The Best Classical Music Recordings of 2026 (So Far)

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From major orchestral releases and landmark symphony cycles to exceptional chamber music, opera and solo recitals, discover the outstanding classical recordings of 2026

Chopin Complete Nocturnes

Pavel Kolesnikov *pf* (Harmonia Mundi)

A deeply personal and very moving set of Chopin's Nocturnes, with pianist Pavel Kolesnikov's devotion to the sound's texture and colour exquisite throughout.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Adès. Kurtág. Tippett Concertos

Sols; Hallé Orchestra / Thomas Adès (Hallé)

Thomas Adès and the Hallé form a powerful partnership here in music by the conductor himself, plus Kurtág and Tippett, in a showcase of the orchestra's excellence in modern music.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Britten. Goossens. Ireland. Walton Works for Strings

Sinfonia of London / John Wilson (Chandos)

A Britten *Serenade for Tenor Horn and Strings* of eloquent charm paired with three lesser-known English works revealed in fresh beauty by the Sinfonia of London.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Shostakovich Symphony No 8

Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra / Alain Altinoglu (Alpha)

Following Alain Altinoglu's excellent Fourth and Fifth last year, Shostakovich's war-torn Eighth Symphony is played with genuine impact: a cycle to follow.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Patkop & Say'

Patricia Kopatchinskaja *vn* **Fazıl Say** *pf* (Alpha)

This striking and intensely played programme pairs works by its artists, violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja and pianist Fazıl Say, with music by Prokofiev and Szymanowski.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mendelssohn Songs without Words

Bertrand Chamayou *pf* (Erato)

This is destined to become – perhaps it already is – a reference point for Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words*, Bertrand Chamayou bringing deep insight and musicianship to this music.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Britten 'En Français!'

Cyrille Dubois *ten* **Orchestre National de Metz Grand Est / David Reiland** (Aparté)

Britten's French songs performed by a French singer – Cyrille Dubois – perfectly at one with the style, and always bringing an interpretation wonderfully his own.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Ancestors of JS Bach'

Various artists (Ricercar)

This superb six-disc set brings together recent recordings from the catalogue with new material, Vox Luminis exploring the music of Bach's forebears – cousins, uncle, father – with characteristic brilliance.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Uyaras'

Bruno de Sá *counterten* (Nonesuch)

A beautifully curated programme in which sopranist Bruno de Sá's voice weaves through the repertoire – Villa-Lobos, Strauss, Ravel, Rachmaninov, Granados and others – with elegance and drama.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Addio Amore’

Jeanine De Bique *sop* **Terry Wey** *counterten* **Basel Chamber Orchestra** (Pentatone)

Soprano Jeanine De Bique and countertenor Terry Wey unite for a programme featuring many a recording premiere, and most of all for duets and arias of often moving impact.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mahler Symphony No 2, ‘Resurrection’

Louise Alder *sop* **Beth Taylor** *mez* **Bavarian Radio Choir and Symphony Orchestra / Sir Simon Rattle** (BR Klassik)

Read the *Gramophone* review

Bartók. R Strauss Violin Concertos

Alena Baeva *vn* **Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen / Paavo Järvi** (Harmonia Mundi)

Alena Baeva offers Bartók and Strauss violin concertos of thoughtfulness and virtuosity, with excellent support from Paavo Järvi and his musicians.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Falla Orchestral Works

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra / Domingo Hindoyan (Onyx)

A wonderful addition to the 150th birthday celebrations of Falla, Domingo Hindoyan and his superb RLPO alive to this music’s rhythmic intensity and vivid sound world.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mozart Piano Concertos Nos 5, 14 & 20

Freiburg Baroque Orchestra / Kristian Bezuidenhout *fp* (Harmonia Mundi)

Kristian Bezuidenhout continues his fascinating fortepiano journey through Mozart's concertos with another richly exploratory and superbly played album.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Beethoven Piano Trios Nos 5 & 6

Rautio Piano Trio (Resonus)

