

C L A S S I C A L M U S I C D A I L Y

Time and Space — Issue 142, 1 November 2020



András Schiff
Johannes Brahms Clarinet Sonatas
Jörg Widmann

ESM NEW SERIES

Béla Hartmann: This most welcome album is the result of the long association between the eminent pianist András Schiff and the clarinetist and composer Jörg Widmann. The works included, both of Brahms' late Clarinet Sonatas and Widmann's own neo-Brahmsian *Intermezzi* for piano, featured in a series of recitals given in various locations in 2018, including London's Wigmore Hall.

Widmann's *Intermezzi* were commissioned by András Schiff for the Salzburg Festival in 2010, and were composed specifically to suit the style of Schiff, a pianist much admired by Widmann for his ability to express much with restrained means and to reveal the latent tension of the music in an atmosphere of clarity and transparency. It is precisely these features that Widmann also identifies in the late piano works of Brahms, resulting in a perfect match between music and interpreter.

'In every respect this is a superb CD, combining playing of the highest craft and musical understanding with great works of the past, as well as new contributions which are likely to become established regulars in the modern piano repertoire.'

harmony, highlighting the epic, narrative quality of the First as much as the amorous warmth of the Second.

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Geoff Pearce: French composer Dominique Lemaître is new to me, even though he has written over a hundred works and was born in 1953. I was, therefore, intrigued by this disc and the opportunity to review it. The composer's output encompasses a great variety of music and he has acknowledged a wide range of musical influences. He is particularly fond of the cello and this shows in this very effective offering.

The first work, *Orange and Yellow II — Homage to Morton Feldman*, was originally written for two violas in 2013 and is part of an ongoing series of duos that started back in 2005. The work is in one movement. As the work is stereophonic in nature, yet the parts intertwine at the same time, a good sound system or stereo headphones are essential. The composer shows great skill in writing for the cello and employs many different techniques to provide a varied and interesting soundscape. The percussive plucked notes, harmonics and playing on or close to the bridge are particularly effective and the eight-minute work is never dull and is performed with consummate skill.

The second work, *Thot* (1994), is scored for cello and clarinet and refers to the Egyptian god of scribes and the record keeper of the relationships between things and humans. There is a sensuousness about this music as the two instruments come together, but a sense of the eternal, and timelessness as they grow apart. At times the texture and sounds make you think that more than two instruments are involved, yet at other times, an almost lunar-like emptiness makes one listen intently. This is a beautiful piece encapsulating time and space. [READ MORE ...](#)

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Geoff also listens to music for violin by Nielsen on Naxos and to Schumann and Piatti cello concertos on Dutton Epoch.



'... singers, orchestra and chorus are top notch.'

in the French Free Zone. The work was staged again in far distant Papatee in 2000 and in 2016 in Rochefort and in the Théâtre de l'Athénée in Paris. Hahn obtained his much desired job of Director of the Paris Opéra after the liberation in 1945 but died two years later due to a brain tumor.



'All the artists involved, and especially cellist Dan Barrett, produce truly inspirational music making.'

The plot is a simple Polynesian idyll of the wedding of the much travelled Loti with the Princess Mahénu. There are a few complications because the princess has a ridiculous Chinese suitor, Tsen-Lee, and more significantly, she cannot leave the island of dreams with her husband without breaking an enchantment. Thus, the lovers must part without saying farewell. [READ MORE ...](#)

Giuseppe also reviews two recordings of Henryk Gorecki's music — on ATMA Classique and Naxos, Alessandro Melani's *L'Empio Punito* on Glossa and Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne's *Phèdre* on the Palazzetto Bru Zane label.

Gerald Fenech: Daniel-François-Esprit Auber — that is his full name — died in his 89th year on 12/13 May 1871 during the siege of Paris. When still a child he learned to play the piano and oboe, and also became a skilful singer. Discarding his father's business as an art dealer, the young Auber went to England in the early 1800s as a banker and there he learned the language and appears to have had some success as a performer and as a composer of romances and quartets. After the collapse of the Peace of Amiens in 1803 he returned to France and was admitted as a composer to the Société Académique des Enfants d'Apollon, aged twenty-four. Indeed, it was his Violin Concerto, that can be heard on this recording, and which was performed in 1805, that led to this nomination.

