

# ECHOES OF OBLIVION

*Classical Music Daily*

with

**Robert McCarney**

*Echoes of Oblivion — Issue 161, September 2022*



Serbian composer Vasilije Mokranjac (1923-1984), shown on a 1998 Yugoslavian stamp

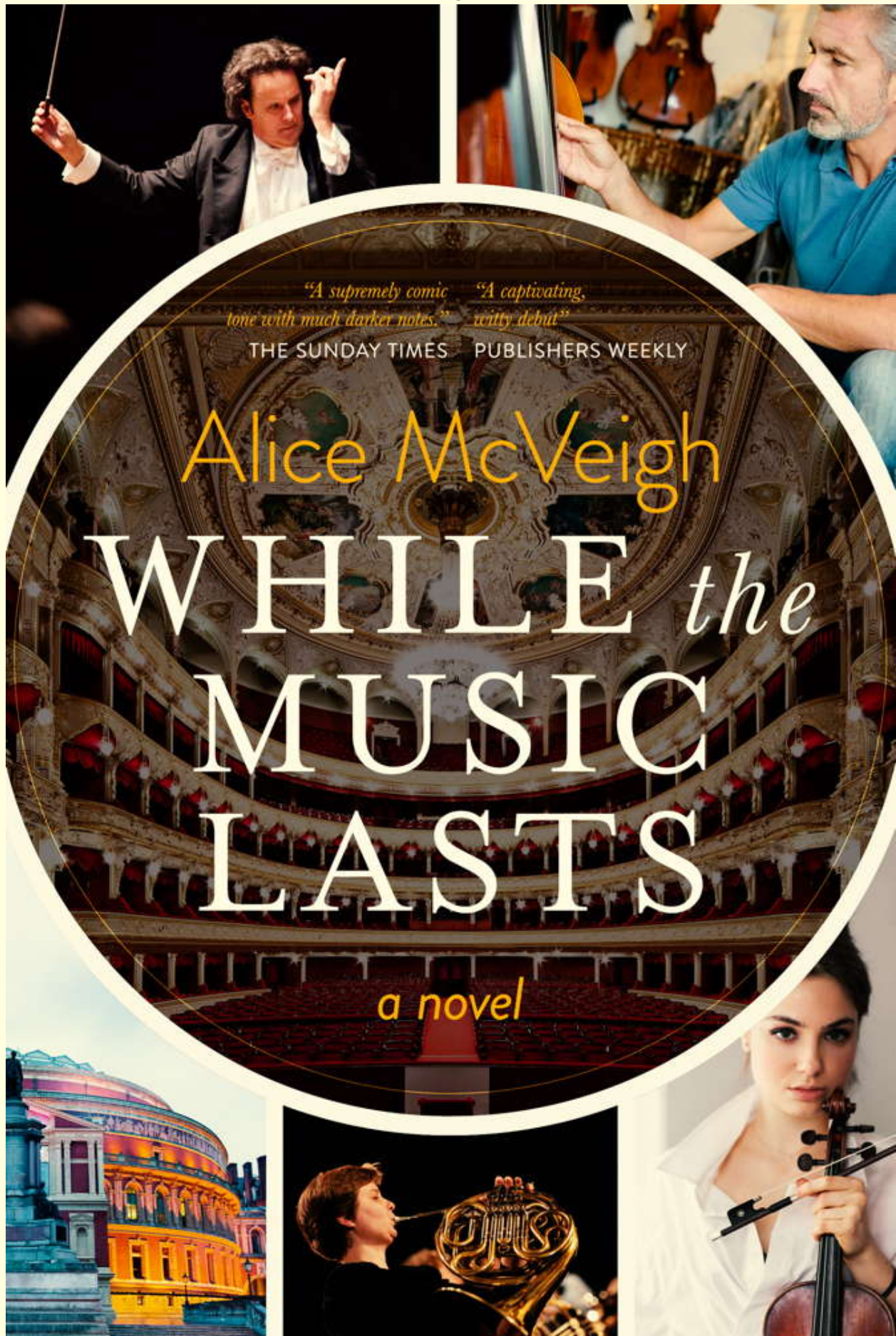
**Robert McCarney:** On a late spring day in 1984 a sixty-year-old man threw himself out of his apartment window upon the mercy of gravity and thus to the eternal void below. Who was he? He was a husband, a father and a professor of composition at his local Faculty of Music. He also happened to have written some of the most, by turns, powerful, passionate and poignant music one is ever likely to hear.

His name was Vasilije Mokranjac. A name one will struggle, almost certainly in vain, to find within the pages of the numerous books — encyclopedias apart — written about the music of the twentieth century.

This state of affairs is not unique to Mokranjac. He is one of dozens, possibly hundreds, of men and women who devoted their lives to the composition of extraordinary and extraordinarily worthwhile music throughout the course of the last century. A lifetime's worth of dedication and devotion oftentimes in the face of extreme and multiple difficulties which in many cases was ignored or treated with total indifference by their public and incomprehension, hostility and derision by many of their musical peers. Music in many instances never performed, recorded or even printed. The absence of so many of these singular souls from the pages of all those histories of twentieth century music, an absence mirrored in concert programmes and radio broadcasts, is the *raison d'être* of this series. [MORE ...](#)

We welcome this new voice to our pages. Two of Robert's *Echoes of Oblivion* features have been published so far, and a third should appear over the next few days. [READ MORE 'ECHOES OF OBLIVION'](#)

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'This portrayal of the psychosexual duet between men and women, and of the music-making process in a symphony orchestra, sings with lyrical intensity and eloquent feeling' - *Publishers Weekly*. Available September 2022. [BUY NOW](#)

## ENSEMBLE — THE CRAFTSMAN AND THE ICON

2022 Tanglewood Season

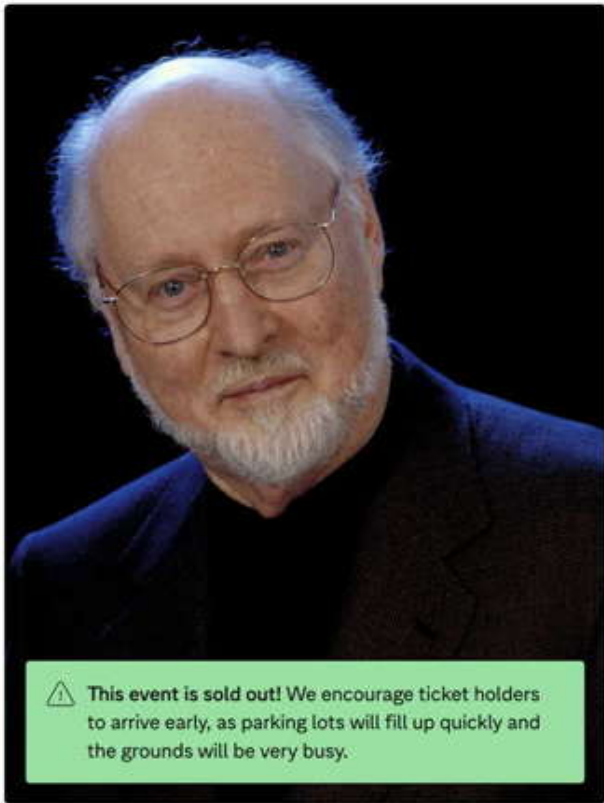
# John Williams – The Tanglewood 90th Birthday Celebration



Tanglewood  
Koussevitzky Music Shed, Lenox/Stockbridge, MA

*The George and Roberta Berry Concert*

Boston Symphony Orchestra  
Ken-David Masur, conductor  
with special guests  
J. William Hudgins, vibraphone  
Yo-Yo Ma, cello  
Branford Marsalis, saxophone  
Eric Revis, bass  
James Taylor, vocalist  
Jessica Zhou, harp



⚠ This event is sold out! We encourage ticket holders to arrive early, as parking lots will fill up quickly and the grounds will be very busy.

A screenshot from the Boston Symphony Orchestra website advertising the reviewed 20 August 2022 concert

**John Dante Prevedini:** On 20 August 2022, Tanglewood presented the George and Roberta Berry concert *John Williams — The Tanglewood 90th Birthday Celebration* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Ken-David Masur and featuring soloists Yo-Yo Ma, Branford Marsalis, James Taylor, Eric Revis, J William Hudgins, Jessica Zhou and a surprise guest appearance by Itzhak Perlman. The outdoor concert, which took place at the Koussevitzky Music Shed, was sold out to an estimated audience of about eighteen thousand. The total program ran for just over two hours with a brief intermission, and no apparent COVID restrictions were in place, though some of the performers were still masked on stage. The concert, for which Williams himself was present, included a printed program with notes prepared by Robert Kirzinger.

The theme of the evening was a tribute to nothing less than Williams' entire career in music, with a special focus on his relationship with Tanglewood, and the astounding breadth of this theme was accordingly reflected in the thoughtful variety of selections showcased. The program opened with six of his concert works, and the evening concluded with selections from several of his most popular film scores. The second half also featured two performances by James Taylor, whom the program notes describe as 'a longtime John Williams friend and fellow Tanglewood lover' — his rendition of 'Getting to Know You' from Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I* arranged by Charles Floyd with the BSO and a pared-down performance of his original song 'Sweet Baby James' alongside Yo-Yo Ma.