A period instrument performance from the Rautio Piano Trio which brings lightness, transparency and a sense of conversational intimacy to this pair of Beethoven chamber works.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'The Beethoven Connection, Vol 2'

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet *pf* (Chandos)

The second volume – the first was in 2020 – from Jean-Efflam Bavouzet dedicated to music by Beethoven's contemporaries, exploring links between their own and his music. Hugely enjoyable.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Mémoire'

Alexandre Tharaud *pf* (Erato)

A vast range of composers, many represented by short works, but what unites them all is the care and devotion, plus engaging charm, with which Alexandre Tharaud presents them on this joyfully personal album.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Schulhoff ‘Menschheit’

Barbara Kozelj *mez* **The Hague Residentie Orchestra / Jun Märkl** (Challenge Classics)

The powerful beauty of Schulhoff’s music, almost Straussian in its richness but with a distinct style of his own, is superbly realised here by mezzo Barbara Kozelj.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Contes’

Sandrine Piau *sop* **David Kadouch** *pf* (Alpha)

A haunting album of songs reflecting different, sometimes dark, aspects of fairy tales and childhood, performed with expressive depth and elegance by soprano Sandrine Piau and pianist David Kadouch.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Pocket Universe’

EXAUDI / James Weeks (NMC)

These four contemporary composers couldn’t ask for more committed and persuasive advocacy than from the excellent EXAUDI, conducted by co-founder James Weeks.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Handel Giulio Cesare in Egitto

Sols; The English Concert / Harry Bicket (Linn)

A splendid recording of Handel’s *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, rich in character throughout, whether from the superb soloists or the brilliant players under Harry Bicket.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Bruckner Symphony No 3

Anima Eterna Brugge / Pablo Heras-Casado (Harmonia Mundi)

Pablo Heras-Casado brings a powerful sense of momentum to his performance of Bruckner's Third Symphony – and the recording has a wonderfully vivid spaciousness.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Shostakovich Symphony No 7, 'Leningrad'

San Diego Symphony Orchestra / Rafael Payare (Delos)

Rafael Payare leads an impressive account of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony, rich in detail and powerful in drama.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Bloch Violin Sonatas

Boris Brovtsyn *vn* **Diana Ketler** *pf* (Naxos)

Exceptional performances of two quite different sonatas, violinist Boris Brovtsyn and pianist Diana Ketler bringing a real immediacy and lyricism to Bloch's music.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Brahms. Reger Clarinet Quintets

Michael Collins *cl* **Escher Quartet** (BIS)

Michael Collins's third recording of Brahms's Quintet (here with the Escher Quartet) and his first of Reger's, both performances full of communicative spirit and elegance.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Enescu Octet. Piano Quintet

Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective (Chandos)

The Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective's impeccable chamber instincts triumph again, with this album of warm, collegial performances of works by Enescu.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Brahms Piano Pieces

András Schiff *pf* (ECM New Series)

Late Brahms played by András Schiff on a beautiful and distinctive-sounding 1859 vintage Blüthner piano, which adds a memorable colour to performances rich in character.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Britten Three Cello Suites

Pieter Wispelwey *vc* (Evil Penguin)

Pieter Wispelwey's third survey of Britten's Cello Suites draws on decades of reflection on the music, making for compelling and highly engaging listening, and recorded with striking intimacy.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Lassus Requiems

Vox Luminis / Lionel Meunier (Ricercar)

Vocal ensemble Vox Luminis offer listeners a masterclass in performing music of this era – impeccable intonation, distinctive individual voices and lines, all beautifully balanced.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Loesser Guys and Dolls

Sols; Sinfonia of London / John Wilson (Chandos)

John Wilson takes us back to the original sound world – indeed the opening night – of *Guys and Dolls*, capturing the score's intricacies and personality.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Giordano Marina

Sols; Orchestra I Pomeriggi Musicali Milan / Vincenzo Milletarì (Decca)

Last issue we told the story behind the recording of Giordano's rediscovered opera *Marina*, and this month celebrate the result: a triumph from Decca.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Christensen. Eichberg. Fundal Viola Concertos

Rafaell Altino *va* **Odense Symphony Orchestra** (Dacapo)

Three fascinating works for viola and orchestra by three contemporary Danish composers – Rafaell Altino compellingly exploring their variety of sound worlds.

