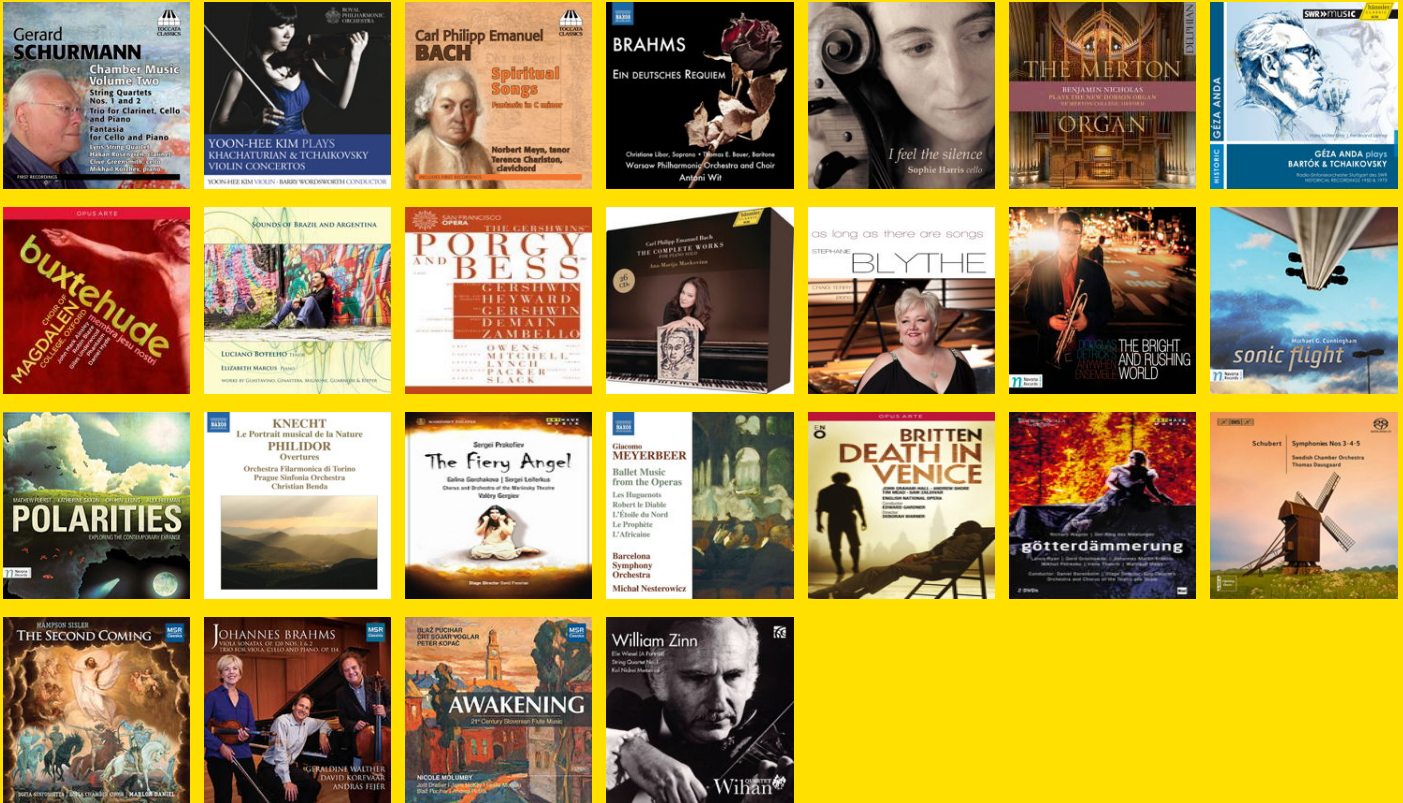


The Music & Vision

Classical Music Newsletter

TOUGHEST PENANCE – Issue 73, 1 April 2014

SELECTED NEW RELEASES



FROM PARIS WITH LOVE



'The last piano recital in the current Sunday morning series at Nottingham's Royal Concert Hall was given by Robert Thompson, a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, who then studied with Peter Frankl. After striking a fine balance between poise and turbulence in Mozart's Fantasia in C minor, K 475, he moved on to Schubert's first set of Impromptus, D 899. To regard these simply as

miniatures is to misjudge them, and Thompson's performances were alive to the expressive range of each one. The first is a particularly big-boned piece, symphonic in scope, and its expressive ambiguity was nicely pointed.' - Mike Wheeler reports from Nottingham, also listening to Opera North's *From Paris with*

Love and Verdi's *Macbeth*, and to the Vienna Tonkünstler Orchestra. In Derby, he attended performances by the Derby Concert Orchestra, the Piatti String Quartet and Sinfonia Viva's annual schools' residency.

