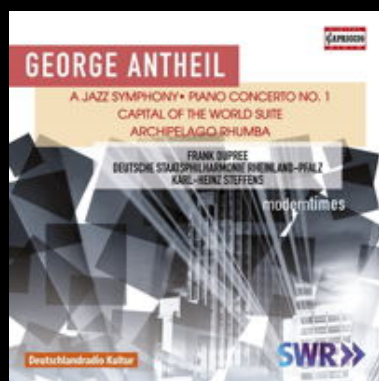


knew could cause an uproar. Listening to his music, I find nothing so weird that cannot be accepted as today's norm. Indeed, this CD projects Antheil's music in a very good light, and the recent revival he is enjoying is much deserved.



'Karl-Heinz Steffens and his German troops are passionate advocates of Antheil's cause, and performances are full of engaging expressiveness and technical finesse.'

'The 1925 *Jazz Symphony* is an excellent example of the composer's acumen on how one can fuse a totally modern idiom with the traditional.'

'The Piano Concerto dates from 1922, and it is no coincidence that it has quotations from *The Rite of Spring* and *Petrushka*.' (Modern Times — George Antheil, Capriccio C5309)

'Aaron Copland (1900-1990) is most definitely, after Leonard Bernstein, America's greatest twentieth century composer. Indeed Copland is credited with the unique achievement of having given the world a unique American sound world while still adhering to the traditional, European symphonic style.'



'Splendidly rousing playing from the Detroiters mercurially led by Leonard Slatkin, whose dedication to Copland's creations has a sense of purpose that is unerring throughout.'

'Premiered in 1946, Copland's iconic Third Symphony, considered to be the finest work in symphonic form by an American composer, was described by the composer himself as a wartime piece — or, more accurately, an end-of-war piece. Intended to describe the euphoric spirit of victory that America was experiencing at that particular moment, the narrative path adopted by the composer suggests that euphoria is arrived at only after a process of private reflection and collective struggle.' (Copland: Symphony No 3, Naxos 8.559844)



'... the oldest evidence of musical creation anywhere in the world.'

'This fourth volume in the ongoing series "European Music Archeology Project" takes us back, incredibly, to forty millennia ago, and the birth pangs of the dawn of Man. One may ask: was our species conscious back then of the mystery of musical sounds? Indeed it was, and this issue, which is the brainchild of the two soloists, sets out to prove just this. Painstaking research has shed light on how life was some 40,000 years ago, when the last Ice Age was in its death throes.'

'Particular attention was given to the Upper Danube region where anatomically modern humans walked the land. These far-away ancestors of ours were forced to spend the long winters in the relative warmth of caves. Traces of their daily living have been discovered in the Aurignacian layers of several cave sites in the Swabian Jura in the South of Germany. Apart from hunting and working tools, archaeologists also identified personal ornaments, figurine art and fragments of wind instruments made of perforated bird bones and mammoth ivory.' (The Edge of Time — Palaeolithic Bone Flutes of France and Germany, Delphian DCD34185)

Geoff Pearce: 'I generally love Czech music and when I heard this choir before, I was favourably impressed, so I was really looking forward to reviewing this disc. Czech composer Jan Jirásek (born 1955) was unknown to me, but I had read that he is very highly regarded.

'*Missa Propria*, in three sections, written in the 1990s, is breathtaking in its simple declaration of faith. The opening Kyrie eleison slowly builds to a climax before ending in a triumphant conclusion. This is unhurried and uncomplicated music.

'The Gloria Miserere Gloria introduces some portamento-like passages for the young singers, and the girls perform admirably. There are some absolutely ravishing vocal passages, and I can't say I have ever heard music quite like this before. The performance, with its highly accurate vocal lines, superb entries and a quite wide range of expression, impresses me very much. The final Gloria is magical with its resolution at the end.' *Jan Jirásek: Parallel Worlds*, Navona Records, NV6101



'There are some absolutely ravishing vocal passages, and I can't say I have ever heard music quite like this before.'

