

2020
54,196 reviews
and more.. and still writing ...

Founder: Len Mullenger

Editor in Chief: John Quinn

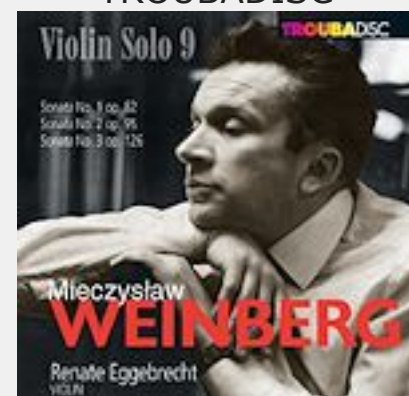
Some items to consider

paid for advertisements



Chopin Edition 17CDs now available separately £11 post-free anywhere

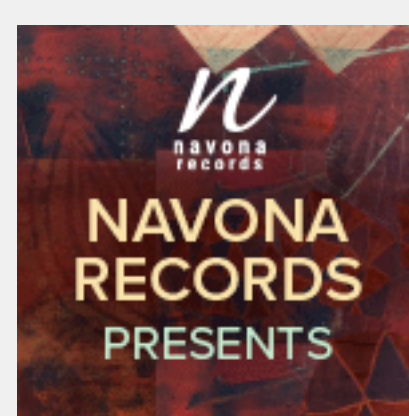
TROUBADISC



100th birthday of Mieczyslaw Weinberg on December 8, 2019. Renate Eggbrecht has recorded all 3 violin Sonatas



Mozart Brahms Clarinet Quintets



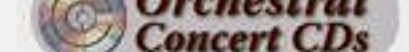
New Releases



Click to see New Releases
Get 10% off using code musicweb10



Lyrta



Special offer 50% off 15CDs £83 incl. postage

Musicweb sells the following labels

- Altus 10% off
- Atoll 10% off
- CRD 10% off
- Hallé 10% off
- Lyrta 10% off
- Nimbus 10% off
- Nimbus Alliance
- Prima voce 10% off
- Red Priest 10% off
- Retrospective 10% off
- Saydisc 10% off
- Sterling 10% off



Follow us on Twitter

Subscribe to our free weekly review listing sample

Sample: See what you will get

Editorial Board
MusicWeb International
Founding Editor
 Rob Barnett
Editor in Chief
 John Quinn
Seen & Heard
Editor Emeritus
 Bill Kenny
MusicWeb Webmaster
 David Barker
Postmaster
 Jonathan Woolf
MusicWeb Founder
 Len Mullenger

Méditations pour le Carême et Motets
Marc-Antoine CHARPENTIER (1643-1704)
Méditations pour le Carême, H. 380 à 389 [29:33]
Robert de VISÉE (c.1655-c.1732)
Tombeau de Mesdemoiselles de Visée [4:39]
Sébastien de BROSSARD (1655-1730)
Salve rex Christe, Motet pour trois voix d'hommes et basse continue [8:07]
Marin MARAIS (1656-1728)
 Premier livre des pièces de violes, suite n°1 en ré mineur : I. Prélude en ré [4:20]
Sebastien de BROSSARD
O plenus irarum dies, Motet pour basse solo et basse continue [13:02]
 Ensemble les Surprises/Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas rec. 9-11 September 2019, Lutheran Church of Saint-Pierre, Paris, France
AMBRONAY AMY056 [59:49]

One expects Charpentier's music to be exuberant. Here we have the more spiritual and personal side of his output. *Méditations pour le Carême* are a set of meditations for the season of Lent. This is coupled with two meditative motets by the interesting Sébastien de Brossard, and two instrumental pieces by Robert de Visée and Marin Marais.

Méditations pour le Carême is not the Charpentier of the ever-popular *Te Deum*, but that of the *Leçons de Ténèbres*. It is a soulful and, as the title suggests, meditative series of ten short sombre reflections on the suffering of Christ and the meaning of divine love. They can in fact be seen as an extension of *Leçons de Ténèbres*. They are meant for the Sacrum Triduum, to be sung throughout Lent; the whole forty days are a time of reflection, penitence and spiritual renewal that culminates in the main feast of the Christian Church, Easter. These pieces were not intended as a set, but as short pieces that can be sung on their own, although the do sit together well as recorded here. I have a very good mid-1980s recording by William Christie (Harmonia Mundi HMA 1905151), and a great recording by Le Concert Spirituel and Hervé Niquet (Glossa GCD 921604). Niquet only recorded five of the pieces, otherwise that would be my top recommendation. As it is, this new recording must take that accolade. I particularly like the use of the organ, something that Niquet also employs, as this gives the work a greater sense of gravitas. The recorded sound of the Christie is now showing its age, whilst this new recording is much clearer; the three singers have greater presence.

Of Brossard's two motets on this disc, it is the longer *O plenus irarum dies* which I find the finer; the bass Étienne Bazola has a real presence. The works are well placed alongside the Charpentier, because *Méditations pour le Carême* would be lost if it was not for a copy in Brossard's collection. He was a priest and a music theorist as well as a composer. He spent some time as the *maître de chapelle* at Strasbourg Cathedral, which is where I first came to know his music. He was a fervent champion of Italian music, and especially the music of Giacomo Carissimi, who had also influenced Charpentier. In *O plenus irarum dies*, Brossard calls upon all his skill to expertly depict 'O day full of wrath!', another Lenten text. I have *O plenus irarum dies* sung by Alain Buet, whose bass voice is not as strong as Étienne Bazola's; this disc, then, had the edge over that by Robert Weddle (Assai 207582, see [review](#)).