Later he furthered his studies with Luigi Cherubini and after the demise of his teacher, Auber later became Director of the Paris Conservatoire. Having met his lifelong collaborator, the brilliant dramatist Eugene Scribe, in 1819, the composer's main occupation became that of writing operas, of which he composed a substantial number. As the creator of *Le maçon* (1825), *La muette de Portici* (1828), *La Fiancée* (1829), *Le domino noir* (1837), *La part du diable* (1843) and *Haydée* (1847), Auber not only became famous but also amassed a considerable fortune. Sadly, after his death his reputation declined, and today only a handful of his beautifully crafted and melodic overtures are performed.

In this second Naxos volume dedicated to Auber's overtures, one can continue to explore some little-known examples of the composer's elegant and refined operatic music. *Julie, ou l'erreur d'un moment* (1805) was his first stage-work, its fantasia-like beauty foreshadowing the later masterpieces.

Striking melodies and haunting episodes abound in these overtures and entr'actes from *La débutante* (1824), *Fiorella* (1826), *Lestocq* (1834), *Jean de Couvain* (1812) and *La fiancée* (1829). The Overture to *Léocadie* (1824) in particular is permeated with a restrained yet fragrant Iberian colour. [READ MORE ...](#)

Gerald also listens to *Portraits de la Folie* on the harmonia mundi label, to Saint-Saëns' Piano Concertos 3, 4 and 5 on BIS and to a Delphian recording of Beethoven for four hands, played by Peter Hill and Benjamin Frith.



'An excellent compilation ... of some really bouncy music in good sound and annotations.'

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PROFILE — UNTIL DAWN — THOMAS WALLY

Ona Jarmalavičiūtė: The portrait CD *Jusqu'à l'aurore* comes from Thomas Wally — contemporary Austrian composer, violinist (for example as a substitute in the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Vienna Opera Orchestra) and lecturer at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. A portrait recording was one of his long-term professional goals — he views it almost as a business card of a composer, which allows us to take a listen and get to know him as well as his sound and compositional work. The recording celebrates a decade of Wally's musical creativity and a long close collaboration with the Mondrian Ensemble, with which the composer shared the trust to record his pieces. Here the musician elaborates on the concept of his CD, a retrospective of his compositions, and the long story of making his dream come to fruition.

Ona Jarmalavičiūtė: *The CD was recorded a year ago. How was the idea born?*

Thomas Wally: When I was a student nearly twenty years ago, I used to go to a record shop and look at the records of other composers, thinking about what these composers' lives would be like. Since then I wanted to have a portrait CD with my music. These days there aren't that many music labels concentrating on contemporary music; the record business itself has gone through a fundamental change. I contacted the label Col Legno several times, asking whether they would be interested in such a CD.

When the label said yes and the ensemble said yes, I had to make it happen. The whole project accompanied me for more than a year, since I was responsible for it. And it took a lot of effort — fundraising, organizing and supervising the recording sessions, dates, plane tickets, accommodation, deciding which pieces and which takes to keep on the CD, writing the text for the booklet. I did a lot of things for the first time in my life. All in all, it was a really interesting experience!



Thomas Wally. Photo © 2015 Maria Frodl



Jusqu'à l'aurore CD cover

OJ: *Are you satisfied with the result, since you were seeking perfection?*

TW: I am actually very satisfied. I am usually very exact with my work when I am in the process of composing or working, but when it is finished, I feel quite relaxed, feeling that I did my best. So I really like the album. I think it also looks beautiful — I like its optical style and elegance.

The title of the CD is also part of the title of one of the two recorded piano quartets. This quartet is a very special piece, marking the beginning of my collaboration with the Mondrian Ensemble. It actually alludes to a film, named *From Dusk till Dawn*, directed by Robert Rodriguez and written by Quentin Tarantino. I was inspired by the genre twist; it is a road movie in the first half and a vampire movie in the second half. And I also used a twist in the quartet. The title of the CD and of the quartet is also inspired by the night time itself. So many beautiful things happen at night — the night can be a symbol of freedom, celebration, joy, love. For me, this CD also symbolizes these ideas.

OJ: *Where did you look for help or inspiration while making the recording?*

TW: I asked people for advice about several things where I had no experience — fundraising for example. I received some good advice. The label itself really helped and, since they have a tradition of a First Listener's Note, I approached composer Dieter Ammann, who wrote it. Actually I haven't met Dieter Ammann in person yet, but I chose him since I knew that he liked my music and that he had collaborated with the Mondrian Ensemble himself. And, of course, he writes really good texts.