Read the *Gramophone* review

McCabe Cello Concerto. Symphonies Nos 2 & 3

Raphael Wallfisch *vc* **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Kenneth Woods** (Signum)

An excellent album of major orchestral works, including two premiere recordings, by the British composer who died in 2015.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Schnittke Complete Works for Two Violins

Vadim Gluzman, Friedemann Eichhorn *vn* **Deutsche Radio Philharmonie / Valentin Uryupin** (Naxos)

All Schnittke's music for two violins, performed with passionate commitment.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Vivaldi Bassoon Concertos, Vol 6

L'Onda Armonica / Sergio Azzolini *bn* (Naïve)

The conclusion of Sergio Azzolini's complete cycle of Vivaldi bassoon concertos – begun in 2009 – brings this ever-inventive music wonderfully to life. A great way to finish.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Beethoven Piano Sonatas Nos 30-32

Mitsuko Uchida *pf* (Decca)

Luminous playing and a deeply personal attention to dynamics define Mitsuko Uchida's approach to Beethoven's late sonatas. Another superb recording from one of today's finest pianists.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Poulenc Music for Two Pianos

Antony Gray, Rob Hao *pfs* (Divine Art)

Duo Antony Gray and Rob Hao are to be praised for this wonderful survey of Poulenc's music for two pianos – all of it, in fact, except for the Concerto – including much that is little known.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Solitude with Schubert’

Lotte Betts-Dean *mez* **George Xiaoyuan Fu** *pf* (Platoon)

A thoughtfully chosen Schubert recital from George Xiaoyuan Fu – last year’s Concept Album Award winner – rich in atmosphere and deeply personal playing, and singing too.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Finzi For St Cecilia, etc

The Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge / Steven Grahl (Hyperion)

Three major works spanning Finzi’s composing career from a choir – Trinity College Cambridge – that continues, under Steven Grahl, to build on its impressive reputation on record.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Schumann Das Paradies und die Peri

Sols; Le Concert des Nations / Jordi Savall (Alia Vox)

A vividly recorded and vibrantly performed new version of Schumann’s oratorio *Das Paradies und die Peri* conducted by Jordi Savall, featuring fine singing throughout.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Dvořák Symphony No 9, ‘From the New World’ C Simon Four Black American Dances

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra / Manfred Honeck (Reference Recordings)

Careful reflection on the score and a rich rapport between conductor and orchestra makes for a fine Dvořák Ninth, while Carlos Simon’s coupling is superbly spirited.

Read the *Gramophone* review

CPE Bach Six ‘Berlin’ Symphonies

Arte dei Suonatori / Marcin Świątkiewicz (BIS)

The inventive language – humour and dissonances alike – of CPE Bach’s very earliest symphonies is wonderfully brought out by the Polish period ensemble Arte dei Suonatori.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Sibelius Complete Symphonies

Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra / Jukka-Pekka Saraste (Ondine)

Jukka-Pekka Saraste draws on decades of wisdom to offer a Sibelius symphony set of deep insight, the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra splendid throughout.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Vivaldi The Four Seasons

Daishin Kashimoto *vn* **Berlin Baroque Soloists** (Berliner Philharmoniker)

Berlin Philharmonic concertmaster Daishin Kashimoto and his orchestral colleagues bring virtuosity and joy to Vivaldi’s famed and dramatic depiction of the seasons.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Echoes of my Childhood’

Daniel Müller-Schott *vc* **Irina Zahharenkova** *hpd* (Orfeo)

A very personal project by cellist Daniel Müller-Schott - the harpsichord that Irina Zahharenkova here plays is the one his mother played during his childhood. A lovely recording.