The two instrumental pieces divide the vocal settings well. They are both in character – brooding, almost sombre works that keep the penitential atmosphere of the vocal music. They are wonderfully performed by the instrumentalists of the Ensemble les Surprises. The viol of Juliette Guignard is particularly fine.

This is a super disc, especially recommendable for *Méditations pour le Carême*, which deserve greater recognition. It now sits at the top of a very small heap of recordings of the work. Its clean, sharp recording is nearly the equal of the Niquet. The added bonus of a complete set of Brossard's ten short pieces making it a very rewarding disc. All the singers are excellent, as are the instrumentalists. They are aided by beautifully recorded sound, and by informative and detailed booklet essay by the Ensemble's director and keyboard player, Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas. A disc to listen to and enjoy, and not just during Lent!

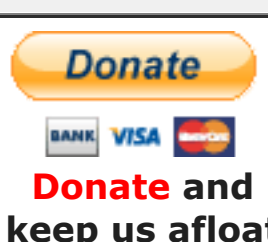
Stuart Sillitoe



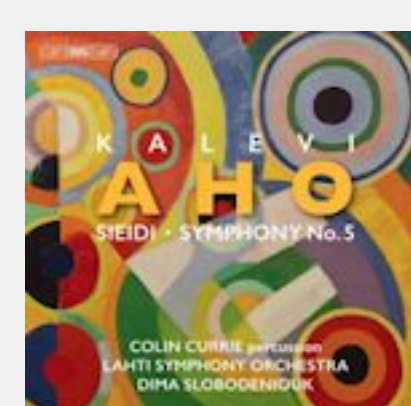
Support us financially by purchasing this from



Advertising on Musicweb



Recordings of the Month
October



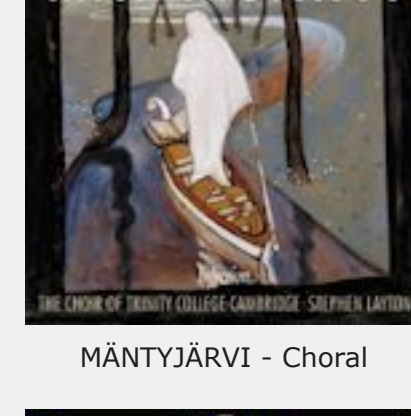
Aho Symphony 5



Peter Grimes



Dowland - A Fancy



MÄNTYJÄRVI - Choral

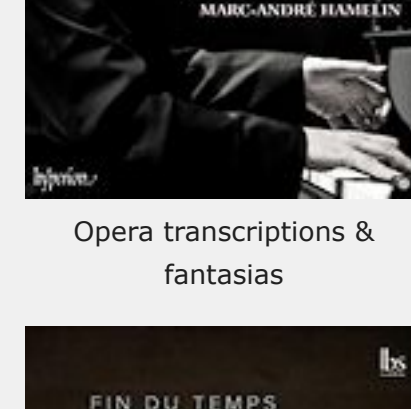


Rachmaninov... Babayan

September

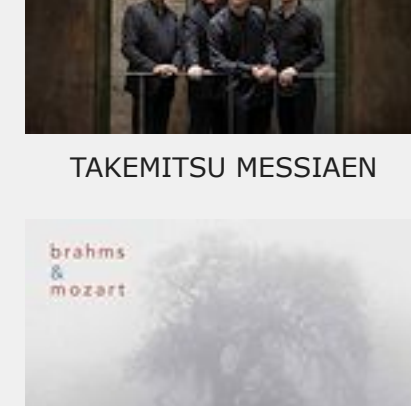


Miss Julie

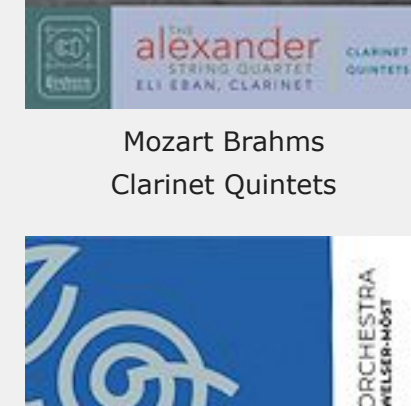


Liszt - Thalberg

Opera transcriptions & fantasias



TAKEMITSU MESSIAEN



Mozart Brahms Clarinet Quintets



Schubert Symphony 9

August



Jean-Baptiste LEMOYNE



Enescu Ravel Britten

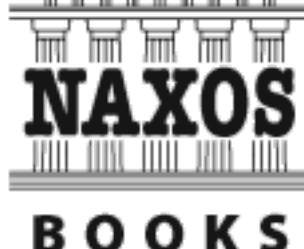


Debussy Images etc.



53 Studies on Chopin Études 1

Konstantin Scherbakov (piano)



The World's Leading Classical Label Direct To You