OJ: *How did your long lasting collaboration with the Mondrian Ensemble come into place?*

TW: Years ago two musicians from the Mondrian Ensemble lived in Vienna — violinist Ivana Pristašová and viola player Petra Ackermann. I got to know them through the contemporary music scene and we played together a lot. Ivana Pristašová introduced me to several ensembles and this was really helpful for my career. Together we played in projects in Vienna and also in Paris, and she also performed my pieces. *Caprice*, the first piece on the recording, was actually premiered by Ivana Pristašová, Petra Ackermann and Roland Schueler in 2009.

Later on they both moved to Switzerland and became musicians in the Mondrian Ensemble. In 2011 I asked them if they would be interested in premiering a piece and a year later I composed the piano quartet ... *jusqu'à l'aurore ...: Caprice (IV) bleu* for them.

OJ: *How did you find their interpretation during the recording? Did you have any specific notes for the players about what you wanted?*

TW: They are excellent musicians. When I did have some suggestions, they were about details. And I would say my notation is also pretty exact. We were joking that when somebody would make a mistake, I would have to rewrite the piece.

It also helped immensely that the ensemble members had already been performing some of the pieces for several years; two of the piano quartets from the CD were written for the Mondrian Ensemble. The string trio was written for Ivana Pristašová and Petra Ackermann. The solo piece is written for Ivana Pristašová. So at the time of the recording there weren't any questions left. All of the musicians did a really good job in the recording process and it felt like a luxury to work with them.

OJ: *What do you value most in the Mondrian Ensemble and their playing?*

TW: They work very well as a 'classic' ensemble, but, at the same time, they all — also — live in the contemporary music world, mastering pieces that were written in the twentieth and 21st centuries — so they're used to new challenges and innovations. [READ MORE ...](#)

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ENSEMBLE — A SPACE TO REFLECT

Adam J Sacks: The Season Opener of the Hong Kong Philharmonic on 9 and 10 October 2020 was a remarkable model for a path forward for classical performance in the era of COVID. Temperature checks upon arrival with Masks *de rigueur* throughout, and each row had sections of seats blocked off to maintain adequate social distance. As if underscoring the shared nature of this predicament, orchestra members themselves spread out in the balcony while performing the opening piece, Copland's war-time era *Fanfare for the Common Man*. While one might shy away from analogies to battle and combat, the work impressively filled the potential of a tribute to the front-line health care professionals that have taken the brunt of this perplexing ongoing pandemic. Applying a classic work from the repertoire for such a contemporary purpose further underlies the importance of public performance which offers a space to reflect, pay tribute and even mourn those now absent.

With music director Jaap van Zweden still undergoing compulsory quarantine, Lio Kuokman, the first Chinese individual to hold his current position of assistant conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra, filled in admirably, serving simultaneously as both conductor and pianist for Beethoven's Triple Concerto. Acting as a kind of referee between the dueling violin (Jing Wang) and cello (Richard Bamping) of that piece, he conducted with gymnastic aplomb, rising and falling back to the piano bench, like an inflated exercise balance ball.

The finale of the night, Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier Suite*, concluded the festivities on a discordant if not surreal note of delirious and boisterous maudlin fantasy world, strangely in tune with the strange nature of the concert precautions and a new reality of the everyday outside.

Yet the most memorable offering of the evening by far was the rendering of Doming Lam's *Thanksgiving to Joe-Kwan, the Kitchen God*, the applause for which was greeted by the composer himself, helped to the stage in a wheelchair with all of his ninety-four years.

A fully-realized fusion of Chinese tradition and the *avant-garde*, this work reflects an entirely different form and procedure beyond expectations of European music. Here the music rolls in like a thunder storm akin to a natural phenomenon where elements of melody occur only around the edges. The effect is less than a sonorous communication of a line of speech than the overwhelming of the senses. Off stage percussion, from plucking of the inside of the piano to odd pairings of flute and xylophone never truly in tandem or solo, break apart boundaries few are aware ever exist, and point the way forward to so many promising new possibilities.