The concert works that constituted the first half of the program are notable in that — compared with the film score selections that followed — they remain relatively unknown to the public. Thus, the program provided a rare opportunity for general audiences to hear a range of John Williams' compelling concert music that they might not otherwise have had the occasion to encounter. The opening selection was *Sound the Bells!*, a bright and energetic fanfare which the program notes explain had been originally composed for the Boston Pops' 1993 Japan tour as a piece for brass and percussion only (hence the title's double meaning); this concert's version was an expanded arrangement for full orchestra. Next was the dark and forceful *Tributes (for Seiji!)*, which Kirzinger tells us was composed for the occasion of Seiji Ozawa's twenty-fifth anniversary as BSO music director in 1999.

The suspenseful and unpredictable *Highwood's Ghost* followed, subtitled 'An Encounter for Harp, Cello, and Orchestra for Jessica Zhou and Yo-Yo Ma'. This piece, according to Kirzinger, was composed in 2018 for the Leonard Bernstein centennial and was named after the allegedly haunted Highwood House, a building on the Tanglewood grounds.



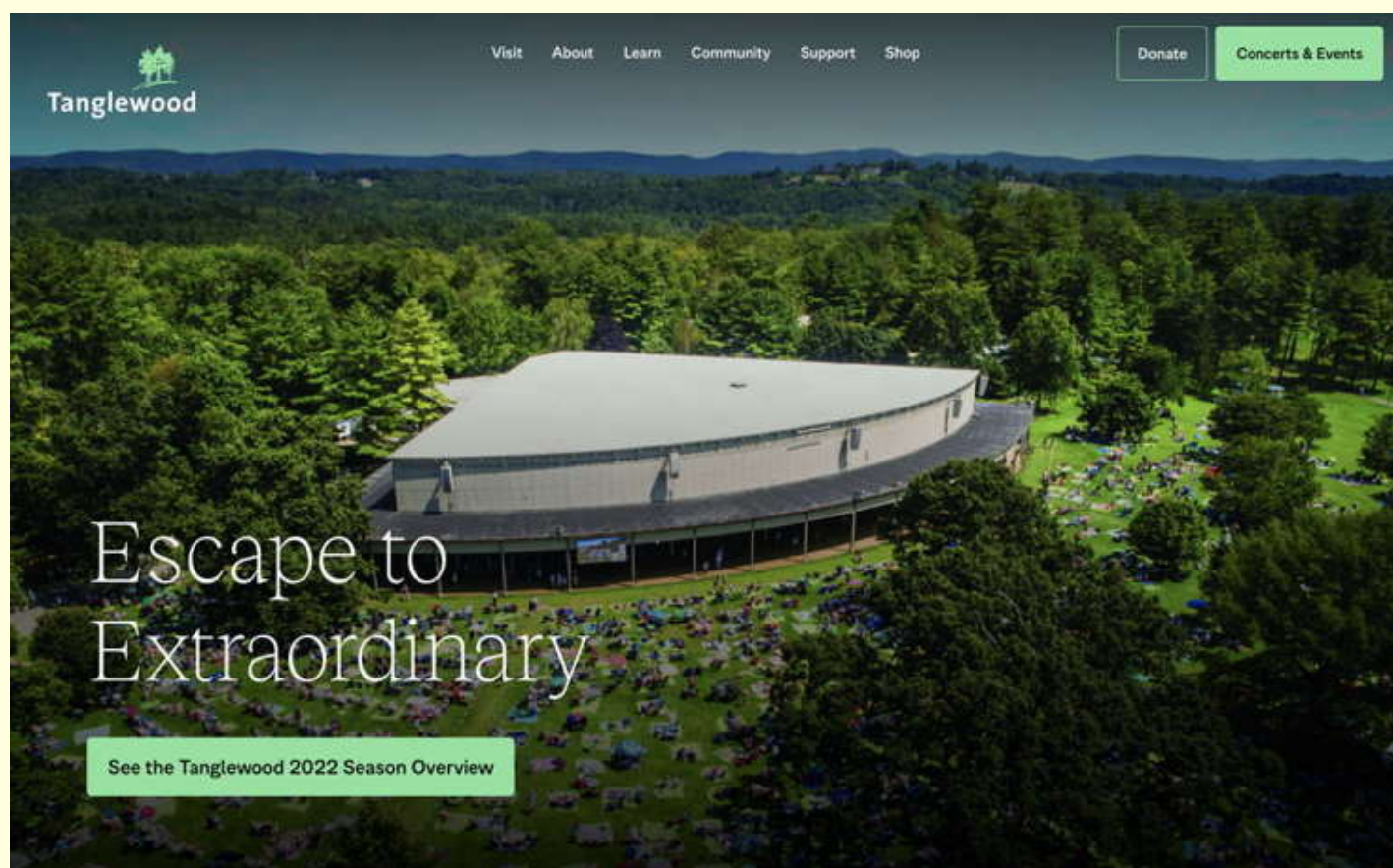
**Highwood House at Tanglewood, which lent its name to a work by John Williams**

Next was the short movement *Pickin'* from *Three Pieces for Solo Cello* (2000), which Yo-Yo Ma indicated in the introduction to his performance was John Williams' empathetic reflection on an imagined experience of being forced to pick cotton for days on end, interweaving layers of compositional material inspired by African American musical traditions into a convoluted and grotesque performance designed to literally make the cellist's hands 'hurt'. This was followed by *JUST DOWN WEST STREET...on the left*, a brief and energetic fanfare which the program notes indicate was composed for the venue's seventy-fifth anniversary in 2015 and whose name derives from a common direction given to visitors seeking the main entrance to the grounds. Following the intermission was *To Lenny! to Lenny!* (1988), a brilliant and surprising set of variations on Bernstein's 'New York, New York' theme from *On the Town* superimposed onto the rhythms of 'America' from his *West Side Story*.

After this was *Escapades*, a suite of three selections from the *Catch Me If You Can* score: *I. Closing In*, *II. Reflections* and *III. Joy Ride*. This score is noteworthy for effectively achieving a fusion of two genres — the orchestral concerto and the jazz trio (in this case, alto saxophone with vibraphone and double bass). The respective featured soloists were Branford Marsalis, J William Hudgins and Eric Revis. After the two selections by James Taylor, the concert concluded with three more selections from Williams' film music — a surprise performance of the *Schindler's List* main theme with featured soloist Itzhak Perlman, a medley of the throne room music and finale from *Star Wars: A New Hope* and an encore performance of the *Superman* main theme.

One of the biggest challenges with any attempt to commemorate the legacy of an artist so influential, so immediate and so omnipresent as John Williams is perhaps the task of conveying a fresh perspective on his work. After all, his film music has become so ubiquitous in the popular consciousness as to have found its way into our common vernacular of cultural references, whether or not we may even be musicians. The undulating *Jaws* music, the 'Imperial March' motif and the *Jurassic Park* themes, for instance, have effectively become leitmotifs through which the general public is able to exchange commentary on the events of the day through pure musical metaphor. Conversely, in dedicating so much of this particular program to his comparatively unfamiliar concert music, the event has the effect of curating a portrait of the artist as a craftsman whose work stands on its own beyond the semantic contexts of the cultural tropes (sharks, Darth Vader, dinosaurs, etc) it is so often primarily used to evoke.

Through the concert works, we hear the compositional voice of John Williams in a phenomenologically pure form where his mastery of melodic development, compositional form, orchestral color and programmatic storytelling itself takes center stage. I, for one, am glad to see John Williams' evolving legacy being curated at Tanglewood in this way on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday.



A screenshot from the Boston Symphony Orchestra website advertising the Tanglewood 2022 Season and featuring the Koussevitzky Music Shed

The eighteen thousand audience members, who spent over an hour in standstill traffic simply to turn 'just down West Street...on the left', deserve to know this John Williams — the craftsman without whom there could not be the icon. [MORE ...](#)

[MORE ARTICLES BY JOHN DANTE PREVEDINI ...](#)

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**Roderic Dunnett:** Bampton Classical Opera, near Oxford, England, always proves one of the most enjoyable, unmissable events of an English Summer.

Why should this be? Gilly French and Jeremy Gray founded this joyous, inspired company in 1993: its thirtieth anniversary will fall next year. Its staged operas are invariably sung in English, nearly always in their own lively, hilarious and brilliant new translations.

This year Bampton are staging not one, but two operas: one as usual in mid-July, late August and early September (the last, in London), What we saw and heard — and relished — this summer was Haydn's *// mondo della luna*. Bampton has produced numerous stellar productions, but this — the first of Haydn's operas to be staged (in 1776) at Esterházy, Hungary (where he was employed from 1766 until 1790), which they with typical cleverness renamed 'Fool Moon' — was definitely one of their best.



Enter the supposed moon folk — Bonafide, Cecco and the two exquisite dancers in Bampton Classical Opera's *Fool Moon*.  
Photo © 2022 Anthony Hall

However also this September (see below) will come a staging of Handel's previously lost and 'magnificent' 1707 comic-pastoral cantata, *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno*, written during the young composer's 1706-10 sojourn in Italy.

Bampton's priority is breathing life into forgotten eighteenth-century repertoire, the bulk of it ignored by the UK's major companies, in lively, relaxed, mostly outdoor, jovial and accessible productions of exceptional musical standards at a manageable price, with some of the best of the country's young singers. Likewise gifted conductors, many starting out on their careers.