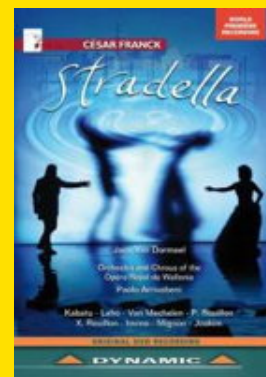
Tess Crebbin returns to *M&V* after a gap of several years, reporting from Munich on the music of Graham Waterhouse. Alice McVeigh was at *Die Frau Ohne Schatten* in London, and also reports on a performance by the Heron Piano Quartet. Suzanne Torrey in Cleveland recalls how Sasha Cooke saved the day. Maria Nockin was at Arizona Opera's spirited reading of *La traviata*, experiences a new edition of *Prince Igor* live in HD from New York, and listens to music for guitar and cello by Eliot Fisk and Yehuda Hanani.

Andrew Schartmann was impressed by Evgeny Kissin in recital at Symphony Hall, Boston and Roderic Dunnett marvelled at Hans Werner Henze's *Boulevard Solitude* performed by Welsh National Opera. Giuseppe Pennisi reports from Turin on decadence and sarcasm in a Zemlinsky-Puccini double bill, finds depth and elegance at Monte Carlo's Printemps des Arts, experiences Silvia Colasanti's *La Metamorfosi* in Florence, a memorable performance of Rimsky Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* in Milan, and, in Rome, Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* performed under difficult conditions. Keith Bramich reports on a beautifully spun piano recital by Steven Osborne at Malvern Concert Club.

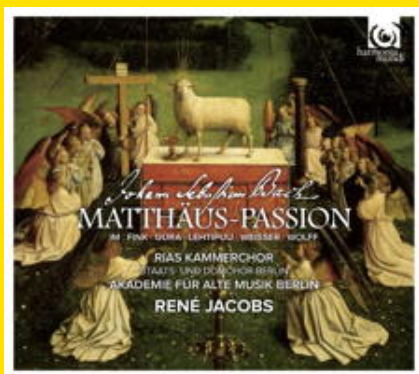
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TOUGHEST PENANCE - FRANK'S 'STRADELLA' ON DVD

'A new opera by César Franck is astonishment enough, but that he probably wrote most of it before the age of twenty is wonder indeed. He didn't quite finish it, and only hinted at most of the scoring, which has been provided to great effect by Luc van Hove. So far so good, and all credit to the Walloons of Liège for mounting it. Alessandro Stradella was an Italian composer of the mid-seventeenth century, who happened to spend some of his life in Venice and was finally bumped off in Genoa to the accompaniment of twenty-four masses for his soul. I suppose Venice will eventually be submerged by its waters and the Tiber may overflow to flood most of Rome; but that is no excuse for Jaco Van Dormael as director to have the cast wading through or sitting in water the whole evening and warding off a downpour of rain with an army of plastic umbrellas. If any of them lived to sing another day, it could only be due to an outstanding Walloonian health service.' — Robert Anderson has very mixed feelings about this DVD from Dynamic.



DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT - J S BACH'S ST MATTHEW PASSION



'The greatest choral masterpiece by the greatest composer ever? Yes, I believe it is, although admirers of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* or Handel's *Messiah* might refute the claim. Whatever the case, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* will always be a profound experience of what redeemable suffering is; a journey where the listener is sucked into that divine intimacy that purifies and transforms. Ever since childhood, René Jacobs has always been haunted by the piece, and his endless search to unravel the mysteries encapsulated in the score has culminated in this magisterial interpretation overflowing with a transcendent participation in Christ's redemptive love for all mankind. Indeed the intensity and angst are hardly bearable.' — Gerald Fenech strongly recommends this harmonia mundi recording and also another on the

same label — music by Vaughan Williams, Dove and Warlock sung by Mark Padmore, with Nicholas Daniel and the Britten Sinfonia.

Andrew Schartmann finds unprecedented freshness in the Chopin interpretation of Nick Van Bloss on Nimbus Alliance, and listens to Beethoven's complete works for cello and piano on MSR Classics. Robert Anderson finds marvellous vitality in William Neil's playing of Poulenc's Organ Concerto, and Howard Smith finds music of notable sensitivity and fine tonality in Marta Bagratuni's *Pieces of the World* on the Blue Griffin label.

Browse our latest CD reviews ...

IN THE NEWS

San Diego Opera is to close at the end of its current season.

We mark the passing of Joseph Kerman, Marion Stein, Ray Still, Gerard Mortier and Robert Ashley.

Read this news in detail ...

ASK ALICE - 'RODELINDA' AT ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

Alice discusses music festival judges and *Rodelinda* at English National Opera.

Read more ...

**Any classical music-related questions?
Ask Alice here ...**



COMING SOON – LIVE PERFORMANCE IN APRIL

View our listings ...

Add your concert here if not listed ...

This newsletter, edited by Keith Bramich, is a monthly taster for Basil Ramsey's high quality and colourful online classical music magazine, published every day since January 1999.

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