Doming Lam (born Macau, 1926).
Photo © 2009 Jian Ye

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A scene from San Diego Opera's drive-in *La bohème*. Photo © 2020 Karli Cadel

Maria Nockin: On Tuesday 27 October 2020, I attended *La bohème*, San Diego Opera's first drive-in opera. It was my first drive-in anything and it was spectacular. I guess a great deal of the emotional impact was the result of not having been to an actual performance of anything since March. By the end of the performance we realized that an immense hunger for opera had brought opera lovers to the Pechanga Arena Parking Lot. Deafening applause, the sound of hundreds of horns and blinding light flashes began the moment the music stopped.

The opera was performed on a raised stage and broadcast to two screens. As in many opera houses, audience members could see closeups on the screen as well as the singers on the actual stage. My companion and I arrived two hours early so as to get front line places. Then we read and reread the directions as to how to tune in the FM radio to hear the opera. Director of Education and Outreach for San Diego Opera Nicholas Reveles gave a short introduction before the opera began as he normally would in the opera house. Each of the leading singers spoke of getting through months of pandemic and quarantine with no possibilities offered to perform safely. For them, the pandemic has been both an artistic and economic disaster.

Drive-in performances may soon become more common because they are safe, and when careful attention is paid to singers' distances from each other onstage, they provide viable artistic solutions. These distances have a major effect on the stage direction, however. Singers must be at least fifteen feet apart when singing to each other. Camera angles can minimize the intervening space to some degree, and director Keturah Stickann took full advantage of it, but since the tenor and the soprano were not a couple in real life, they could never embrace. Stickann solved that problem by having Rodolfo tell the story as a memory from years earlier. Not having a chorus for the Parisian Christmas Eve street scene took away the opera's lighter moments, however, and streamlined the movement of the ninety-minute opera toward its inevitable tragic end. Audience members could weep for their own lost loved ones as well as the heroine.

Joshua Guerrero has always been a good tenor; now, his voice has matured and acquired a bit of welcome 'heft' to it. On Tuesday night his performance was close to perfection. Nobility of sound, colors, nuances, bloom of the voice — they were all there in spades in his nuanced, idiomatic portrayal of Rodolfo.



Joshua Guerrero as Rodolfo and Ana Maria Martinez as Mimì in San Diego Opera's drive-in *La bohème*.
Photo © 2020 Karli Cadel

Soprano Ana Maria Martinez replaced Angel Blue as Mimì on rather short notice. Blue replaced Christine Goerke who had to quarantine instead of hosting Saturday's Met Stars online concert. Celebrating twenty-five years since her first assumption of the role, Martinez still looks like the young girl Rodolfo remembers. Although over the years, her voice has grown considerably and she has become known for heavier roles such as *Madama Butterfly* and *Carmen*, last night she was again the lovely, sweet toned, but not-quite-innocent seamstress. She and Guerrero combined their voices at the end of what would have been Act I in the theater to provide a thrilling finale to the scene.

Baritone Alexander Birch Elliott was a strong Marcello who obviously enjoyed drowning the pharaoh of his failed painting. An energetic singing actor, he and Andrea Carroll, his Musetta, provided the few light moments available in this setting. She combined coquetry with silver-glinting tones as she flirted with Marcello in her lilting Waltz. Her luscious red costume from L'Opéra de Montréal, too, was as outstanding as needed to fit the text of her aria.

In the last scene her character prayed to the Virgin sincerely with warm tones and no trace of her former devil-may-care air. That reminded me that Musetta, like Rodolfo, is based on a real person. Marie-Christine Roux, who inspired the character of Musetta, eventually boarded a ship for Algeria where her sister lived. Unfortunately, the ship sank *en route* and she drowned before reaching her destination. [READ MORE ...](#)

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Giuseppe Pennisi: COVID-19 is galloping in Italy as in several other European countries. Public health systems are under stress. On 25 October 2020, the Italian Government issued an Order in Council with several measures, including the lockdown of theatres, concert halls and cinema houses. Therefore, the staging of *La Traviata* on 27 October 2020 in the splendid Vespasiano Theatre in Rieti — a Provincial capital North of Rome — may be remembered as the last for a while. Realistically, although — as Oscar Wilde liked to say — it is difficult to make predictions when they concern the future — while the medical doctors of Milan are calling for a total lockdown of Lombardy, it is difficult to conjecture the reopening of theatres, concert halls and cinemas in the coming months.