In their convivial settings over three decades they have ferreted out countless gems, like the Spaniard Vicente Martiñ y Soler's *La capricciosa corretta* (written for London with libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte; its composer was much admired by Mozart); young Stephen Storace's *The Twins* — after Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* (again, libretto by Da Ponte, and also a beloved protégé of Mozart). Brilliantly, Salieri's superb, Verdi-rivalling *Falstaff*, the bass title role played by the magnificent Mark Saberton, then a Bampton regular; Mozart, Schikaneder and friends' *The Philosopher's Stone*; Nicolas Isouard's *Cinderella*; Georg (Jiří) Benda's *Romeo and Juliet* — embracing in total ten or more UK premieres.

Gilly French and Jeremy Gray have set an enviable and outstanding pattern by giving a first break to singers and (here) conductors who now have world reputations. Edward Gardner (no less: ENO, CBSO, Norway, now LPO); Christian Curnyn (with Laurence Cummings, the outstanding British baroque

specialist); Paul Wingfield (now Head of the Vocal Department at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire); Jason Lai (formerly assistant at the BBC Philharmonic); the cheerfully extrovert Australian Alexander Briger, nephew of Sir Charles Mackerras; Simon Over (who founded the celebrated Southbank Sinfonia for young (post-Music College) players in 2002, and directs the Anghiara Festival near Arezzo in Tuscany, Italy); ENO's Murray Hipkin (who acted as this year's Haydn's repetiteur, possibly in London rehearsals), Robin Newton, who merits far more recognition; and the grandfather of them all, David Owen Norris. Quite a list. But Bampton, year on year, has a gift for winking out talent.

The story of *Il mondo della luna* is yet another of the fifty-plus opera libretti by the (much-set) playwright Carlo Goldoni. (Haydn used I think three, but *Il mondo*, or texts poached from it, was used by over half a dozen other composers.) It's about a crazed, addled pseudo-philosopher (Bonafede — baritone Jonathan Evers) whom, being excessively obsessed with telescopes and things planetary, a gathering of his family and friends manage to kid that he has indeed travelled to the moon. Much humour follows, wonderfully and bizarrely captured in Jeremy Gray's as usual ingenious production (as both director and designer).

In short, it's a giggle from start to finish in this joyous, beautifully sung staging. One of the special things about Bampton's idyllic garden setting — gloriously apt for picnics — at the old Deanery in that charming village is that, with the help of some perfectly placed background box bushes, every word bounces back and can be heard. For once, no surtitles are needed for texts in English. Another top benefit is Bampton's own orchestra, which has got better and better over the years as players enthusiastically choose to return: indeed some of them wouldn't miss it for anything.

Here, under Thomas Blunt, who has an astounding CV at the highest levels, and who drew some of the best, spot-on precise comic bonbons — indeed teasing merrymaking — I have yet heard from Bampton's orchestra. Woodwind exciting as a full section, in ensemble or in numerous obbligati — no clarinets at this point, of course. Every time the bassoon intervenes, such as following Bonafede's snappy first aria, there was a special tingle. The strings were especially brilliant in several *pianissimi* (actually even better — quadruple *piano*) that Blunt held them to, and hilarious music for the 'flight', for instance; quite spectacular, or rather lulling — preceding the duet between Ecclitico — originally an alto, but later altered by Haydn to a tenor — and Flaminia. Or the amazingly original, all but daring Overture to Act II. Almost exotic horns, important roles for cellos with or without double bass support: it was all there. And who said Haydn couldn't write decent operas? (Bampton have specialised in Haydn and rare Gluck: good for them.) Here Haydn's deftness and wit could just as easily be Mozart.



**All girls together: Flaminia (Siân Dicker), Lisetta (Margo Arsane) and Clarice (Iúnó Connolly) plus moon fairies (Harriet Cameron and Tilly Goodwin) in Bampton Classical Opera's *Fool Moon*. Photo © 2022 Anthony Hall**

It was all classic Bampton: if anything, it confirmed that Bampton never fails. **MORE BY RODERIC DUNNETT**

**Giuseppe Pennisi:** *Otello* is the 2022 Rossini Opera Festival's third opera. It concluded the operatic part of the event on the evening of 11 August: a magnificent conclusion, although there were reservations about the stage direction. The opera had not been seen in Pesaro since 2008, when an edition co-produced with the Opéra de Lausanne and the Deutsche Oper Berlin was presented. In Berlin, it entered the repertoire.

The plot is based on the first part and the end of Shakespeare's tragedy but takes place entirely in Venice. In the first and second acts, the noble Elmiro wants to marry Desdemona to the son of doge Rodrigo, but the girl has secretly married Otello. Iago hatches the intrigue that will lead to the tragedy. Rossini and Francesco Berio di Salsa also wrote a 'happy ending' for audiences in Rome and Florence, who did not like to leave the theatre in tears and were accustomed to 'serious operas' with a final rondo. In the nineteenth century (before Verdi's *Otello* appeared), the work was enormously successful. The silence must be attributed to the fragility of the libretto — the librettist Francesco Berio di Salsa certainly had neither the culture nor the style of Arrigo Boito — as well as to the vocal difficulties. Not the least of these was having three tenors to counterbalance a soprano of agility capable of both a reckless treble and very serious low tones.

The opera, in fact, was built for Isabella Colbran, eight years older than Rossini and later his first wife, who at the time had a *ménage à trois* with the young composer and the mature impresario Barbaja. Colbran was a rare 'amphibious soprano' able to reach a very high register and then descend to an almost alto one. To this real war machine, Rossini contrasted three tenors: one with a wide and flattened vocality sometimes almost Wagnerian (Otello), a contraltino of agility, with a texture from E flat to C sharp (Rodrigo), and a third with a dark timbre almost baritone but poured into belcanto (Iago).

In this Rossini Opera Festival (ROF) edition, Desdemona is Eleonora Buratto, one of the rare Italian sopranos who can reach very high tones and then go down to the very low ones. A great interpretation especially in the third act from the 'song of the willow' to the finale. [MORE ...](#)



Eleonora Buratto as Desdemona in the Rossini Opera Festival's production of *Otello* in Pesaro.  
Photo © 2022 Amati Bacciardi

**Giuseppe Pennisi:** On 2 August 2022 I was at the opening night of Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, the last title of Teatro dell'Opera di Roma's summer season at the Terme di Caracalla (Baths of Caracalla) in Rome. *Il barbiere di Siviglia* is a 'Roman' opera, as it had its world premiere on 20 January 1816, so a little more than two hundred years ago, at the Teatro Argentina, where, due to a poor staging and an anti-Rossini claque, it was a resounding fiasco. Nonetheless, the young composer knew that he had written a masterpiece (which would have earned him great copyrights throughout his life, even in the decades in which Verdi's melodrama had displaced Rossini's repertoire from the billboards). It should be noted that in Rome and its surroundings is not only staged the production of *The Barber* signed by the Teatro dell'Opera but also others, staged in various spaces by small companies to cheer up the summer evenings. It is also useful to remember that, a few years ago, Teatro dell'Opera di Roma co-produced with Teatro Massimo di Palermo a project called 'opera camion' which brought *Il barbiere* to the suburbs. Not a few of those who then enjoyed a super cheap *Barber* queued up to get inexpensive seats at the Baths of Caracalla.

The production at the Baths of Caracalla — an audience of 2,400 seats in the stalls — was conceived for the summer of 2014, when it was presented on only a couple of evenings due to union tensions and strikes. It was revived in 2016. The 'word of mouth' of those who saw it, meant that on 2 August — the first performance — the vast stalls area was overflowing. And so was the gallery (1,200 seats): it seems that even the repeat performances (until 6 August 2022) are almost sold out.



A scene from Teatro dell'Opera di Roma's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* in Rome. Photo © 2022 Fabrizio Sansoni

*Il barbiere di Siviglia* at the Baths of Caracalla is set in the Hollywood of the 1920s when historical blockbusters were shot, comic films were based on gags and cakes in the face and the movie industry was going towards the 'talkies'. In this context, Almaviva is a rich and powerful movie producer. It is above all a caricature of George M Cohan, a great author of musical comedies between 1904 and 1942. He is also known for a patriotic song — *Over There* — the most loved and the most sung by American troops in the First and Second World Wars and in the Korean War. In this edition, Almaviva is not the usual handsome young great seducer; he is undoubtedly attractive, not for his physique but rather for the wallet, for the bank accounts and to be able to finance blockbusters like the one of which we see a large excerpt, while in the pit Stefano Montanari conducts the well-known symphony. [MORE ...](#) [MORE BY GIUSEPPE PENNISI ...](#)

**Mike Wheeler:** Since Derby Concert Orchestra conductor Jonathan Trout had contracted Covid, his place was taken by Bob Chasey, a college friend of his, I'm told, and a former violinist with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. He seems to have established a good rapport with the players, so it was a pity there was no information about him in the programme, even though there had clearly been enough time to change the conductor's name on the front cover.

A Nordic first half first opened with Sibelius' *Karelia Suite*, the first movement picking up after a slightly uncertain start. While the second movement felt a touch stolid at times, the third movement had plenty of energy.

In Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite No 1*, Morning Mood felt fresh, followed by a plangent, dignified account of Åse's Death. Anitra's Dance was graceful, while In the Hall of the Mountain King (which Grieg once claimed that he couldn't bear to listen to any more) was rumbustious.



**Bob Chasey**

Dvořák's Symphony No 9, 'From the New World', comprised the second half. The first movement held together well, though an unscripted acceleration towards the end wasn't strictly necessary. A gently flowing and atmospheric second movement featured Vicki Newall's expressive cor anglais solo. The third movement's dances were rhythmically alert, and though the performance of the finale felt rather episodic, the big final climax was powerful without losing clarity, and the concluding fade-out was nicely judged.

Last-minute re-arrangements no doubt contributed to the orchestra occasionally seeming at less than its best. In particular, there were some odd details of balance. Horns tended to dominate, as did the tuba and, in the Dvořák particularly, the clarinets' tone sometimes cut through with a noticeably sharp edge. The timpani, too, were overpowering at times, though that may have been partly the result of where I was sitting. All the same, there was some fine playing, and the performances were shaped with care for more than just passing details.

**Mike Wheeler:** The Delphine Trio — Magdalenna Krstevska, clarinet, Jobine Siekman, cello, and Roelof Temmingh, piano — was founded two years ago at the Royal College of Music. The group has a deliberate policy of exploring under-represented areas of the repertoire, and this recital was a fine example — The Assembly Rooms, Buxton, UK, 12 July 2022.

Beethoven is not exactly under-represented, but his Clarinet Trio, Op 11, really could do with being played more often. It may not be particularly profound, but it is hugely enjoyable. In the first movement, the players, following their carefree way with the opening, brought out hints of the wildness beneath the music's drawing-room manners. They made the second movement flow gently, and moved from the spirited to the more lyrical, and back, in the various instrumental dialogues in the concluding set of variations.

Kenneth Leighton's *Fantasy on an American Hymn Tune* is even less of a repertoire piece. In fact, the composer himself is due for rediscovery. The hymn tune is the well-known 'At the River', printed at the front of the score, and which the players sang as an introduction. In their hands, the Fantasy was full of ear-catching detail: the tolling piano writing at the start, Leighton's typically knotty counterpoint, the jazzy dance-impulse the players explored in the second of the six main sections. Magdalenna Krstevska and Jobine Siekman let rip in their double cadenza, making a telling contrast with the cello-piano threnody that followed. The piano's disruptive presence in the final section pointed up the long, quiet withdrawal at the end.



The Delphine Trio — from left to right, Jobine Siekman, cello, Magdalenna Krstevska, clarinet and Roelof Temmingh, piano

*Oblivion* is one of Piazzolla's best-known short pieces, which the Delphine Trio delivered in all its soulful, bluesy sultriness.

American composer Robert Muczynski ought to be better known, outside of the States, if his Fantasy Trio is typical. There was driving energy, and a delightful throwaway ending, in the first movement. The second movement is a nocturne, whose opening cello solo here seemed to evoke a solitary figure in an Edward Hopper painting. The dance rhythms and smoother textures of the third movement were well contrasted. After a lyrical introduction, the trio had fun with the last movement, with its cheeky, deliberate allusion to the theme tune from *The Flintstones*. [MORE ...](#) [MORE BY MIKE WHEELER](#) [MORE FROM BUXTON](#) [LATEST REVIEWS](#)

## CD SPOTLIGHT — DELECTABLE PROGRAMMES

**Gerald Fenech:** Johann Wilhelm Wilms (1772-1847) was born in Cologne only two years after, and some kilometres distant from, Beethoven. During his career, Wilms was a force to be reckoned with in Amsterdam, where he lived from the age of nineteen till the end of his life. Indeed, his music was actually performed more frequently than Beethoven's for a time, and his orchestral works were played in such musical centres as Leipzig.

Besides chamber music and solo sonatas, Wilms composed several symphonies and solo concertos for oboe, flute, clarinet, bassoon and cello, as well as seven piano concertos, two of which are lost. The extant five, which he wrote for his own use, were published between 1799 and 1820. He also performed regularly as soloist in concertos by other composers.

As the years went by, Wilms began to retreat from the public eye, either because of setbacks in his private life or because he was disillusioned with the superficial reaction of the Amsterdam audiences. By the time of his demise in 1847, he was remembered almost exclusively as the composer of the Dutch National Anthem, which the country used from 1815 till 1932, and for the Dutch premieres of the Mozart and Beethoven concertos.

In time for the 250th anniversary of Wilms' birth, Ronald Brautigam has edited the five surviving piano concertos and presents the first three on this Volume 1. All three concertos are in three movements and, as is to be expected, they are strongly influenced by Mozart's and Beethoven's pieces in the genre.

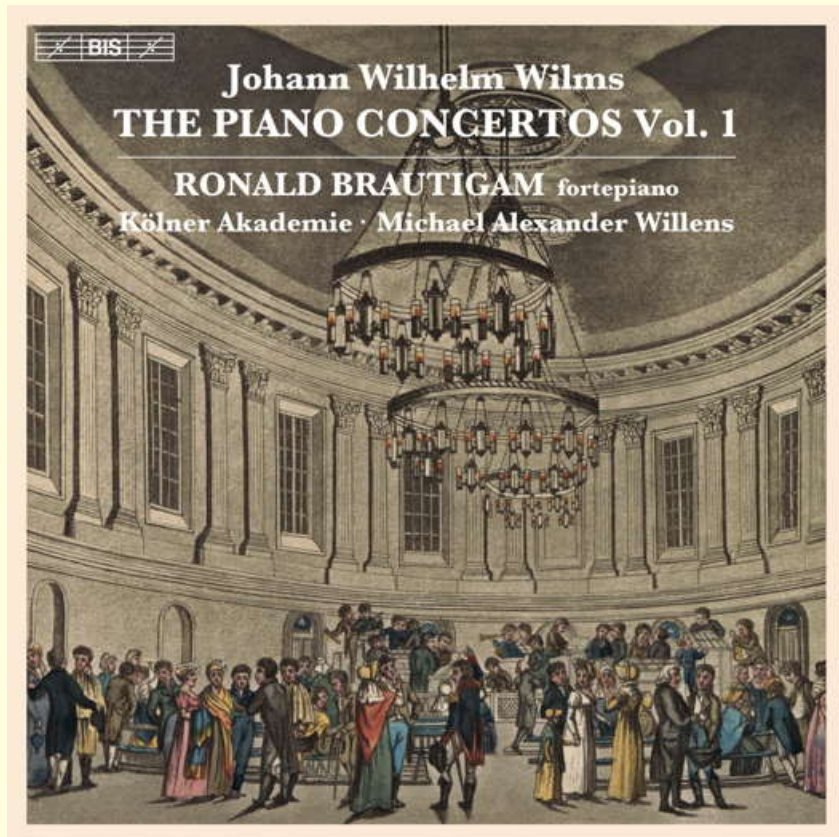
Not short on melodic invention, the quality of writing is gloriously fresh, and the two outer movements in each concerto are as lively as anyone would wish for.

There is a depth of expression in all three and the music is consistently virtuosic, refined and harmonically ingenious. Brautigam's advocacy for these works borders on the obsessive, and his playing is not only full-blooded but captures the spirit of the age with immense fidelity.

Like a true artist, Brautigam never resorts to self-gratification, but remains loyal to the composer's wishes all along. Michael Alexander Willens and his Kölner Akademie lend wholehearted support.

This is great music-making that reveals that the Romantic piano concerto did not end with Mozart and Beethoven. Indeed, there were other less famous names who carried the torch into the twentieth century. Wilms was one of those links. A delectable programme in finely balanced sound and eye-catching annotations. Hopefully, Volume 2 is just round the corner.

**Gerald Fenech:** Born in Stockholm, Ludvig Norman (1831-1885) grew up in humble circumstances due to his father's early death. He showed an exceptional musical talent at an early age, and with financial assistance from many influential persons, among them the famous soprano Jenny Lind, at the age of sixteen he went to study at the renowned Leipzig Conservatory. Returning to Stockholm as a professional musician and composer, he set out to raise the artistic level of musical life in his country.



'Brautigam's advocacy for these works borders on the obsessive, and his playing is not only full-blooded but captures the spirit of the age with immense fidelity.'

**ONDINE** **LUDVIG NORMAN**  
Symphony No. 3  
Overtures

Oulu Symphony Orchestra  
Johannes Gustavsson



'... rich in melody, colour and wide-ranging harmonies.'

Over the years he worked in many roles, but he was appreciated mostly as a conductor. Not yet thirty, he landed the post of chief conductor at the Royal Opera in Stockholm in 1861. He remained in the job for eighteen years where his work was highly praised for the level of performance that was at par with the best in Europe.

As a composer, Norman was not as successful. At the time folk music, opera and operetta were what the people wanted. But these did not appeal to Norman, who was more interested in chamber music, piano and orchestral works. Considered to be one of Sweden's main symphonists, Norman wrote three symphonies, three overtures and a funeral march in memory of August Söderman.

