

THE CLASSICAL CD

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2016 RETROSPECTIVE

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR - HOMAGES

BUSONI transcription of Bach's Chaconne

CHOPIN Barcarolle in F sharp major /

FRANCK Prelude, Chorale and Fugue

LISZT Venezia e Napoli - 3 pieces

MENDELSSOHN Prelude and Fugue for piano in E minor Op 35

No 1 & Prelude and Fugue for piano in F minor Op 35 No 5

In this new recording Benjamin Grosvenor explores works by great composers paying tribute to their predecessors.

Amongst these works, Mendelssohn looks back to the *Prelude & Fugue* form made so popular by Bach; and Franck does likewise.

Busoni takes Bach's great solo violin *Chaconne*, presenting it in a bold and imaginative transcription for piano; Chopin breathes new life into the traditional 'Barcarolle' of Venetian gondoliers, followed ten years later by Liszt's tribute to Italian folksong, *Venezia e Napoli*.

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR features in a Nottingham Classics Concert on FRIDAY FEBRUARY 3rd with the BBC Philharmonic playing SAINT-SAËNS PIANO CONCERTO NO 2, a work he has recorded to great acclaim and coupled with Ravel's Piano Concerto in G and Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. DECCA £12.95



DANCE MACABRE

BALAKIREV Symphonic Poem 'Tamara'

SAINT-SAËNS Dance Macabre Op 40

DUKAS Sorcerer's Apprentice

MUSSORGSKY Night on a Bare Mountain (orch Rimsky-Korsakov)

DVORAK Noonday Witch Op 108

IVES Hallowe'en (chamber music version).

Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal/Kent Nagano
Decca £12.95

This is a spectacular collection of works inspired by the macabre and supernatural in performances that display their orchestral originality and ingenuity in evoking ghoulish and spooky scenarios. As well as the usual suspects we get two rarities, Balakirev's tone poem Tamara and Charles Ives's Hallowe'en, the first of his 'Three Outdoor Scenes' of which Central Park in the Dark is the best-known.

TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No 6 Op 74 'Pathétique'

Romeo and Juliet - Fantasy Overture

Czech Philharmonic/ Semyon Bychkov

Decca £12.95

'All the markers for success are there in the first few minutes of the symphony...Bychkov's Russian roots make him mindful of Tchaikovsky's classicism, the emotion always 'contained' until it can be contained no more...A very fine performance... and supplemented by a Romeo and Juliet of similar qualities.' Gramophone Magazine, October 2016

It is often forgotten that the '*Pathétique*' is a very original symphony with a layout not dissimilar to the layout of Mahler's Ninth Symphony, and with Bychkov and the Czech players you are reminded of that in an intense performance that captures to perfection the moments of sentimental yearning through to the devastating explosive panic of the first movement climax. The 5/4 second movement is a balletic nostalgic repose before the third movement - thrilling defiant roller coaster ride to the nihilism and oblivion of the final adagio - all powerfully conveyed by Semyon Bychkov in a reading that marks it out as one of the finest to date and all captured in the usual superlative Decca sound.



MAHLER Symphony no 10 in F sharp Major - performing version by Deryck Cooke in the 1976 revision.

Seattle Symphony Orchestra directed by Thomas Dausgaard
Seattle Symphony Media £12.95

This is an exceptional release and could well persuade the dwindling band of doubters who questioned whether Deryck Cooke should have attempted a

completion of Mahler's Tenth to finally accept it as one of the composers most amazing, original and awe inspiring creations. There have been many fine versions to date but none anywhere near as fervent and authoritative as this one from Dausgaard and the Seattle Symphony who get deep inside what I feel is one of Mahler's most innovative and daring scores, music that shows the impending loss of Alma haunted him as much as facing death.

The version used here is Deryck Cooke's final revision from 1976. He had been working on the score since the late fifties and it is without doubt the finest of the many attempts to decipher the original. Mahler completed much of the symphony, the rest in short score, principally the last two movements, with clear indications as to instrumentation.

Alma Mahler heard a BBC performance of Cooke's first draft in the early sixties and approved it, adding that it was undoubtedly true to Mahler, and so calling into question why so many conductors in the early 60s seem to have had a superstitious dread of Cooke's realisation.

Cooke's genius in revealing the astonishing originality of the score - heard to greatest effect in the last movement - one of Mahler's most inspired and original creations with its muffled bass drum strokes recalling a fireman's funeral that Mahler heard in New York in 1910. This is followed by one of the composers most poignant and sublime melodies for flute that clearly expresses his love for Alma, perhaps too late as their relationship was already on the rocks. The muffled bass drum strokes return in the central section followed by a truly awesome and cataclysmic climax that makes one wonder how he would have developed musically had he lived. The symphony closes with the return of the flute theme now played by the full orchestra in music of heart rending sadness.