In Rieti, the small but interesting Reate Festival takes place. I have written about it previously because, intelligently, it co-produces with other institutions (such as Accademia di Santa Cecilia and Accademica Filarmonica Romana). This *Traviata*, staged on the eve of the closing of the theatres, is co-produced by the Festival with the Teatro dell'Opera Giocosa in Savona and the Teatro Coccia in Novara, with the support of the Alberto Sordi Foundation for young people. In addition, Michele Olcese's effective and suggestive scenes are the result of the collaboration with the Arena di Verona. The sumptuous costumes by Giada Masi and the lighting by Andrea Tocchio are effective.



A scene from Act I of Verdi's *La Traviata* in Rieti

The production, which I hope will be seen, in due course, in Savona, Novara and — I hope — Rome too, has two very strong points:

- The stage direction by Renata Scotto, Queen of the Metropolitan Opera when I lived in the United States. Few people know that, in 1995, at New York City Opera, she directed a production of *La Traviata*, cast live on television, which won the prestigious Emmy Award for best live television event.
- The performance of Rosa Feola, who ten years ago had her debut at the Vespasian Theatre in Rieti and today is considered one of the greatest 'absolute sopranos'.

These are two artists whose simplicity and human touch is equal to their quality and international fame.

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Giuseppe Pennisi: A survival strategy, like that taught in the Marine Corps training centres — this is what the music sectors of several countries are longing for. Live music has to cope with Government restrictions on audience, seating and distancing both on stage and in the audience seating arrangements. In addition, subsidies are shrinking due to priorities given to other public spending such as the health sector and the social safety net addressed to job losers and enterprises facing bankruptcy as well as due to escalating public sector debts. Finally, many opera and concert goers are sheltering in place due to the pandemic. The decrease in disposable income does not augur well for several years after the end of the health crisis.

In Italy, on 15 October 2020, the Associazione Nazionale Fondazioni lirico-sinfoniche (ANFOLS) — the guild of the main opera houses — issued an alarmed and alarming statement: a 60 million euro box office contraction for 2021. They requested, of course, the Government to step in. This is highly unlikely. Moreover, it is impossible to program because there is a key uncertainty on seating capacity availability. Following a 13 October Order-in-Council, until 15 November, the operative regulation sets a seating capacity of a thousand for open-air performing arts and two hundred for inside performances. Theatres and concert halls have been working on a small print proviso: at the request of the Regional Government(s) and with seating arrangements approved by the public health authorities, the capacity can be expanded. To give an idea: in Rome the Santa Cecilia auditorium, with a capacity of nearly three thousand, is authorized to sell some eight hundred tickets and the Teatro dell'Opera, with a capacity of nearly two thousand, some six hundred tickets. In Bologna, the charming nineteenth century wooden architecture of the Teatro Comunale is shut; concerts are performed in a huge hall planned for major conferences and political meetings; the concert *Madama Butterfly* is being staged without the women's chorus as one of its members was found to be COVID-positive.

Prospects are not encouraging. In the Summer, only one contagion had been reported in the music sector, but only a few days ago in Bari the Teatro Petruzzelli had to suspend performances of Verdi's *Falstaff* due to ten cases of infection among musicians. There are rumours of other cases. The Teatro alla Scala had called for a press conference on 16 October to present its December-March program but cancelled it on the very morning when it was scheduled. Malignant whispers say the virus is circulating in the best-known Italian opera houses. On 16 October, a new Order-in-Council was approved. It affects theatres and concert halls. However the Prime Minister said, in a press conference, that the situation will be monitored in the next two-three weeks and then, if needed, new measures will be enacted.

However, when the going gets tough, the tough get going. Several Italian theatres are performing on a reduced capacity — eg La Scala had a series of successful performances of an all-stars concert version of Verdi's *Aida*. In Verona's Teatro Filarmonico a program of six symphonic concerts as well as a concert version of Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera* is about to start. In Rome, the weekend of 16-18 October featured the inauguration of the symphonic season of the National Santa Cecilia Academy and the debut of Mozart's *Zaide*, an incomplete opera never staged in the Italian capital. Because I have a lung condition, due to the pandemic, my doctors forbade me to have contact even with close relatives such as my only grandson, but HD television and radio provided a substitute, not for a fully-fledged review but for a report.