The late **Howard Smith** listened to Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* arranged for orchestra (Naxos 8.572051) and to Prokofiev from Temirzhan Yerzhanov (Con Brio Recordings, CBR 28454).

Browse our latest CD reviews ...

All our CD reviews are illustrated with sound samples, usually chosen by the author of each review. If you enjoy listening to these sound samples, you can often hear an extra sample on the 'CD information page' linked from the bottom of each review. An alternative way to reach these CD information pages is via our **New Releases** section, where you can also see information about recent CDs which haven't yet been reviewed, and follow the review cycle process for any particular CD.

PROFILE — LUNCH WITH TORSTEN RASCH

Keith Bramich: 'Due to low audience numbers and a generous session length, this event became extremely good value for participants, since twelve of us (including Rasch and his interviewer, *M&V* contributor Roderic Dunnett) sat around a couple of tables in the glorious new King's School Worcester boathouse [Three Choirs Festival, UK, 26 July 2017], all engaged in a very personal and fascinating multi-way conversation, held over a light lunch.

'In fact, the pre-event audience conversation was interesting even before the arrival of our interviewer and interviewee, touching on the Dymock Poets — a group of men who lived in the village of Dymock, near the Gloucestershire/Herefordshire border, from about 1911 until 1914 — and on Welsh poet Alun Lewis (1915-1944). This information became immediately relevant to the interview's central subject, Torsten Rasch, his interest in setting English poets, and his work *A Welsh Night* (setting poetry by Alun Lewis), given its first performance in a new orchestral version last night in Worcester Cathedral by mezzo Sarah Connolly and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Frank Beermann. The work, commissioned by Anwen Walker, was first performed two years ago, at the 2015 Hereford Three Choirs Festival, by Sarah Connolly and pianist Joseph Middleton. (**Read Roderic Dunnett's review of the 2015 performance.**)

'Rasch explained that most early twentieth century English poets are completely unknown in Germany, and so he hadn't previously heard of Alun Lewis, but now thought that Lewis is unjustly forgotten and actually the greatest of the World War II poets. Rasch was able to meet and befriend Lewis' widow, Gweno. He needed a structure for the whole work, so he imagined a dialogue between Alun and Gweno Lewis — what they might say to one another in poetic form. (Alun and Gweno had married in 1941, but less than three years later, Alun had died mysteriously in Burma, of a gunshot wound to the head from his own weapon. Gweno spent the rest of her life promoting Alun's poetry, until her death on 13 January 2016, aged one-hundred-and-two.)



Torsten Rasch

'In response to a question from the audience, Rasch explained that about 70% of his compositional output involves the setting of words, and that he is definitely mostly inspired by words, and has a gift for recognising which poems or fragments of poems will, in general terms, be a good fit for his music.

'Rasch has a fascinating background. Born in Dresden in 1965, his father was a builder, and he had no prior connection with music, but he sang in the Dresdner Kreuzchor, and decided to study pop music, rather than classical music. Initially, he made a living by playing keyboards in bands. When the Berlin wall came down in 1990 and he was able to travel, he wanted to get away, as far from Germany as he could, and settled in Japan, building a career there as a film music composer. Whilst in Japan, finding film work rather restricting, he started to write songs and orchestral works. A Japanese singer asked him to write a song, which was recorded in Bratislava and appeared on a CD. In

1999 he was commissioned by the Dresdner Sinfoniker to write an orchestral work. The orchestra returned in 2002 and asked him for a song cycle. This was based, unusually, on lyrics by the German band Rammstein. The result, *Mein Herz brennt*, began to get Rasch noticed internationally — it was highly recommended by Rob Cowan, broadcasting for *BBC Radio 3*, and Robin Holloway, in an article for *The Spectator* titled *Punk Transformed*, wrote "This extraordinary work has disturbed and excited me more than any

new music I've encountered for some years". (Read Tess Crebbin's 2004 interview with Torsten Rasch and Sven Helbig.)