In 1864 Norman married Wilhelmina Neruda, a violin

virtuoso of some fame, who hailed from Moravia. At first, the couple were very happy and they had two sons, but gradually their relationship turned sour. By 1869, a permanent breakup was inevitable. Being a Catholic, Wilma could not get a divorce, so they simply separated. Norman was devastated, and his enormous grief had a lasting impact on the last eighteen years of his life, a period of constant illness and depression.

Miraculously, all this suffering did not deter him from continuing with his creative activity. Indeed, three of the pieces on this recording date from this turbulent period. The Symphony No 3 in D minor, Op 58, was written in 1881, but not performed until 1885 after Norman's death. Here the tonal language is concentrated and the technique is refined.

The opening is vigorous and succinct and this is followed by a delicate and slightly hesitant second subject. The following movement opens with a solemn melody, but this mood soon changes to a more mobile and temperamental one.

The third is characterized by subtle motifs, pronounced rhythms and an elegant treatment of orchestral sounds. The symphony is brought to a close by a joyful and energetic concluding movement.

The Overture in E flat, Op 21, was composed in 1856 and first performed one year later. Here Norman, sticking to a traditional structure, combines formal elegance with contagious joy.

The Overture *Antony and Cleopatra*, Op 37, is a highly dramatic piece reflecting the passion and tragic end of the two lovers. It was composed for a first performance of Shakespeare's play on 28 March 1881.

The Funeral March in B flat minor, Op 46, was written in 1876 in memory of August Söderman, Norman's colleague at the Royal Opera, who died at the early age of forty-three. This tripartite work is deeply expressive, sophisticated in sonority and harmonically evocative, besides being infused with a sincere heartfelt grief.

Sadly, Ludvig Norman's music is still waiting to be discovered and explored. And why not? This issue reveals a composer full of energy and invention, and his writing is rich in melody, colour and wide-ranging harmonies. Johannes Gustavsson and his Oulu Symphony Orchestra players deliver exhilarating performances, and in their hands the music sounds even more exciting than one expects. Recommended with conviction.

**Gerald Fenech:** Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) is, together with Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884), the foremost Czech composer of his time. Indeed, Czech Romanticism owes all of its impact to these two giants, who practically revolutionised the musical world in their country singlehandedly, particularly the symphonic genre. Dvořák made his name with a series of works that championed Czech national identity, winning international acclaim in the late 1870s and 1880s with pieces such as the *Slavonic Dances* and the Violin Concerto.

His nine symphonies are considered the benchmark of his output, but sadly only the last three (Nos 7-9) enjoy the popularity they so richly deserve. The first six hardly ever garner a performance, although Nos 5 and 6 do get an occasional performance, albeit spasmodically.

Dvořák composed his Seventh Symphony in 1885 for the Philharmonic Society in London, and the piece was premiered on 22 April of that same year at St James Hall, London. It was a huge success, and is considered by critics and musicologists alike as a pure work of art comparable to Beethoven. Dvořák knew what he was writing. His remark after drafting the first movement, 'God grant that this Czech music will move the world', says it all. It did indeed.

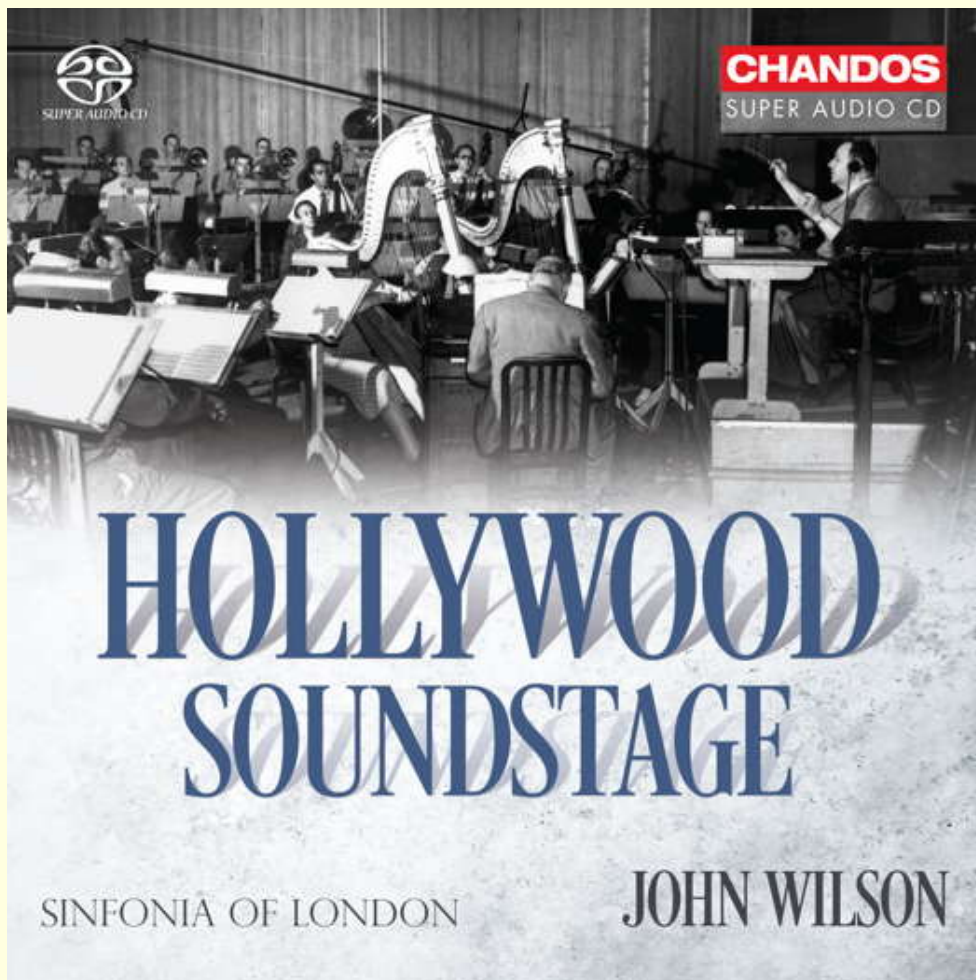
So, too, did the Eighth, premiered on 22 February 1890 in Prague, and with the composer himself conducting. The piece took the musical world by storm, and has remained a firm favourite ever since. What is so attractive in this symphony, apart from its highly imaginative structure, are the uplifting melodies and the energy of Bohemian dance rhythms.

The Ninth, 'From the New World', Dvořák's eternal symphonic swansong, was completed in May 1893. It was premiered on 16 December 1893 at Carnegie Hall, New York, and the reception was indescribable. With its striking melodic themes based on the composer's impressions of North America, and imaginative interpretation of its music, the work has entranced listeners for nearly 130 years. Another attractive feature of the piece is its nostalgic aura that captures Dvořák's longing for his friends and family in Prague with telling effect.

These works were recorded live at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in February 2020 by Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the reviews were ecstatic. These performances are a moving experience, and Dudamel amplifies the turbulent emotions of each work with a power and intensity that you do not hear every day. Indeed, the way he connects the dark inner world of these pieces with the spiritual roots of Dvořák's homeland is just captivating. This is an issue that will set you on fire. Just buy it — you won't get burned.



'... Dudamel amplifies the turbulent emotions of each work with a power and intensity that you do not hear every day.'



**Gerald Fenech:** Sinfonia of London rose to fame in the 1950s as the leading recording orchestra of the day, appearing in the musical credits of more than three hundred films, including the 1958 soundtrack by Bernard Herrmann for Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. Reformed by John Wilson in 2018 as a recording orchestra, and made up of some of London's finest orchestral musicians, their first recording of Korngold's Symphony in F sharp won the orchestral award from *BBC Music Magazine*, and drew critical acclaim worldwide. Erich Wolfgang Korngold's (1897-1957) Overture from *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*, which opens this exhilarating programme, is an excellent demonstration of his rich, chromatic sound-world that set a blueprint for the Hollywood sound and so many composers that followed.

'... an absolutely rewarding hour ...'

The score for *The Wizard of Oz* by Herbert Stothart (1885-

1949) won an Oscar, and it is his suite from the movie that features here. The programme also includes some exciting suites from *Now Voyager* by Max Steiner (1888-1971) and *Rebecca* (receiving here its first recording) by Franz Waxman (1906-1967).

*Laura* by David Raksin (1912-2004) and *The Sandpiper* by Johnny Mandel (1925-2020) are represented by their respective main titles. *My Fair Lady* by Frederick Loewe (1901-1988) makes its bow with the delightful 'Embassy Waltz' and 'Transylvanian March'.

The finale to this memorable collection is the rousing 'Street Scene' from *How to Marry a Millionaire* by Alfred Newman (1900-1970).

This is an absolutely rewarding hour of scintillating film music that stirs in one's memory the days when the silver screen used to lure millions into the world of fantasy and entertainment. Indeed, those were the decades when cinema was the real thing. A spectacular release, beautifully annotated, sumptuously recorded, passionately performed, that will keep you engrossed from beginning to end. Do not tarry, book your ticket without delay and just let your hair down.

Gerald also listens to Charles Koechlin's *Seven Stars Symphony* on Capriccio, to César Franck piano music on Stradivarius, to an unusual choral arrangement of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* on Albion Records and to Telemann cantatas on CPO.