Richard Gibson Classical CD.

'You may be surprised by Thomas Dausgaard's force and conviction as a Mahlerian. This exceptional issue from the Pacific Northwest ought to be a game-changer for all concerned'

Gramophone Magazine CD of the month Awards Issue 2016

SHOSTAKOVICH Violin Concerto No 1 in A minor

GLAZUNOV Violin Concerto

Nicola Benedetti/Bournemouth SO/Karabits

Decca £12.95

'This might just be Benedetti's best recording yet. Two very different 20th-century violin concertos show her at her most generously expressive and succinct, her most agile and commanding...' Guardian 30th June

This riveting performance of Shostakovich's First Violin Concerto is Nicola Benedetti's best recording to date. Written in the late 1940s during one of the Soviet Union's perennial purges on music deemed too progressive or insufficiently optimistic, it was wisely suppressed by the composer until after Stalin's death in 1953.

Nicola brilliantly evokes the eerie desolation and pervasive disquiet of the opening Nocturne, and is spell-binding in the demonic dance of death of the second movement. But it is in the third movement passacaglia where she gets deep inside music that recalls the terror and tragic inevitability of the Stalin years.

The cadenza starts off quietly reflective but develops into fiendishly difficult music of manic wildness and Benedetti manages it with astonishing ease. This leads straight into the burlesque finale. The

mood now is one of riotous high spirits, a defiant sense of victory over adversity with the fateful passacaglia theme joining in the fun.

Nicola is well accompanied by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra under Kirill Karabits, most notable in the delicate textures of the *Nocturne* or in the grotesque edge of the abyss of the second movement. The coupling is Glazunov's Violin Concerto, a late romantic musically conservative work that Benedetti adjusts to perfectly, catching mood of sentimental lyricism to perfection. **Richard Gibson Classical CD**

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphonies No 1 in G minor Op 13 'Winter Daydreams' No 2 in C minor Op 17 'Little Russian' / No 5 in E minor Op 64
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic / Vasily Petrenko
Onyx 2 CDs £19.95

'bursting with promise...Symphony No 5, full of light, shade, intensity, yearning accentuation, is a fine addition to a busy field. Petrenko and the RLPO make an exciting partnership.' *The Guardian, 19th June 2016*

Vasily Petrenko has already recorded Tchaikovsky's Manfred Symphony for Naxos to great acclaim. This first instalment of a projected complete cycle is a revelation.

DOWLAND: Lachrimae, or Seven Tears

Elizabeth Kenny (lute)/Phantasm
Linn £12.95



'The performances are elegant, rich-textured and beautifully phrased. Affecting.' *Sunday Times, 17th July 2016*

John Dowland's gifts as an exceptional melodist and lutenist are evident throughout *Lachrimae* or *Seven Tears*, and the dances that follow, making it one of the most inspired musical collections of the Renaissance, scored for viols and lute, the *Lachrimae* reveal a personal world of melancholy, offset by ensuing happier

moods of the dances. Phantasm and Elizabeth Kenny are superb in this music - in the dances there's a buoyancy and an improvisatory feel to Elizabeth Kenny's magical lute playing.

BRAHMS Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor Opus 15 Four Ballades Opus 10

Paul Lewis (piano)/Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra/Harding
harmonia mundi £13.25

'His account has clarity, muscle.... but also intimacy, vulnerability and volatility: the combination is magnetic.' *Guardian April 2016*

British pianist Paul Lewis has risen to international stardom with an enviable and award winning reputation in the music of Beethoven and Schubert. Here he plays Brahms First Piano Concerto coupled with Brahms' emotionally powerful early Ballades Op 10.

MENDELSSOHN Piano Concerto No 1 in G minor Op 25 The Fair Melusine Overture Op 32

SCHUMANN Piano Concerto in A minor Op 54
Ingrid Fliter (piano)/Scottish Chamber Orchestra/Antonio Mendez
LINN £12.95

Ingrid Fliter brings the lyrical romanticism of Schumann's iconic Piano Concerto to life while handling the technical demands with brilliance. She is equally adept in the Mendelssohn, adding a mischievous sparkle in the outer movements and a poetic magic in the slow movement. She is superbly supported by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra complete with authentic brass and woodwind under Antonio Méndez.