Read the *Gramophone* review

JS Bach French Suites

Andrew Arthur *hpd* (Inventa)

Harpsichordist Andrew Arthur seems so comfortably inside these Bach works that they speak with a delightful naturalness and feeling of calm spontaneity, while the perfectly chosen instruments are beautifully recorded.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Ad nos’

Thomas Kelly *pf* (Rubicon)

This fine debut album from Thomas Kelly demonstrates both his brilliant playing but also his exploratory interest in repertoire, including piano transcriptions of 19th-century organ works.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Stephen Hough’s Piano Postcards’

Stephen Hough *pf* (Hyperion)

Stephen Hough has gathered together arrangements – some his own – of songs and melodies which remind him of places encountered on his travels; fond memories, shared with affection. A delightful album.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Parry De profundis, etc

Hertfordshire Chorus; London Mozart Players / David Temple (Signum)

David Temple leads another triumphant performance of English choral music, with more Elgar and some Parry too, *De profundis* a standout work on an all-round superb release.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘La nobiltà di Milano’

The Breathtaking Collective; Cappella Mariana / Bruce Dickey (Passacaille)

A recital of Renaissance music full of glorious freshness and vitality, The Breathtaking Collective justifying their name with their inspired music-making.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Martinů Complete Symphonies

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra / Jakub Hrůša (DG)

Jakub Hrůša makes a wonderfully powerful case for Martinů’s symphonies, the composer’s originality and textures stunningly vivid as played by the Bamberg Symphony.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Copland Symphony No 3 Walker Visions

London Symphony Orchestra / Sir Antonio Pappano (LSO Live)

Two very different but dramatic American symphonies, Copland’s familiar Third and Walker’s powerful Fifth, both brilliantly realised by Antonio Pappano and the LSO.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Haydn Symphony No 104 Mozart Symphony No 41

Accademia Bizantina / Ottavio Dantone (HDB Sonus)

Performances that sound thrillingly fresh, Ottavio Dantone’s Accademia Bizantina clearly relishing their chosen pairing of Mozart and Haydn symphonies.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mozart Piano Concertos Nos 9 & 22

Jan Lisiecki *pf* **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra / Manfred Honeck** (DG)

The second time for the Bamberg Symphony this issue, here giving perfect support to Jan Lisiecki's highly enjoyable takes on Mozart's concertos Nos 9 and 22.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Schubert/Liszt. Tchaikovsky Fantasies

Lukas Geniušas *pf* **St Gallen Symphony Orchestra / Modestas Pitrėnas** (Alpha)

A thrilling album, with pianist, orchestra, repertoire and sound ideally matched.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Beethoven Violin Sonatas, Vol 1

Alina Ibragimova *vn* **Cédric Tiberghien** *pf* (BIS)

Alina Ibragimova and Cédric Tiberghien return to Beethoven's sonatas on period instruments this time, and the result is delightfully engaging playing from this brilliant partnership.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Zelenka Trio Sonatas

Ánge Luis Sánchez Moreno *ob* et al (Genuin)

This album of Zelenka Sonatas is a real triumph, its quintet of superb players bringing sparklingly collaborative engagement to the inventive 18th-century virtuoso's sound world.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Schumann Carnaval, etc

Dasol Kim *pf* (Aparté)

Piainist Dasol Kim brings character, personality and a reflective beauty to Schumann – the *Ghost Variations*, *Waldszenen* and, at the album's heart, the masterpiece that is *Carnaval.*

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Troubled Times'

The Queen's Six; The Rose Consort of Viols (Signum)

Tudor and Jacobean sacred music rooted in the complex and so often tragic history of its age – composers include Bull, Byrd and Morley – all exquisitely sung by the Windsor Castle-based ensemble.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Lully Proserpine

Les Talens Lyriques / Christophe Rousset (Château de Versailles)

Marie Lys, Véronique Gens, Olivier Gourdy and Laurence Kilsbyare lead an all-round splendid cast in bringing rich drama to Lully's opera - another superb recording by Christophe Rousset.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Beethoven Five Cello Sonatas

Paul Watkins *vc* **Alessio Bax** *pf* (Signum)