**MORE FROM GERALD FENECH ...**

**Geoff Pearce:** Douglas Knehans (born 1957) is an important living composer whose music is quite widely performed in many countries of the world. He has written in a wide range of genres and his music is attractive and approachable. This recording presents two works from 2019, *Mist Waves*: a chaconne for solo violin and string orchestra, and his *Cloud Ossuary* — Symphony No 4. There are excellent notes in the booklet which explain the meaning of the works, and the booklet also includes the poem by the composer's daughter, Katerina Knehans — *Bones and All*, which inspired the composition of the symphony.

The composer describes *Mist Waves* as a 'kind of loose chaconne' based on an eight bar phrase, and was inspired by the clouds that appear above landscapes and form waves. The opening is quiet and gently reflective, with a soaring violin against a slowly pulsating string accompaniment. The mood is maintained throughout, and the variation showing the gently shifting quality of these cloud waves, is reflected by whereabouts in its range the solo violin is playing. This is a very meditative work that I find relaxing and satisfying. Pavel Wallinger and the Brno Philharmonic strings deliver a very beautifully controlled performance.

*The Cloud Ossuary* — Douglas Knehans' Fourth Symphony — is in three movements of increasing length. The first movement, 'The Ossein Cage', is described by the composer as a 'vigorous and somewhat failed rant against containment'. It starts slowly and almost imperceptively but gains in momentum and volume. This depicts an attempt to escape a cage of dead bone, at first exploratory and tentative, but rising to a state of desperation. This is a great movement displaying the composer's fine orchestration skills. The end of the movement is calm, perhaps reflecting that the escape has failed and the imprisoned is worn out.

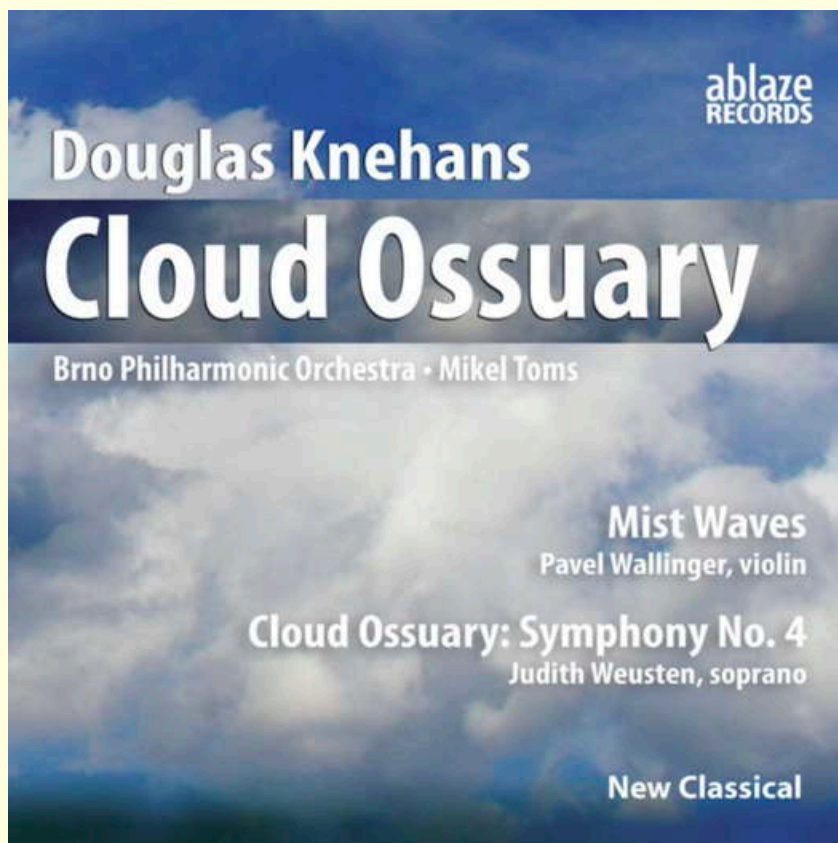
The second movement, 'Breathe Clouded', is a veiled slow movement, in contrast to the first rather anguished movement. It presents a somewhat dark reflection with a rather dreamlike feeling of unease sometimes surfacing, before falling back into the dream-like meditation. The whole work is nebulous and veiled and there is some beautifully effective writing. There is some stand out solo writing for cor anglais in this movement and this is often mirrored by the solo trumpet.

The final movement, 'Bones and All', employs the voice of Judith Weusten and is longer than both the two previous movements. Elements of the first two movements are employed here (such as the cor anglais melody of the second movement), as well as the poem on which the symphony is based.

At the third section, following the structure of the poem, the music livens and elements of the first movement make themselves felt.

There is anguish and struggle here but this subsides and becomes mournful as the narrator is looking at the dead body and rearranging it so that it looks more peaceful.

This is a deeply felt and finely conceived work, and in concept and in many places I find parallels with the last movement of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. There is sorrow and resignation here, but also hope. The fourth verse is almost exultant, rather in the manner of a Bach chorale prelude. The final two lines of the poem end the work with an almost unworldly acceptance and peace.



'Pavel Wallinger and the Brno Philharmonic strings deliver a very beautifully controlled performance.'

On hearing these two works, I felt inspired and hopeful for the future of classical music, as they are unpretentious and a great example of what contemporary music can be. The performances by all concerned, especially the soprano and violin soloists, as well as the direction and great orchestra leave me wanting to hear more of this composer and his works. I think this recording will have wide appeal and I hope to hear much more of the composer's works. I also commend the recording quality and informative booklet that accompanies it.



'... stellar performances ...'

**Geoff Pearce:** This is a great disc released on the Onyx label featuring a conductor I had not heard of, Domingo Hindoyan. If the quality of these performances is anything to go by, I suspect that we shall hear a great deal more of this conductor, Venezuela born, and a graduate of the famed El Sistema music system before training in Europe. He is now the chief conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a real change of direction of French music, and the works recorded here represent that change. There was an interest in the music of Asia generally, including various scales that made their way into some of these composers' works, and a fascination with the 'East' generally. This is also reflected in orchestral colour and often sensuous subject matter.

The disc opens with Debussy's *poème dansé* or 'danced poem', *Jeux*, written for Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes in 1912 and first performed the following year. It depicts the search by a boy and two girls for a tennis ball, on an early evening in summer. They embrace only to disappear into the darkness of the garden when a second tennis ball is thrown towards them by an unknown person. The music is mysterious, at times playful, and always atmospheric. The performance here is very fine, as is the recording quality, and the orchestra responds to the quick changes of mood, to bring this colourful score to life. There are about sixty changes of tempo in this work, so it demands utmost concentration to bring it off. This is only the second time I have heard this work, which is not performed nearly as often as it should be.

Albert Roussel (1869-1937) is somewhat under-represented in concert programmes and recordings these days. This is a pity, as he is a very fine composer indeed. Whilst his output is not large, it does encompass a wide range of genres, and he was an important teacher of Martinů, a composer I am particularly fond of.

Roussel wrote a two act ballet in 1931, his Opus 43, *Bacchus and Ariadne*. This recording features the second suite, drawn from the second act of the ballet. This suite is in seven short movements and the plot is loosely described in the accompanying booklet.

The movements are quite contrasting and colourful, reflecting the story, and they range from quiet despair to passion and seduction. The work ends with a bacchanal.

The all-time favourite *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* by Debussy, an evocative depiction of a Mallarmé poem of the same name, was first performed in 1894. It was Debussy's first orchestral masterpiece, and arguably his most popular work today. 'Music is a dream from which the veils have been lifted,' wrote Debussy while working on his *Prélude*. 'It's not even the expression of a feeling; it's the feeling itself.' This performance is quite lovely: Cormac Henry is a very fine flautist and his delivery is perfection. He is supported here by fine playing from the rest of the orchestra, beautiful woodwind solos, detailed brass playing and a lush carpet of strings. This is as fine a performance as you will hear anywhere.

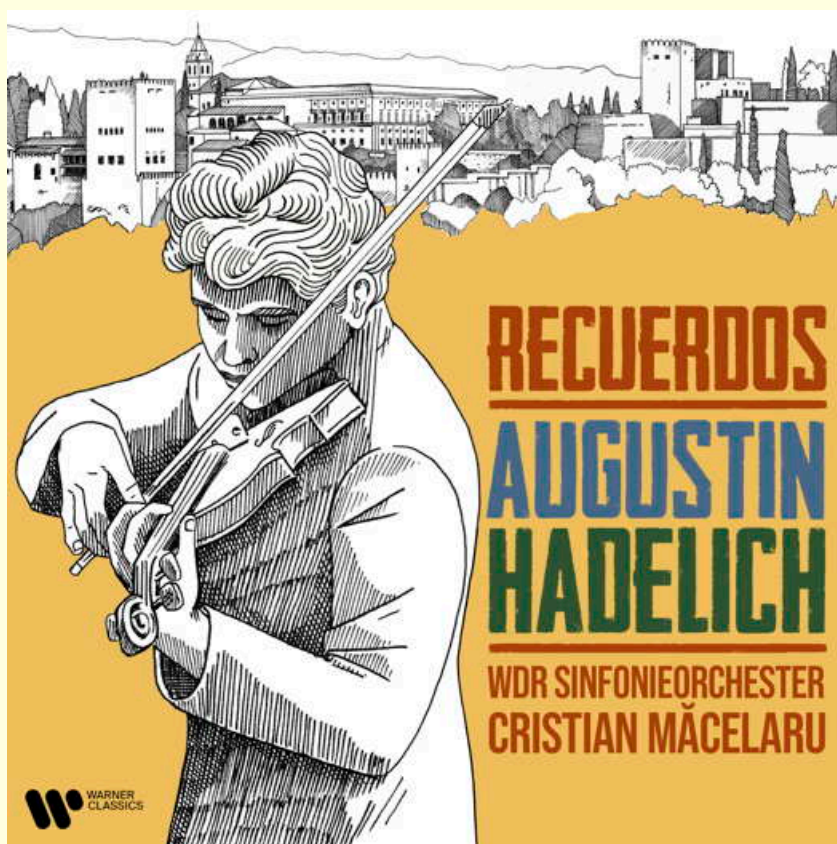
*La Peri* by Paul Dukas (1865-1935) is one of the composers' few works to survive because the composer was very self critical and destroyed much of his work. *La Peri* (1912) was his last major orchestral work. It is short, consisting of a small fanfare and *Poème dansé*. The work describes young Persian Prince Iskander (Alexander the Great)'s search for the lotus flower of immortality, and his encounter with La Peri (The fairy). After being exalted that he found the flower, he steals it from La Peri, only to have it taken from him by its rightful owner, after it had been altered by the creator spirit Ormuzd. Iskander, resigned, awaits to die. I have another recording of this work, and have always enjoyed the colour and exotic nature of this music. I have always regretted that Dukas destroyed so much of his music, if the quality of *La Peri* and *L'Apprenti sorcier* are anything to go by.