'After a couple of decades in Japan, Rasch moved to Berlin. He was taken on by Faber Music in London, and he began to get better known in the UK. Just a few months ago, he brought his family to England to live in Gloucestershire.' **Read more ...**

ENSEMBLE — ALTOGETHER INVIGORATING

Malcolm Miller: 'London-based Italian pianist Gabriele Baldocci gave a stirring lunchtime recital to launch the annual Beethoven Piano Society of Europe's Summer Festival at Regent Hall (near Oxford Circus, London, UK), which this year features four concerts on successive Fridays, culminating in a violin and piano recital.'



Gabriele Baldocci playing at London's newly refurbished Regent Hall. Photo © 2017 Bobby Chen

'Baldocci is a professor of piano at Trinity Laban Conservatoire and an official member of the Martha Argerich Presents project. His choice here of a fiery programme highlighted the piano's orchestral accent, ranging from the percussively brittle yet also richly lyrical sonorities of Kabalevsky's *Pianos Sonata No 3 in F, Op 46* to the grandiose orchestration of Liszt's arrangement of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. The latter was performed as part of Baldocci's project to perform and record all nine symphonies, which has already seen the release of his Liszt-Beethoven "Eroica" Symphony (on Dynamic *CDS7771*).

'The Kabalevsky was full of life; the first movement's intricate formal processes and contrasts were etched with textural clarity and plenty of interest, the chromatic harmony explored and highlighted with much drama and wit. The rather bright Steinway tone in the hall best served the finale with its caustic Shostakovichian irony, and jaunty angular melodic and rhythmic patterns. Here Baldocci was alert to the wit and buoyancy of the style; the eloquent unexpected twists and turns of the tonal harmony in the slow movement added edge to the artfully shaped tunes, the pianist blatantly enjoying the

"cantabile" element of the theme. The vivacity and often forthright attack might have been lightened a little to allow in some chiaroscuro, yet in the Liszt arrangement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony which followed, emphasis and flamboyant richness were the order of the day.' [Read more ...](#)

Mike Wheeler reports on a Britten and Owen double bill in Derby Cathedral, and on a selection of operas and concerts from the 2017 Buxton Festival: 'Music Theatre Wales has an enviable track record in staging contemporary operas. It has another winner on its hands with *Y Tŵr* (The Tower), with a text by Gwyneth Glyn and score by Guto Puw (Buxton Festival, Buxton Opera House, Buxton, UK, 17 July 2017). Commissioned and produced jointly by Music Theatre Wales and Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, the Welsh-language national theatre of Wales, it is the first professional opera specifically commissioned in Welsh (previous unsuccessful attempts at Welsh-language opera were detailed in the programme).

'The libretto is based on a play by Gwenlyn Parry (1932-1991), a leading Welsh dramatist who worked in theatre, film and television. *Y Tŵr* is his most celebrated work, credited with bringing everyday vernacular language to Welsh theatre.

'The three acts follow two people, known simply as The Woman and The Man, across three stages of their relationship, symbolised by the levels of the tower they metaphorically climb as they move on. In Act I, we watch the young couple in summer, teasing, flirting, dreaming, making love.



Caryl Hughes and Gwion Thomas in Guto Puw's *Y Tŵr* at the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff, Wales on 16 May 2017. Photo © 2017 Clive Barda

'The sound of a distant train is heard, and what I assume is a Welsh folk song is sung, recurring in the two later acts, as dreams become memories. Act I moves without a break

into Act II, with the two characters now in an autumnal middle age full of regrets and recriminations concerning both their relationship and his job. In Act III, after the interval, they have reached a weary, wintry old age which not even a premature putting up of Christmas decorations can do much to alleviate. If that all sounds depressing, it isn't. The opera ends with a re-birth of sorts, leaving us deeply touched and feeling privileged to have shared the couple's life-story.' **Read more ...**

'The description *opera seria* has often been regarded as the the kiss of death; for all I know it still is in some quarters. But, as the Handel revival of the last fifty years or so has shown us, there's more to the genre than the stereotypes — convoluted plots featuring impossibly magnanimous rulers, the anti-dramatic, stiff formality of all those *da capo* arias — would have us believe.