In the first part of the concert the chorus (led by Piero Monti) and the symphonic orchestra of the Santa Cecilia National Academy, conducted by Antonio Pappano, performed Anton Bruckner's *Te Deum*, an ode to God in which the author uses voices and instruments to give solemnity to the religious content of the text. At the same time, through music, Bruckner gives strength to his faith, drawing on the musical heritage of the sacred tradition from Gregorian to Baroque. Mahler, who directed the *Te Deum* in Hamburg almost a decade after its composition, noted on its score: 'for angelic voices, men in search of God, tormented hearts and souls purified by fire'. In this rendering, the intention was to thank God for the end of the pandemic. Unfortunately, that very night the news arrived that on 16 October, the number of daily COVID-19 cases had been more than ten thousand. The chorus and the orchestra provided a very intensive reading of the Anthem.

In the second part, Antonio Pappano conducted Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. This is a cycle taken from an anthology of Chinese poetry published in 1907 by the poet Hans Bethge, in which Mahler returns to reflection, accompanying all his work, on the meaning of life. Performed posthumously in Munich in 1911, six months after the composer's death, under the direction of Bruno Walter, *Das Lied von der Erde* is structured on both the symphonic form and that of the *Lied*. They merge into an impressive symphony for alto, tenor and orchestra.

Pappano reads the score like Pierre Boulez and, before him, Bruno Walter did: very transparent but unemotional. As a result, the sense of suffering and the serene Zen acceptance of *Das Abschied* are more acute. German alto Gerhild Romberger and American tenor Clay Hilley performed very well; she was engrossing in *Das Abschied*. He was a real Wagnerian tenor, as required. The audience responded with applause and accolades. [READ MORE ...](#)



Antonio Pappano conducting the orchestra and chorus of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia

Giuseppe also reviews a 1 October 2020 Teatro dell'Opera di Roma performance of Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

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Mike Wheeler: We had a Tuba Tune in Thomas Hawkes' recital the week before; this week — Derby Cathedral, Derby, UK, 16 October 2020 — we started with another, by Reginald Porter-Brown. Simon Russell, Organist at St Mary's Church, Nantwich, Cheshire, gave the outer sections plenty of swagger, and brought out suggestions of Elgarian nervy energy in the middle. The attractive limpidity he brought to the contrapuntal textures of J S Bach's Fantasia in C minor, BWV 562, was an ideal contrast.



Simon Russell

The four movements of *Suite du Premier Ton*, by Canadian composer Denis Bédard, aim, Russell told us, to evoke the French baroque world of, say, François Couperin. Following the stately 'Plein Jeu', 'Dialogue' is a perky little scherzo, in which Russell had fun exploring some of the Cathedral instrument's more out-of-the-way corners. 'Récit' provided a meditative interlude before the concluding 'Grand Jeu'. After its imposing start, this settled into a vigorous fugue which not only recalled the Bach Fantasia, but also kept breaking into what sounded like a Renaissance basse-danse, with Russell giving it plenty of rhythmic drive.

Intermezzo in F, by Ian Higginson, a personal friend of Russell, was another quiet, reflective interlude, whose mood was intensified, verging on the melancholy, in Flor Peeters' *Aria*, transcribed from the slow movement of his Trumpet Sonata, Op 51:

Franck's Choral No 1 in E was the imposing finale, though the opening

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| 30th October | <i>Peter Siepmann</i> |
| 6th November | <i>Christopher Ouvry-Johns</i> |
| 13th November | <i>Jeremiah Stephenson</i> |
| 20th November | <i>Hugh Morris</i> |
| 27th November | <i>Edward Turner</i> |

As a result of Covid-19, we were not able to have our usual Summer Organ Recital Series this year. Instead, we are hosting some shorter Friday Lunchtime Recitals, which will take place in the Cathedral from 1300-1345. Entry is free, but booking is essential via the Cathedral's Eventbrite page (<https://bit.ly/33XFAP1>). There will be a retiring collection to support the Cathedral's return from lockdown.

Please note: masks are required, and Covid social distancing measures will be strictly observed.



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inhabits a similar world to the one we'd just left. Russell held the work's sectional structure together convincingly, and kept the second half's grand gestures on just a tight enough lead to nicely grade the build-up to the burst of light marking the work's climax.