If you are a lover of French music from the last few years of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, this is the disc for you. There is one well known work and three works that are not performed or recorded as often, and they receive stellar performances from this very fine orchestra and conductor. The programme notes, although short, are informative and the recording quality is very pleasing.

**Geoff Pearce:** Augustin Hadelich is one of those violinists who has inspired and delighted me since I first heard a recording some years ago. His online instructions on various aspects of violin playing and repertoire are very informative and I try to watch as many as I can. He has a wide ranging repertoire, including some composers whose violin works receive not as much exposure as they should: Enescu and Ysaÿe. He has performed all over the world and I am excited that he will be playing the Brahms concerto in Sydney later on this year and I will be able to attend.

The first work on this disc is a work by the great violinist and composer Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) — his *Carmen Fantasy*, Op 25. It is in five short movements. One thing that impresses me very much about Hadelich's playing is that he phrases very musically and beautifully, has a wide dynamic range and produces a great singing melodic line. He is also a great story teller and the tale of *Carmen* really comes alive.

His playing is effortless, and whilst this is a virtuosic showpiece, one does not get the impression of a flashy player with no depth, in fact I enjoy his playing in the slower and lyrical sections as his music making seduces one. My only quibble is that sometimes, in the louder sections, the recording level in the orchestra is a little bit bright for my taste.



'... an impressive technique and tone ...'

The second work, the Prokofiev Violin Concerto in G minor, Op 63, has a connection with the Spanish flavour of the first work, in the fact that the last movement employs castanets. The work was also partly written in Spain and received its premiere about six months before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. I think the soloist has a real affinity with this concerto as Prokofiev himself was a real story teller. Right from the outset of the first movement, one can sense that Augustin Hadelich has really captured the essence of this work with its broad sweep of melody and quick changes of mood and *tempi*. The technical demands are considerable, but this only enhances the narrative.

The second movement, a complete contrast to the first, is, in the violinist's words, 'one of the greatest melodies in the violin literature'. The violin soars over an accompaniment consisting of largely plucked strings and clarinet at first and this grows into a second section where the orchestral presence is more assertive, but in concert with the soloist. This movement, like the first, takes you off in quite a few directions and changes of *tempi* and mood, and again, Hadelich's ability as a story teller is paramount to making this a great performance.

The final movement, a lively Russian dance, is full of colour and feels almost ecstatic but perhaps a little drunk too. Hadelich rises to the formidable technical requirements and his playing is colourful and effortless.

The Violin Concerto in D minor, Op 15 of Benjamin Britten is an early work, written when the composer was just twenty-three, in 1938. It was composed for the Spanish violinist Antonio Brosca, and was regarded by Britten as one of his greatest works. It has long been a favourite of mine, and I am pleased to see that, in the last few years, it has gained greater recognition. Britten was a firm pacifist, and given the time that the work was completed, some of the anguish he felt by the events of the Spanish civil war must have filtered through. This concerto has some very difficult passages for violin, and this may be one reason why it took quite a while to be readily taken up and performed.

After a timpani motif introduction — certainly an acknowledgement to Beethoven — the violin enters, lyrically and sweetly, but this soon rises in power into a frenzy, before a militaristic march takes over. Whilst the ferocity peters out and a slower, calmer section ends the movement, there is a general feeling of unease and disquiet that stays with one until the end of this movement.

The second movement takes off in a whirlwind of sound, and one can hear the influence of Prokofiev in this music as it becomes more frenetic. This is followed by the second subject, one of the most emotionally devastating sections of the concerto, and the section that made the strongest impressions on me when I first heard this piece. Hadelich says that the cadenza (which utilises musical material from both the second subject and also the motif from the opening of the first movement) pushes the soloist to his technical and emotional limits and his notes explain why it reinforces the musical anguish of the music.

The last movement, a passacaglia, is the longest of the three, and again, contains much contrast, from despair, trying to escape that despair, to 'a bombastic sense of patriotism'. This is a movement where the anguish of the composer, in a world where there seems little hope, is visceral. Hadelich says that performing this work is a devastating musical journey, no matter how often he performs it. I feel that he really owns this concerto, perhaps more than any other recording of it I have heard. (I have the recording by Mark Lubotsky with Britten conducting the English Chamber Orchestra. Which of these I prefer would be a toss up, but I think Hadelich has the emotional edge.)

The final work is an arrangement of *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* by Francisco Tárrega (1852–1909), originally a work for guitar depicting the composer's recollections of the Alhambra, the citadel and palace at Granada, built by Moorish kings in the thirteenth century. This is a beloved work of guitarists and is a poignant piece. It is not out of place on this album, as it reflects a feeling of loss. This arrangement for solo violin by Ruggiero Ricci works very well and it is deceptively difficult (as it is for classical guitar to affect a totally even tremolo). **MORE ...**

Geoff Pearce also listens to Mahler's Symphony No 4 played by Les Siècles and François-Xavier Roth on harmonia mundi, and to Can Çakmur's piano album *Without Borders* on BIS Records.

**MORE BY GEOFF PEARCE ...**



'... played impassionately ...'

**Giuseppe Pennisi:** This CD, released now by Naxos but recorded a few years ago in the Auditorium Conciliazione, Rome, provokes in me a feeling of double affection: one for the composer of the music, Gian Francesco Malipiero; and one for the ensemble, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma.

Gian Francesco Malipiero is, no doubt, one of the most important and most innovative European musician of the nineteenth century, but now his music is performed only in a limited number of countries. Born in Venice into an aristocratic family, the grandson of the opera composer Francesco Malipiero, Gian Francesco Malipiero was prevented by family troubles from pursuing his musical education in a consistent manner. His father separated from his mother in 1893 and took Gian Francesco to Trieste, Berlin and eventually to Vienna. The young Malipiero and his father

broke up their relationship bitterly, and in 1899 Malipiero returned to his mother's home in Venice, where he entered the Venice Liceo Musicale (now the Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello di Venezia). This complex education gave him the opportunity to learn from several schools of innovation and to blend them into a very special style. Malipiero was strongly critical of standard thematic development in composition. He declared:

*As a matter of fact, I rejected the easy game of thematic development because I was fed up with it and it bored me to death. Once one finds a theme, turns it around, dismembers it and blows it up, it is not very difficult to assemble the first movement of a symphony (or a sonata) that will be amusing for amateurs and also satisfy the lack of sensitivity of the knowledgeable.*

Malipiero's musical language is characterized by an extreme formal freedom; he always renounced the academic discipline of variation, preferring the more anarchic expression of songs, and he avoided falling into program music descriptivism. Until the first half of the 1950s, Malipiero remained tied to diatonism, maintaining a connection with the pre-nineteenth-century Italian instrumental music and Gregorian chant, moving then slowly to increasingly eerie and tense territories that put him closer to total chromaticism. He did not abandon his previous style but he reinvented it. In his latest pages, it is possible to recognize suggestions from his pupils Luigi Nono and Bruno Maderna. His compositions are based on free, non-thematic passages as much as in thematic composition, and seldom do movements end in the keys in which they started. He composed nineteen operas and a very large number of orchestral music.

As Ernest Ansermet once declared, 'his symphonies are not thematic but "motivic": that is to say Malipiero uses melodic motifs like everyone else [...] they generate other motifs, they reappear, but they do not carry the musical discourse — they are, rather, carried by it'. Pierre Boulez said that Malipiero's *Le Sette Canzoni* (second act of the opera *Orfeide*) is the only composition at the level of very well-known and often performed with Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. Yet I had very many difficulties in finding and purchasing a good CD of *Le Sette Canzoni*.

This CD includes the two violin concertos as well the tone poem *Per una favola cavalleresca*. This is the first recording of *Per una favola cavalleresca* and I do hope that it will have excellent sales and many listeners.