'there's still room for something fresh to be said with this evergreen music ... in both the Mendelssohn and Schumann, Fliter plays with tautness and energy....Heartfelt and intelligent, this is life-enhancing music, and as a bonus there's The Fair Melusina Overture.' *BBC Music May 2016*

BRITTEN Violin Concerto KORNGOLD Violin Concerto

Vilde Frang (violin)/Frankfurt Radio Symphony/James Gaffigan
Warner Classics £11.75

GRAMOPHONE CONCERTO AWARD WINNER 2016

'Frang ...never wallows in Korngold's Rachmaninovian melodies. A bold coupling, superbly executed.' *Sunday Times January 31st 2016*

Britten's Violin Concerto was composed in 1938/39. It is in part a haunting lament for the defeat of the Republican forces by General Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Frang gets deep inside Britten's troubled music. She is superb in the wild demonic second movement and the ensuing fiendishly difficult cadenza. Her interpretation of the Korngold is also a revelation revealing what an imaginative and attractive work it is - a work that deserves to be far better known.

BACH Concerto For Two Violins In D Minor, BWV1043 Violin Concerto No 1 in A minor BWV1041

**Violin Concerto No 2 in E major BWV1042B
Concerto For Oboe, Violin And Strings BWV1060R**

Cecilia Bernardini (violin) With Huw Daniel (Violin) in BWV 1043
Alfredo Bernardini (Oboe)/Dunedin Consort /dir John Butt
Linn £12.95

'This latest fine release features the Scottish ensemble's Dutch-Italian leader Cecilia Bernardini in violin concertos by JS Bach There are so many things to marvel at: her earthy way with rhythm.. her ability to dart in and out of ensemble textures and make the whole thing so joyously convivial...She is joined by her father, the renowned baroque oboist Alfredo Bernardini in the Concerto for oboe and violin in C minor. Butt conducts with all the exuberance and swing and fine lines we've come to expect from the Dunedins.' *The Guardian, 10th March 2016 *****

MENDELSSOHN Violin Concerto in E minor OP 64 / A Midsummer Night's dream incidental Music Op 61

Jennifer Pike (violin)/Rhian Lois (soprano I), Keri Fuge (soprano II)/CBSO
Youth Chorus CBSO/Edward Gardner
Chandos £12.95

'Pike allies the luminous beauty of her tone to her innate musicality and mercurial technique to produce an exceptionally lyrical interpretation of the evergreen Violin Concerto in E minor.' *Guardian 24th January 2016*

The coupling is Mendelssohn's Overture and incidental music to a *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The overture is a truly remarkable work combining classical sonata form with a colourful and highly descriptive romantic imagination, made even more incredible an achievement for being written by a 17 year old. The remaining pieces were written towards the end of the composer's all too brief life and brilliantly capture that earlier style, full of magic, mischief and romantic yearning.

SAINT-SAENS Cello Concertos Nos 1 & 2

Carnival of the Animals/Africa and Caprice-Valse
Truls Mørk (cello) / Bergen Philharmonic/Neeme Järvi
Chandos £12.95

This is one of those recordings....which just encourages you to sit back, relax, listen and wallow. Mørk brings his characteristic incisiveness and mountain-spring tone to the concertos' *Gramophone January 2016*

**COPLAND - Fanfare for the Common Man/El Salón México/Rodeo
Four Dance Episodes/Billy the Kid Suite/Appalachian Spring Suite**
BBC Philharmonic/John Wilson
Chandos £12.95

'Wilson is in his element here, coaxing razzmatazzy playing from the BBC Philharmonic in the rhythmically charged Mexican Dance and battle scene from Billy the Kid, and Hoe-Down from Rodeo. There is tenderness, too, even a touch of Leonard Bernsteinesque wallowing in the melodies of Appalachian Spring' *Sunday Times, 17th January 2016*

CHRISTMAS OPENING

Sunday 18th 11-3, other days open 10-5.30 Christmas Eve and re-open Wednesday 28th December - closed New Years Day and January 2nd - re-open Tuesday 3rd January 2017.

Over the Christmas period we have plenty of special offers, a full range of seasonal music plus nostalgia items, comedy CDs, jazz, musicals, spoken word Shakespeare DVDs etc.

In addition we have range of deletions, warehouse overstocks and pre-loved titles - mostly titles no longer available and some quite rare.

And don't forget at the same address is **BOOKWISE**, who have a full range of nearly new books on all subjects plus sheet music and scores - all to raise money for **Music for Everyone**, who run music activities for all ages and all abilities.

Next year we will be celebrating our **30th Anniversary**, and looking back at the fifty or so most successful and significant titles. We would welcome your suggestions and comments. In the meantime - Seasonal Greetings and have a very happy New Year

**Written, compiled, and edited by Richard Gibson. Christmas 2016
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