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Mike was also at organ recitals by Thomas Hawkes and Laurence Caldecote, and also previews Opera North's Autumn 2020 season. (There could be changes due to the COVID-19 lockdown in England beginning on 5 November 2020.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC NEWS — BROOKLYN RAGA MASSIVE

At the heart of Indian classical music are a set of melodic frameworks for improvisation and composition — ragas. Raga-inspired music of any genre is fluid, colourful and highly improvisational, requiring deep listening and respect between musicians. New York's Brooklyn Raga Massive (BRM), founded in 2015, is a collective aiming to leverage values of openness, generosity, humility and respect for tradition to cultivate genuine connections between artists and audiences of all backgrounds. Composer Terry Riley was impressed with BRM's album *In C* and wanted to compose a new piece to perform with them. Unfortunately it didn't work out, so BRM wrote the piece themselves, with encouragement from Riley, and it will appear on BRM's new album *In D* which will be released on 21 November 2020. Information: brooklynragamassive.org

Florian Ross (born 1972) is a jazz composer, pianist and musical explorer based in Köln, Germany who has just released his twentieth album since 1998 on Naxos — *Florian Ross — Architexture* — music for jazz quartet and wind ensemble. Since studying at London's Guildhall School of Music in 1995/6, Ross has become very fond of British composers and their music, and was always puzzled about how close their harmonic and melodic language was to European jazz. He listened to a lot of Britten, Warlock, Delius, Elgar ... and decided to incorporate their language into his music. Now, after many jazz small and big band recordings, he has been able to talk Naxos and Deutschlandfunk into making another crossover / third stream album after his first since 1999, the 'Suite for Soprano Sax & String Orchestra featuring David Liebman'. Information: florianross.de

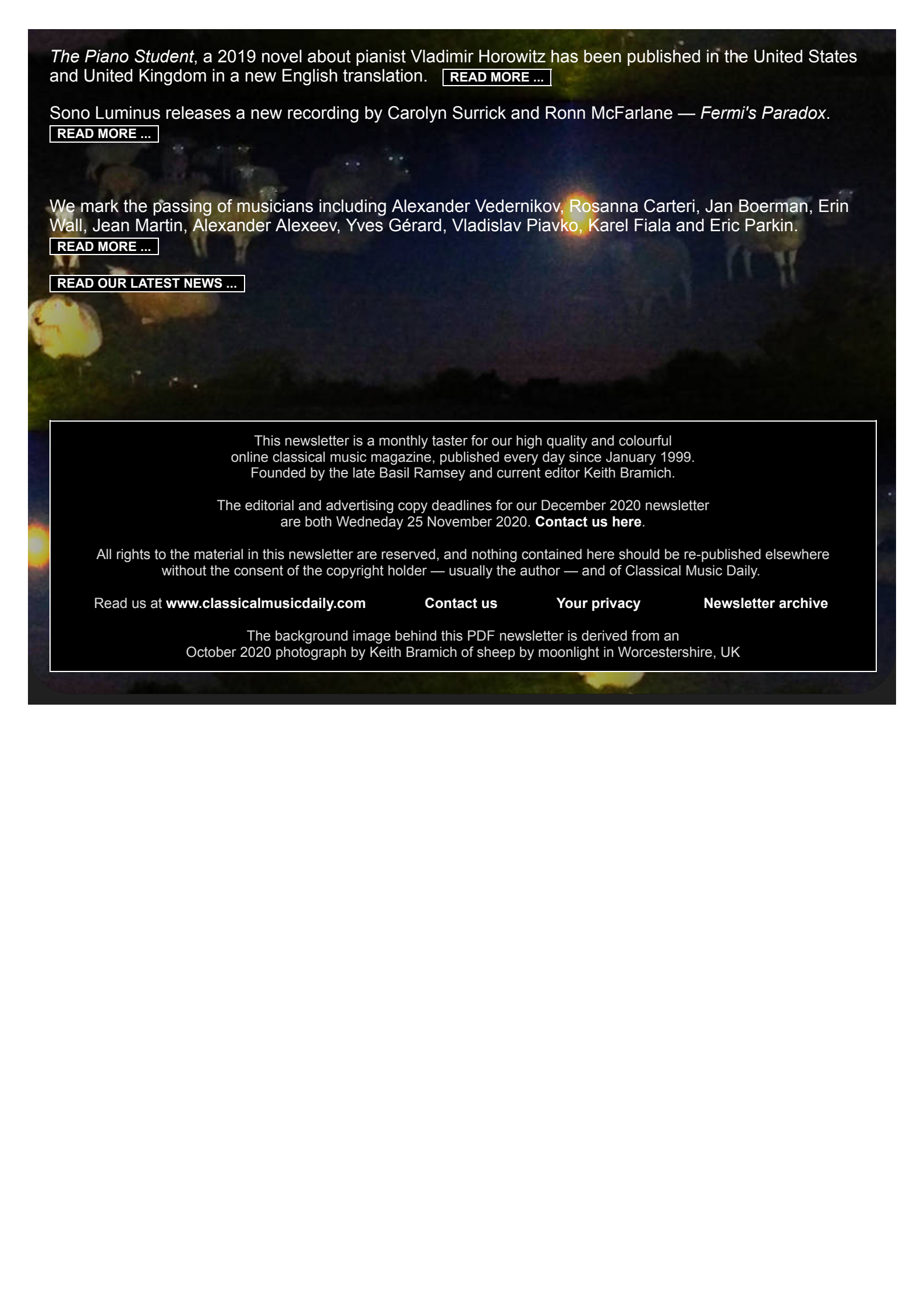
On 30 October 2020 American composer George Lewis released on Carrier Records the 1984 recording of his *Rainbow Family*, one of the first live electronics works ever performed at IRCAM — the Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique in Paris. The tracks were recorded during three days of live performances that took place in May 1984 — the culmination of two years of research and creative work. The performances featured between one and four human improvisers — French double bass player Joëlle Léandre, American soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy, multi-instrumentalist Douglas Ewart and British guitarist Derek Bailey — working with three networked Apple II computers driving three of the then-new Yamaha DX-7 synthesizers. Information: carrierrecords.com