Joshua Ellicott in the title role of Mozart's *Lucio Silla* at the Buxton International Festival, with Rebecca Bottone as Giunia. Photo © 2017 Robert Workman

'Mozart composed *Lucio Silla* at sixteen, and of course, at that age he can't hope to rival Handel, but what he can do is flex his wings ready to take to the air in *Idomeneo* eight years down the line. The plot concerns the Roman dictator of that name, and his efforts to woo Giunia, daughter of his defeated rival, Caius Marius, trying to persuade her that her husband Cecilio is dead — he isn't. Joshua Ellicott gives Silla a pent-up quality liable to snap at any moment, but also shows him visibly tormented by Giunia's stubborn aloofness. He even makes his last-minute change of heart, if not exactly believable, then at least convincing enough to allow us to suspend our disbelief, over however great a height. Rebecca Bottone's Giunia responds in kind, with a mixture of sorrow and defiance, rising to a height of tragic intensity in her Act III aria "Fra i pensier più funeste di morte", as she longs to follow her supposedly dead husband.' **Read more ...**

Giuseppe Pennisi: 'Macerata Opera Festival (20 July-14 August 2017) operates in two very different theatres: a small, elegant baroque opera house inside the city and a huge open-air space (originally built for a local sport event). Generally, the festival opens in the larger area. This year the inauguration was in the baroque house with a world premiere. I was there on 20 July and this review is based on that performance of the opera *Shi*, which in Mandarin, means "it must be done". The opera is by young Italian composer Carlo Boccadoro, on a libretto by Cecilia Ligorio, who is also the production's stage director. It is a "chamber opera" in five scenes. In the pit, Carlo Boccadoro conducts a small ensemble of two pianists — Andrea Rebaudengo and Paolo Gorini — and the percussion group Tetrakis — Gianluca Saveri, Giulio Calandri and Cecilia Martellucci. On the stage were actor Simone Tangolo, baritone Roberto Abbondanza and bass Bruno Taddia. It is a low cost, easily transportable production, like those that Benjamin Britten wished would prevail in the opera world after World War II. In the past, the festival premiered other chamber operas such as *The Servant* by Marco Tutino and *Le Malentendu* by Matteo D'Amico, but this program has been discontinued for several years. This is a much appreciated new start.



A scene from the first performance of *Shi* at the Macerata Opera Festival. Photo © 2017 Alfredo Tabocchini

'The one act opera lasts an hour and a half and is based on the real life of a Jesuit Father, Matteo Ricci, who, with a few colleagues, travelled from Central Italy to China and lived there for thirty years. There he gained the trust and confidence of the Emperor, who allowed him to preach the Gospel and after his death to be buried in China — a real exception for a foreigner. The videos and projections by Igor Renzetti carry the action from the tempestuous sea in the Mozambique Channel to the hard crossing of deserts, and the cities of Macao and Nanjing, the Forbidden City of Peking and the makeshift

convent where Matteo Ricci died. The videos and projections are very effective in helping the libretto flow.

'The opera's main theme is tolerance and understanding between different cultures. The score is abstract, as is most contemporary music, but not *avant-garde*. At the premiere, it was enjoyed by everyone, even those not used to contemporary music.' **Read more ...**

Giuseppe was also at the Puccini Opera Festival in Torre del Lago for *Turandot* and *La Rondine*: 'The Puccini Festival production toured three Tuscan theatres a few years ago, but it had to be adjusted to fill the huge Torre del Lago stage. In short, a staircase on a rotating platform and the view onto the lake together with a few props made good the different places of the action — Magda's home in Paris, a ballroom and a hotel near Nice. The stage sets were authored by Giuliano Spinelli and the elegant period costumes by Florida Benedettini and Diego Fiorini. The stage director is Plamen Kartaloff.