Two artists – cellist Paul Watkins and pianist Alessio Bax – revelling in the variety of Beethoven's music, offering hugely enjoyable and engaging reflection and drama.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Elgar Violin Concerto

Frank Peter Zimmermann *vn* **London Philharmonic Orchestra / Edward Gardner** (BIS)

The sheer number of recent Elgar Violin Concerto recordings is testimony to the work's power, and Frank Peter Zimmermann's is richly personal.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mendelssohn Symphonies & Oratorios

Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra / Andris Nelsons (DG)

A Mendelssohn feast from Andris Nelsons – the symphonies plus major oratorios – and a set that draws on a deep immersion in the composer's voice.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Brahms. Joachim. R & C Schumann Works for Viola and Piano

Tabea Zimmermann *va* **Jean-Guihen Queyras** *vc* **Javier Perianes** *pf* (Harmonia Mundi)

The first of two viola-based Harmonia Mundi chamber album this month sees Tabea Zimmermann and colleagues with ardently lyrical interpretations.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Alto Appassionato'

Timothy Ridout *va* **Jonathan Ware** *pf* (Harmonia Mundi)

The eloquence of Timothy Ridout's viola playing is a perfect match for a programme of works known and lesser-known, and for an equally painterly pianist, Jonathan Ware.

Read the *Gramophone* review

JS Bach ‘Plucked Bach III’

Alon Sariel *mandolin/lute* (Pentatone)

There is such an instantly engaging delight to be found in Alon Sariel’s sparkling Bach on mandolin, though in music like the great Chaconne, a profound depth too. A wonderful recording.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Inferno’

Behzod Abduraimov *pf* (Alpha)

Behzod Abduraimov’s playing on this album featuring works by Brahms, Debussy, Liszt and more is always elegantly shaped, and combines virtuosity with a compelling sense of the music’s onward journey.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Sonority’

Jan Liebermann *org* (Regent)

A stunning debut from young organist – and our One to Watch – Jan Liebermann of composers including Bach, Dupré and Duruflé, brilliantly drawing on the sonic wealth of Salisbury Cathedral’s instrument.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Lise Davidsen: ‘Live at the Met’

Lise Davidsen *sop* **James Baillieu** *pf* (Decca)

A chance to hear one of today’s most thrilling sopranos, Lise Davidsen, performing a breadth of repertoire at an iconic venue – a memorable evening perfectly preserved.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Tomorrow is Today’

Papagena (Somm)

This superb latest album from the all-female ensemble demonstrates impeccable virtuosity and clear joy in singing together, in music stretching from medieval to modern.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Silver La Belle au bois dormant

Sols; Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra / György Vashegyi (Bru Zane)

Another fascinating revival from Palazzetto Bru Zane, and another discovery for most of us – Charles Silver’s opera *La Belle au bois dormant*, triumphantly realised and recorded.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Beethoven Piano Concerto No 3, etc

Jonathan Biss *pf* **Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra / Malin Broman** (Orchid)

Jonathan Biss’s series pairing Beethoven concertos and modern works concludes with a superb new piece by Caroline Shaw.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Sibelius Violin Concerto, etc

Ava Bahari *vn* **Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra / Santtu-Matias Rouvali** (Alpha)

An expansive, exploratory Concerto from Ava Bahari and Santtu-Matias Rouvali plus a superbly performed *Lemminkäinen Suite*.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘East Meets West’

Anne-Sophie Mutter *vn* **London Symphony Orchestra / Thomas Adès** (Alpha)

An excellent opening to an enticing series led by Anne-Sophie Mutter of works written for her, starting with Unsuk Chin, Aftab Darvishi, Jörg Widmann and Thomas Adès.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Reich ‘The Sextets’

Colin Currie Group (Colin Currie Records)

Steve Reich’s structural ingenuity – at once both complex and beautifully hypnotic – throughout these works is embraced with style, precision and musicality by the Colin Currie Group.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Vesper’

Sean Shibe *gtr* (Pentatone)