Also on 30 October 2020, Sound American released *Something to Hunt*, the first portrait album of the music of American composer and sound artist Ashley Fure (born 1982). Works on the album include Fure's *Shiver Lung* for ensemble and electronics, *Something to Hunt* for septet and *Soma* for sextet performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble. Also included is *A Library on Lightning* for trio, performed by trumpeter Nate Woodley, bassoonist Rebekah Heller and double bass player Brandon Lopez. *Bound to the Bow* for orchestra and electronics is also featured, recorded live by the Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra at the 2016 New York Philharmonic Biennial. The release includes a limited edition hardcover book featuring first-hand accounts of Fure's work by Zachary Woolfe, César Alvarez, Dahlia Borsche, Taïca Replansky, Steve Smith and an interview with Nate Woodley. Information: ashleyfure.com

Primephonic is a Dutch-American company which has developed a dedicated high quality classical music streaming service, founded in 2017. It has three-and-a-half million tracks available from 170,000 musicians and 2,400 labels. Primephonic claims it offers higher audio quality, better classical search and recommendations, more background information and fairer payouts to artists than other streaming services. On 28 October 2020, Primephonic launched *Ludwig*, a ten-week course in classical music for beginners, providing a mix of 99% listening and 1% reading. The new course offers a weekly podcast narrating the history of classical music through ten key encounters with composers, bi-daily email lessons to help serious beginners to understand key events and trends in music history, hand-picked playlists featuring must-know genres and composers, and free access to the Primephonic app, offering unlimited access to Primephonic's catalogue in 24-bit FLAC quality. Information: primephonic.com

Riccardo Muti will be back in Palermo for three concerts and will be granted freedom of the city. (These events may be affected by COVID-19 restrictions in Italy.) [READ MORE ...](#)

New commissions are up and running in Lidiya Yankovskaya's project which demonstrates the importance of refugees to the United States cultural scene. [READ MORE ...](#)



The Piano Student, a 2019 novel about pianist Vladimir Horowitz has been published in the United States and United Kingdom in a new English translation. [READ MORE ...](#)

Sono Luminus releases a new recording by Carolyn Surrick and Ronn McFarlane — *Fermi's Paradox*.

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We mark the passing of musicians including Alexander Vedernikov, Rosanna Carteri, Jan Boerman, Erin Wall, Jean Martin, Alexander Alexeev, Yves Gérard, Vladislav Piavko, Karel Fiala and Eric Parkin.

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This newsletter is a monthly taster for our high quality and colourful online classical music magazine, published every day since January 1999. Founded by the late Basil Ramsey and current editor Keith Bramich.

The editorial and advertising copy deadlines for our December 2020 newsletter are both Wednesday 25 November 2020. **Contact us here.**

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The background image behind this PDF newsletter is derived from an October 2020 photograph by Keith Bramich of sheep by moonlight in Worcestershire, UK