'In the pit a young Italian woman, Beatrice Venezi, handled the complex score very well. Vocally, there are extended melodies, often broken down into recurring motifs. Also, Second Empire Paris is evoked by waltz rhythms of the French model, slower than the Viennese style. There are also hints at more modern (1917) dances such as the one-step and the slow fox-trot. Puccini used a large orchestra for *La Rondine* which allowed for harmonic audacities worthy of *La Fanciulla del West*. Beatrice Venezi handled the large orchestra with the required delicate touch and elegance. The main musical weight is in the second act, where two waltz themes are intertwined, and the concertato is the opera's real pinnacle.

'The five principals were all very good in their respective roles, and a dozen singers in minor roles were also quite effective.

'The audience was enthralled. **Read more ...**

Giuseppe also visited Ravenna for *1917*, reviewed *Carmen* in Rome and visited Siena to write about the re-established International Chigiana Prize: 'Over the last two years, I have chronicled how, after a period of decline, one of the finest European musical institutions, Accademia Chigiana in Siena, is progressively starting a new life, under the guidance of its president, Professor Marcello Clarichi, and of its musical director Nicola Sani. The Accademia Chigiana was founded by Count Luigi Luciano Saracini in 1932 with the purpose of developing advanced training in young musicians by the world's best conductors and instrumentalists. Its trainees were international, admitted via a competition, and from 1982 until 2010, the Chigiana was awarded to the best of them.

'After World War II, financing had been provided largely by an important bank — Monte dei Paschi di Siena (MPS) — considered to be the world's most ancient. Things turned sour a few years ago as MPS finances were saddled with bad non-performing loans.



Leonardo Caimi as Ruggiero and Donata D'Annunzio Lombardi as Magda in 'La Rondine' at the Puccini Opera Festival in Torre del Lago.

Photo © 2017 Giorgio Andreuccetti

Now, in order to rescue MPS, seventy per cent of its capital is held by the Italian Treasury. The Chigiana Academy has been gradually transformed over the last two years. It holds a two month International Festival and Music Academy with concerts — sixty this summer — given by both the world famous instructors and by the trainees. It is worth recalling that among others, the Prize was awarded to Gidon Kremer, Peter Serkin, Evgeny Kissin, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Andreas Schiff and many other famous names. Quite a few of them consider it as the stepping stone to their careers, and gratefully return to Siena in the summer, on a no fee basis, as instructors to younger musicians, and to provide them with advice and references.

'This year, thanks to a generous grant by Tuscany Rotary Club, the International Chigiana Prize had been re-established, but with new modalities: an international jury, wide publicity, auditions held in New York, Brussels and Moscow, and a final concert with the two finalists on 7 July 2017 at the elegant Teatro dei Rinnovati in Siena. In the pit, Orchestra Toscana was conducted by Jonathan Stockhammer. I was in the audience.'

Read more ...

Read our latest concert reviews

Listings of forthcoming concerts and festivals

CLASSICAL MUSIC NEWS — ECHO KLASSIK AWARDS

The winners of the Germany's major classical music award, the Echo Klassik 2017, have been announced. Thomas Gottschalk will host the award ceremony on 29 October 2017 in the Elbphilharmonie Concert Hall in Hamburg — tickets go on sale on 3 August 2017.

The winners are:

Female Singer of the Year: Joyce DiDonato

Male Singer of the Year: Matthias Goerne

Instrumentalist (trumpet): Gábor Boldoczki

Instrumentalist (cello): Johannes Moser

Instrumentalist (piano): Maurizio Pollini

Instrumentalist (accordion): Ksenija Sidorova

Instrumentalist (violin): Christian Tetzlaff

Conductor of the Year: Kent Nagano

Ensemble/Orchestra: Boston Symphony Orchestra

Ensemble/Orchestra: Rias Kammerchor

Ensemble/Orchestra: Wiener Klaviertrio

Newcomer (piano): Lucas Debargue

Newcomer (conductor): Yoel Gamzou

Newcomer (mixed ensemble): Notos Quartett

Newcomer (double bass): Dominik Wagner

Newcomer (singer): Pretty Yende

The 'Klassik ohne Grenzen' Prize (classical without borders): Die 12 Cellisten der Berliner Philharmoniker