A compelling portrait by Sean Shibe of the classical guitar’s voice in the 21st century, music by Thomas Adès, Harrison Birtwistle and James Dillon offering a stunning journey through drama, delicacy and virtuosity.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Rachmaninoff Transcriptions’

Marek Kozák *pf* (Supraphon)

Wonderfully realised performances of Rachmaninov’s piano transcriptions of music from Bach to Bizet, Mendelssohn to Mussorgsky, Marek Kozák completely at one with the idiom.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Benevoli Masses

I Fagiolini / Robert Hollingworth (Coro)

This final instalment of I Fagiolini's survey of Baroque composer Benevoli's multi-choir Masses is a triumphant conclusion to the three-part series, as well as a perfect way to mark the group's 40th birthday.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Rubbra Crucifixus pro nobis

Choir of Merton College, Oxford / Benjamin Nicholas (Delphian)

A perfect tribute to Edmund Rubbra on the 40th anniversary of the composer's death, Benjamin Nicholas's Merton College Choir on impeccable form.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'From Ordinary Things'

Seth Parker Woods *vc* (Platoon)

Cellist Seth Parker Woods is joined by singers and pianists who share his sensitivity of style and clear devotion to this music, not least soprano Julia Bullock who proves a perfect vocal partner.

Read the *Gramophone* review

JS Bach St John Passion

Sols; Pygmalion / Raphaël Pichon (Harmonia Mundi)

Raphaël Pichon – who won last year's Recording the Year with the *St Matthew Passion* – brings us a *St John Passion* of equally moving and musically captivating drama.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mahler Symphony No 7

Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra / Paavo Järvi (Alpha)

A superb understanding of Mahler's shifts of style and tone, and the power of his themes, defines Paavo Järvi's gripping interpretation of Symphony No 7.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra / Gustavo Dudamel (DG)

The melodic theatricality and narrative are exhilaratingly shaped by Gustavo Dudamel, and played by artists relishing all the richness of the score.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Puccini Orchestral Works

Sinfonia of London / John Wilson (Chandos)

Early orchestral music, some from his first three operas, by Puccini, conducted by someone whose love of the composer's vivid and sweeping sound world is evident in every bar.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Szymanowski Symphony No 4, etc

Szymon Nehring *pf* **Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra / Marin Alsop** (Rubicon)

Pianist Szymon Nehring finds the beauty and mystery in Szymanowski's music, from his Mazurkas to his final symphony.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Walton Symphonies Nos 1 & 2

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra / Kazuki Yamada (DG)

Last issue's Musician and the Score feature promised us an imaginative approach to Walton's symphonies, and Kazuki Yamada delivers in style.

Read the *Gramophone* review

JS Bach 'Bach on Nine Strings'

Mario Brunello, Mauro Valli *vc picc* (Arcana)

The title refers to the four- and five-string violoncello piccolos, played with great elegance – sometimes intimate, sometimes dance-filled – by Mario Brunello and Mauro Valli.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Mozart Violin Sonatas, Vol 4

Isabelle Faust *vn* **Alexander Melnikov** *fp* (Harmonia Mundi)

The splendid series of Mozart sonatas that Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov have been bringing us concludes with all the colour and passion that has defined the journey.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Handel Messiah

Sols; Irish Baroque Choir and Orchestra / Peter Whelan (Linn)

There's a glorious sense of almost conversational immediacy to Peter Whelan's *Messiah*, a performance that seeks to capture the sound and spirit of the work's Dublin debut.

Read the *Gramophone* review

Muhly No Resting Place

The Tallis Scholars / Peter Phillips (Linn)

Nico Muhly's understanding of the Tallis Scholars is compellingly evident in every work – as is Peter Phillips's admiration of his music. A wonderfully successful partnership.

Read the *Gramophone* review

'Willows'

Norwegian Chamber Orchestra / Pekka Kuusisto *vn*

(Platoon)

A creative and very personal album from this month's cover artist, ranging from re-thought Vaughan Williams to a beautifully realised folk music collaboration.

