3:55]

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra/Andris Nelsons

rec. Goldener Saal, Musikverein, Vienna, 1 January 2020.

SONY 19439702362 (2 CDs); **19439702389** (blu-ray); **19439702379** (DVD); **19439702391** (3 LPs)



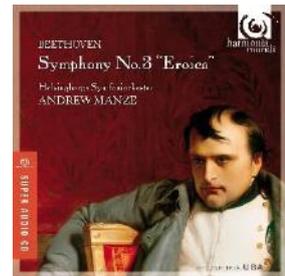
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With four different formats to choose, this will be self-recommending. Those who can't wait will have snapped up the CDs as soon as they were released on 10 January. Those wanting DVD or blu-ray will have to wait until the end of January, with the LPs forthcoming in early February. Why anyone would want to pay three times as much as the CDs or DVD for the LPs, or twice as much as the blu-ray is beyond my understanding, but I am sure that there are many who will.

This year's concert is far from run-of-the-mill. Of course, the Strauss family's music forms the backbone, but I'm pleased to see more of Josef on offer, not just because this year marks the 150th anniversary of his death. For my money, he was the most inventive member of the dynasty, and I'm especially pleased to see his *Cupido* included. It's not a work that I know and it's the only recording of it apart from the very serviceable Marco Polo Josef Strauss Edition, which also includes the *Liechtenstein March* featured in the 2020 concert (Volume 20, **8.223622** – [review](#), download only). If the thought of 26 volumes of Josef's music seems daunting, there's a useful selection on sister label Naxos: *The Best of Josef Strauss* (**8.556846** – [review](#)). Otherwise, this was not quite one of those vintage years like those of Karajan and Carlos Kleiber, but it was a good year.

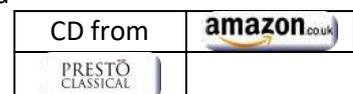
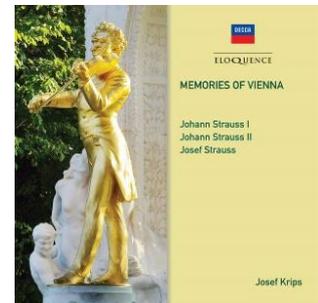
For some reason, two items from the concert have been omitted from the CD and, as far as I can see, from the DVD and blu-ray: the Waltz from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* and Johann II's *Rosen aus dem Süden*.

The nod in Beethoven's direction, with the inclusion of a selection of his *Contredances*, serves to remind me that we seem not to have reviewed Andrew Manze's recording of the *Eroica* Symphony with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra (Harmonia Mundi **HMU807470** [60:05] – download only). The music of the *Eroica* finale first surfaced in one of the dances, which are included in full on the Manze album, along with the finale of the *Prometheus* ballet, Op.43, on the same theme. UK purchasers will find this for around £10 in lossless sound; US readers and others unafflicted by Brexit may find the eclassical.com download better value. Neither offers the booklet.



That was one of Manze's first recordings of music later than the baroque repertoire with which he had been associated. Since then, he has recorded more Beethoven – including Piano Concertos Nos. 2 and 5 with Martin Helmchen, recently released by Alpha ([Winter 2019-20/1](#)) – and has made a complete set of the Vaughan Williams symphonies for Onyx. Manze's Beethoven may not be of the rip-roaring kind, but it's well considered and well worth your consideration. As the original was released on SACD, I'm surprised that no 24-bit version seems to be available.

Decca Eloquence have released a reminder that Willi Boskovsky was not their only **STRAUSS family** specialist in the form of recordings from the 1950s with **Josef Krips** conducting the London Symphony Orchestra (1950 mono), New Symphony Orchestra (1948 mono) and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (1956 and 1957 stereo) in *Memories of Vienna* – music by Johann I and II and Josef, most of the tracks receiving their first CD release. Hilde Gueden is the soloist in *Dorfchwalben aus Österreich*. The LSO tracks sound surprisingly good for their age, the two with the NSO (from 78s) not at all bad, those with the VPO better still. The two items from 1948 (*Annen* and *Perpetuum mobile*) are slightly abridged to fit 78 sides.



If you needed a reminder of Krips as a fine conductor, this could be it (**4840692** [74:50]). The CD sells for around £8, so why do the prices for mp3 start at £8.99 and lossless sound prices range from £11.99 to £13.99 – and why no booklet?