The 'Klassik ohne Grenzen' Prize: Daniel Hope

The 'Klassik ohne Grenzen' Prize: Sebastian Knauer / Arash Safaian

Symphonic Recording (music up to and including eighteenth century): L'Achéron / François Joubert-Caillet

Symphonic Recording (nineteenth century music): Mozarteumorchester Salzburg / Constantin Trinks

Symphonic Recording (20th/21st century music): Neeme Järvi / Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

Concert Recording (music up to and including eighteenth century): Giovanni Antonini / Il Giardino Armonico

Concert Recording (music up to and including eighteenth century): Kristian Bezouidenhout / Freiburger Barockorchester / Gotfried von der Goltz

Concert Recording (music up to and including eighteenth century): Henning Kraggerud / Norwegian Chamber Orchestra

Concert Recording (nineteenth century music): Jan Lisiecki / NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester / Krzysztof Urbanski

Concert Recording (nineteenth century music): Sebastian Manz / SWR Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra / Antonio Méndez

Concert Recording (nineteenth century music): Linus Roth / London Symphony Orchestra / Thomas Sanderling

Concert Recording (20th/21st century music): Renaud Capuçon | Wiener Symphoniker / Orchestre de l'Opera de Paris (Philippe Jordan) | Orchestra Philharmonique de Radio France (Myung-Whun Chung)

Concert Recording (20th/21st century music): Piano Duo Genova and Dmitrov Bulgarian | National Radio Symphony Orchestra | Yordan Kamdzhali

Concert Recording (20th/21st century music): Maria Sournatcheva / Göttinger Symphonie Orchester / Christoph-Mathias Mueller

Choral Recording of the Year: Chorus Musicus Köln | Das Neue Orchester | Christoph Spering

Opera Recording (Opera up to and including 17th/18th Century): Luca Pisaroni | Christiane Karg | Sonya Yoncheva | Thomas Hampson | Rolando Villazón | Chamber Orchestra of Europe | Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Opera Recording (20th/21st Century Opera): Roman Trekel | Anne Schwanewilms | Houston Symphony | Hans Graf

Solo Recording (Music up to and including 17th/18th Century | piano): Fazil Say

Solo Recording (19th Century | piano): Daniil Trifonov

Solo Recording (20th/21st Century music | piano): Thomas Günther

Solo Recording (voice | duets / opera arias): Marianne Crebassa

Solo Recording (voice | arias / recitals): Aida Garifullina

Solo Recording (voice | songs): Ian Bostridge

Chamber Music Recording (Music up to and including 17th/18th Century Music | mixed ensemble): Nils Mönkemeyer | Julia Fischer | Sabine Meyer | William Youn

Chamber Music Recording (19th Century Music | mixed ensemble): Camille Thomas | Julien Libeer

Chamber Music Recording (19th Century Music | string player): Quartetto di Cremona

Chamber Music Recording (20th/21st Century Recording | wind player): Evan van Grinsven

Chamber Music Recording (20th/21st Century Recording | mixed ensemble): Linos Ensemble

Chamber Music Recording (20th/21st Century Music | string player): Quatuor Molinari

Outstanding Achievement in Editing: Querstand

World Premiere Recording of the Year: Thomas Fritsch

Audiophile Multi-track Recording of the Year: MDG | Gerhild Romberger | Alfredo Perl

Music DVD/Blu-ray Recording (opera): Purcell: The Indian Queen (Sony Classical)

Music DVD/Blu-ray Recording (documentary): Mission Mozart

Fostering Young Talent Award: Tonali

Bestseller of the Year: Jonas Kaufmann

Italico Splendore and Villa della Regina present the ninth 'Musica in Villa' — summer courses in music interpretation, which run from 3-10 September 2017 — in the seventeenth century Vila della Regina, Turin, Italy. The courses are organised for young graduate conservatory students, and for all who want to dedicate a week to the intense study of music, plus concerts and social life. The costs are low, the level of teaching quality high, and there's also an opportunity to perform every evening.