Read the *Gramophone* review

DVOŘÁK Cello Concerto, etc

Raphaël Jouan *vc* **Orchestre National de Metz Grand Est / David Reiland**

(La Dolce Volta)

There's a lovely sense of an individual response to this well-known work from a fine young cellist in happy company.

Read the *Gramophone* review

PETTERSSON Symphonies Nos 3 & 8

Norrköping Symphony Orchestra / Christian Lindberg

(BIS)

The penultimate album in Lindberg's complete survey – the first by a single conductor – of Petterson's symphonies is an excellent addition to the series.

Read the *Gramophone* review

BEETHOVENViolin Sonatas Nos 3, 5 & 9

Alena Baeva *vn* **Vadym Kholodenko** *pf*

(Alpha)

There's personality and imagination in abundance in this album from two artists who clearly enjoy sharing an exploratory journey through such well-known and much-loved music.

Read the *Gramophone* review

MARTIN Chamber Music

Ilona Timchenko *pf* **Utrecht String Quartet**

(Dabringhaus und Grimm)

Decades separate these works – the 1919 Piano Quintet, the 1936 String Trio and the 1967 String Quartet – but the programme is united by vibrant playing throughout.

Read the *Gramophone* review

RACHMANINOV Early Piano Works

Boris Giltburg *pf*

(Naxos)

The great draw here is the tonal beauty and unforced lyricism that Giltburg achieves, proving himself to be particularly memorable in Rachmaninov's most inward and intimate music.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Forgotten Melodies’

Alexander Malofeev *pf*

(Sony Classical)

Alexander Malofeev’s much-anticipated debut – featuring music by Glazunov, Glinka, Medtner and Rachmaninov – is an impressive and generously filled recital, wonderfully worth the wait.

Read the *Gramophone* review

ELGAR The Dream of Gerontius

Sols; Orchestra of Opera North / Martyn Brabbins

(Hyperion)

This is the fourth recording of Elgar’s powerful oratorio in two years, but it more than justifies its release with a strongly persuasive sense of distinctive choral individuality and impact.

Read the *Gramophone* review

JOSQUIN Missa L’ami Baudichon

Cut Circle / Jesse Rodin

(Musique en Wallonie)

Cut Circle’s distinctive sound – closely recorded with vivid immediacy – adds to a compelling performance, Josquin’s music speaking across the centuries and still demanding attention.

Read the *Gramophone* review

‘Amidst the Shades’

Ruby Hughes *sop* **Jonas Nordberg** *lute*

(BIS)

With this elegantly crafted programme, spanning early, Baroque and modern works, soprano Ruby Hughes and her companions offer a poetic recital of memorable riches.

Read the *Gramophone* review

JL Bach The 18 Leipzig Cantatas

Capella Sollertia / Johanna Soller (Ricercar)

Cantatas by a distant – though much admired – cousin of JS Bach, who preserved much of this wonderful music himself, which could hardly ask for finer advocacy.

The *Gramophone* review

Mahler Symphony No 9

London Philharmonic Orchestra / Vladimir Jurowski (LPO)

A powerful and deeply considered journey through this late Mahler masterpiece from a conductor whose empathy with this composer's music shines through.

The *Gramophone* review

Berg. Schulhoff. Webern 'Out of Vienna'

Leonkoro Quartet (Alpha)

Winners of Wigmore Hall's String Quartet competition and BBC New Generation Artists, this impressive ensemble bring character, energy and intensity to an engaging programme.

The *Gramophone* review

Bonis. Ravel Violin Sonatas

Clémence de Forceville *vn* **Ismaël Margain** *pf* (Evidence)

Awareness of Bonis's music has grown in the past few years, and Clémence de Forceville's debut album makes as strong a case for it as it does for Ravel's music.

The *Gramophone* review

JS Bach Clavier-Übung III

James McVinnie *org* (Pentatone)

James McVinnie tackles this daunting music with style, colour and virtuosity throughout, while Pentatone's team have captured the 1702 Dutch instrument he's recorded it on wonderfully.