Tutors include harpsichordist Marina Minkin from Israel, who will be teaching harpsichord and Baroque chamber music. The full list of tutors is: Alessandro Andriani, Carmelo Andriani, Claudio Andriani, Roland Baldini, Guido Boselli, Drora Bruck, Pierluigi Camicia, Anna Maria Giaquinta, Elisabetta Guglielmin, Luigi Mariani, Fabiano Merlante, Marina Minkin, Patxi Montero, Vito Paternoster, Monica Piccinini, Fabio Ravasi, Mario Sollazzo and Barbara Tartari.

In its thirty-fifth year, the Presteigne Festival (24-29 August 2017, based around St Andrew's Church, Presteigne, Powys, Wales, UK) celebrates music, musicians and very much more with a wide variety of vibrant events. There is a huge range of repertoire from Bach to the present day, and an enticing feature of Danish music allows for a further look at Nielsen, Langgaard, Holmboe and several contemporary Danes. The festival marks important birthdays for composers John Joubert (ninety) and Hugh Wood (eighty-five), and also celebrates the sixtieth birthday of George Vass, the festival's artistic director for the last twenty-five years.

From 2-14 August 2017, ninety young musicians from sixteen European countries will be taking up residence at Moor Park School in Ludlow, UK, for BISYOC's twelve-day cultural and musical exchange, culminating in a series of four public concerts in Ludlow, Leominster and Presteigne. Tutored by a cohort of professional musicians from some of the leading conservatories and academies across Europe, BISYOC participants have a strong reputation for vibrant, quality concerts — proof that international collaboration can deliver outstanding results.

American tenor Russel Thomas has joined KKN Enterprises for press representation.

Songs and Visions of Joy by British composer Janet Wheeler received its first performance on Thursday 29 June 2017. *The Ballad of Molly and Ewan — A Three Choirs Romance* by English composer Lynn Norris received its first performance on Saturday 29

July 2017.

We mark the passing of Paul Angerer, Thomas Füre, Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini, Seiji Yokoyama, Pierre Henry, Egil Monn-Iversen and Karunamoy Goswami.

Read our latest news

ASK ALICE — TRYING OUT THE STAGG ELECTRIC CELLO

Alice McVeigh: 'I'm here to tell you that an electric cello is kind of cool — it was a big hit with my Chinese whiz-kid, Ming — and also with my aged whiz-kid Berrrrrrrrwyn, from the London Welsh Male Voice choir, who has started cello at — wait for it — seventy-five!! — these being about my last remaining pupils.



Cartoon of
Alice McVeigh.
© 2015 Pat Achilles

'Now I haven't bought the amplifier yet, because (a) they weigh a ton and (b) just getting the blinking cello to lesser spotted Crete is going to be a biggish ask, but — though it sounds very weedy without — it sounds pretty ace through the headphones.

'The strings are slightly too widely spaced, and the shouldery bit (in case you want to pretend to be a rock chick and mess about standing up) is a little off-putting, but it sounds resonant and feels responsive and, for £580 — *including* a really dire bow, but hey, it's included — who's counting?

'It's immensely sturdy — I doubt even Easyjet could break it — and indeed heavy, and I look forward to startling our neighbours once we get an amp (heh heh).

'Simon meanwhile is looking forward to my practising, heard only by me (on the headphones).

'So, all in all, a very jolly little late B-day present. Stand by for the *YouTube* of Wannabe Rock Chick on the Beach ... not!!!!'

Stagg Electric Cello

More episodes of 'Ask Alice' ...

Ask Alice your classical music-related questions ...

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.

The editorial and advertising copy deadlines for our September 2017 newsletter are both Friday 25 August 2017. [Details here.](#)

Read us at www.mvdaily.com

Contact us

Newsletter archive