The *Gramophone* review

Brahms Piano Pieces

Piotr Anderszewski *pf* (Warner Classics)

This month's cover artist demonstrates his poetic understanding of Brahms's expressive late works, choosing 12 of the 20 pieces of Opp 116-119 to create a highly personal album that stands among this gifted pianist's finest.

The *Gramophone* review

Elgar 'Light out of Darkness'

Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea / William Vann (Somm)

A journey though Elgar's evolving voice and career, via some superbly chosen – and performed – movements from liturgy, oratorio and part-songs alike.

The *Gramophone* review

Stravinsky 'Late Works'

Cappella Amsterdam / Daniel Reuss (Pentatone)

Another fascinating and successful exploration of a composer's later period this month – this time the turn of Stravinsky, with Daniel Reuss shaping his choir's sound with great style.

The *Gramophone* review

'M'a dit Amour'

Julie Roset *sop* **Susan Manoff** *pf* (Alpha)

An imaginative programme that showcases Julie Roset's coloratura brilliance and dramatic instinct, but also offers listeners a coherent insight into a diverse range of characters and their lives.

The *Gramophone* review

Thomas Psyché

Sols; Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra / György Vashegyi (Bru Zane)

Another triumph for our Label of the Year, Bru Zane, with an opera by Ambroise Thomas given all the customary devotion they bring to each and every one of their projects.

The *Gramophone* review

Schubert 4 Hands

Leif Ove Andsnes, Bertrand Chamayou *pf* (Erato)

Two of today's finest pianists, Leif Ove Andsnes and Bertrand Chamayou, join forces for one of those very special collaboration albums, in this case in music by Schubert.

Read the review

Debussy. Ibert. Ravel 'The French in Spain'

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra / JoAnn Falletta (Naxos)

A superb example of the artistic excellence JoAnn Falletta's ongoing tenure with the Buffalo Philharmonic is achieving.

Read the review

Schubert Symphonies Nos 4 & 8

Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen / Paavo Järvi (RCA Red Seal)

Paavo Järvi and his Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen bring their wonderfully collegial rapport and virtuosity to bear in a beautiful Schubert recording.

Read the review

Sterndale Bennett Piano Concertos Nos 4 & 6

Simon Callaghan *pf* **Royal Northern Sinfonia / Martin Yates** (Lyrita)

Sterndale Bennett's music given superb advocacy here on a splendidly played and recorded release from Lyrita.

Read the review

Korngold 'The Korngold Collection'

Pacifica Quartet (Cedille)

A valuable survey of Korngold's works for string quartet – and indeed additional guests in the case of the sextet – from the Pacifica Quartet, celebrating their 30th anniversary of music-making in style.

Read the review

'Opus 1'

Anna Geniushene *pf* (Fuga Libera)

An intriguing idea, a programme of Opus 1s from composers as diverse as Berg, Brahms, Chopin, Schumann and Tchaikovsky, all carried off with brilliance by pianist Anna Geniushene.

Read the review

‘Unraveling’

Tim Fain *vn* (Delos)

A thoughtfully crafted and compellingly performed album, a personal journey through modern music by Corigliano, Dessner, Mazzoli, Salonen and our companion throughout, violinist Tim Fain himself.

Read the review

Adès. Haydn. Ligeti ‘Növények’

Katalin Károlyi *sop* **Ruisi Quartet** (Platoon)

Thomas Adès’s set of seven Hungarian Poems for mezzo-soprano and piano sextet is a powerful, haunting cycle, and couldn’t have asked for a more committed performance than here given.

Read the review

R Clarke Songs

Kitty Whately, Nicholas Phan; Anna Tilbrook *pf* (Signum)

A generous survey of Rebecca Clarke’s entire song output – two and a half hours of music, spanning seven decades – from a line-up of artists that includes singers Kitty Whately and Nicholas Phan and pianist Anna Tilbrook.

Read the review

‘The Lambeth Anonymous’

Iken Scholars / Matthew Dunn (Rubicon)

Lambeth Palace’s ‘Arundel Choirbook’ is a major source of works by Fayrfax and Ludford – but what we have here are all the anonymous works found nestling among them.

Read the review