Another feature is the performance by the Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma, conducted by Francesco La Vecchia and with Paolo Cavacci as violin soloist. The Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma has been, for some ten years, a unique experiment in Italy (and one of the very few in Europe) of a completely private fully fledged symphony orchestra, financed by a Bank/Loan & Saving Association. The Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma had a season — November-June — with a concert on Sunday afternoon (repeated Monday night) in the Auditorium Conciliazione, a large concert hall near the Vatican where for forty years the symphony orchestra of the National Academy of Santa Cecilia had been playing. Prices were kept low. Every year, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma made an international tour. I joined them on their tours of Austria, Germany and Poland. My reviews can be found in *Music and Vision*, the predecessor of this magazine.

The Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma, mostly made up by young instrumentalists, grew as a very good symphony orchestra. So much that it was invited by the Head of State to perform one of the annual concerts for the end of the year at the Quirinale Palace: a concert for guests only — the Government, ambassadors to Rome and several authorities. Regretfully, when the orchestra was taking off, the Bank/Loan & Savings Association pulled out its five million euro annual subsidy and the orchestra had to close since it could not survive only on ticket sales and listeners' donations.

Let us start with the second piece of the CD, *Per una favola cavalleresca* (For a Chivalric Tale), the only purely orchestral work on the CD, as well as the longest (at twenty-seven minutes). It dates from 1914-15. It was most likely revised around 1920 to make it into a fully fledged opera — *Lancellotto del Lago* — never published nor staged during Malipiero's life time, but found, in his papers, three years after his death. *Per una favola cavalleresca* belongs to a very special musical world mingling late Romantic echoes from Germany (and even Russia) with the influence by French impressionists like Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. It is a tone poem without narration, even though it is the basis for a fully fledged opera. The first movement is an introduction to a fantastical world (that of King Arthur and his Court). The second movement is a dreamy interlude of love affairs. The third movement is a joyful remembrance of youth and of growing up. The fourth and final movement summarizes the tragic ending of the would-be opera.

There are thirty years between the Violin Concerto No 1 (1932) and Violin Concerto No 2 (1963). The style is, of course, different. In the first concerto, there is the spirit of post-World War I atonality. As Malipiero himself said, the second concerto 'just emerged unproblematically'. The slow music is at first played impassionately by the orchestral violins, violas and cellos, which poignantly quieten when the soloist joins them. Thus, this is an important CD to get to know one of the major twentieth century composers and a promising orchestra that now we can listen to only on recordings.

[MORE BY GIUSEPPE PENNISI ...](#)

[MORE ABOUT MALIPIERO \(INCLUDING AN ECHOES OF OBLIVION ARTICLE BY ROBERT MCCARNEY\)](#)

Our CD reviews are worth exploring in more detail than shown here. They are all illustrated with sound samples, usually chosen by the author of each review, and each review has a detailed information page about the album under scrutiny. We also publish a long list of new releases, normally once each month.

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## OBITUARIES

We mark the recent deaths of German composer and pianist Franz Hummel, Finnish baritone Matti Lehtinen, American cellist Abdul Wadud and American composer and pianist Michael Lang. [MORE ...](#)

## NEWS — SANTANDER PIANO COMPETITION WINNERS

**Ana Espada:** On 5 August 2022, the Awards Ceremony of the twentieth Santander International Piano Competition was held at the Palacio de Festivales de Cantabria's Sala Argenta in Spain.

The Jury's President, Joaquín Achúcarro, announced the winner of the Special Award to the Best Chamber Music Performer, Jaeden Izik-Dzurko, who will have the opportunity to offer a concert with the Cuarteto Casals, guest artists in this edition of the competition and one of the chamber groups of international reference.

Joaquín Achúcarro also read the jury's decision, awarding first, second and third prizes to:

— Jaeden Izik-Dzurko (Canada, twenty-three years old), First Prize and Gold Medal. Wins 30,000 Euros, a tour of concerts around Spain and abroad, as well as the recording of a CD on the Naxos label.

— Xiaolu Zang (China, twenty-two years old), Second Prize, sponsored by Bergé, and Silver Medal. Wins 20,000 Euros and a tour of concerts around Spain and abroad.

— Marcel Tadokoro (France/Japan, twenty-eight years old), Third Prize and Bronze Medal. Wins 10,000 Euros and a tour of concerts around Spain and abroad. [MORE ...](#)



During the Santander International Piano Competition awards gala, from left to right: Marcel Tadokoro, Xiaolu Zang and Jaeden Izik-Dzurko — third, second and first prizewinners, respectively. Photo © 2022 Elena Torcida

**Jeffrey James:** The Gramercy Brass Orchestra's 40th Anniversary Concert for New York City will take place on Monday 12 September 2022 at 6pm, outdoors on Irving Place, between East 19th and 20th Streets and 3rd Avenue and Park Avenue South in Manhattan. The event is free to the public, with leading support from Amazon.

The twenty-five members of the award winning Gramercy Brass Orchestra will perform works to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of New York City born film composer John Williams, and other notable composers such as Arthur Sullivan, Puerto Rican born Rafael Hernandez, Arthur Prior, the legendary Edward Kennedy (Duke) Ellington and The Music Man composer, Meredith Willson.



**The Gramercy Brass Orchestra**

Highlights of the program will include guest appearances by Broadway star, vocalist and actor Matthew Hydzik and legendary NYC trumpet soloist from The Music Man orchestra, Wayne Du Maine. Special guest emcee will be Michael Schuil, voice over artist, singer and actor. [MORE ...](#)

### **MONTHLY AND DAILY UPDATES BY EMAIL**

If you've discovered this newsletter by accident or seen it on our website, [send us an email](#) and ask to be put on the mailing list. We'll send you an email each month so that you can read each newsletter immediately. You can also ask to receive an email from us every day, if you'd like to know as soon as each daily feature is published. The monthly and daily emails can be stopped easily by clicking on a link at the bottom of each message.

### **EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE**

Each year since 1985, initiated by the then Greek Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri, the European Union has designated two or three cities as *European Capitals of Culture*. Selected cities' cultural programmes must have a strong European dimension, including participation by stakeholders, communities and city residents, and provision for the long-term development of the city and its surrounding region. In 2022 the cities of Novi Sad in Serbia, Kaunas in Lithuania and Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg's second largest city,

all hold this title, and thousands of events and projects are taking place during the year. European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya Gabriel, comments: 'The European Capital of Culture initiative illustrates the importance of culture in promoting the values on which our European Union is built: diversity, solidarity, respect, tolerance and openness'.

If you have any news of classical music-related initiatives from these cities, please let us know.

EUROPEAN UNION

SERBIA

LITHUANIA

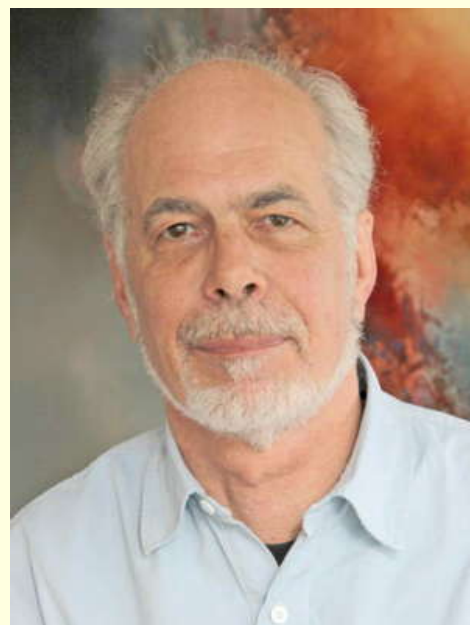
LUXEMBOURG

## PAUL SARCICH

This summer, New Zealand-born composer and occasional *Classical Music Daily* contributor Paul Sarcich has ended four decades of classroom teaching, initially at Victorian College of the Arts School of Music in Melbourne, Australia, and more recently, since 2000, at Morley College in London UK, where he taught orchestration, composition and conducting. He has also taught composition at Birkbeck College, London, UK. His work at Morley College included running the weekly practice orchestra for conducting students, hundreds of which (including the writer of this newsletter) passed through the class during Paul's twenty-two years at the helm.

Ankie Postma, who played flute and then timpani in the Morley practice orchestra, wrote in the Morley College magazine: 'Throughout those years a succession of student conductors and orchestra players basked in the warmth and generosity of Paul's personality, learning from his experience, skills and expertise ... Being such an all-round musician — not only a superb conductor, but percussionist and pianist [and French horn player!] as well — he would fill in any gaps in the orchestra by playing their parts on the piano ... Fantastic friendships were formed over the years.'

[MORE ...](#)



Paul Sarcich. Photo © 2017 Susi Kennedy

## DISCUSSION SESSION ON CLASSICAL MUSIC AND VISUAL DISABILITY

Classical Music Daily is planning another *Zoom* discussion session on 'classical music and visual disability' later this month. Possible subjects for discussion include the production of braille sheet music via Music XML format, inclusivity for performers and audiences, which live streaming services are most useful to blind audience members, and whether it's possible for conductors to be useful to blind musicians. As usual this online discussion will be open to all. In order to try to create a level playing field, the edited version of this discussion will be available only as an audio file.

If you would like to take part, please [contact us](#) to receive details by email. The recording date and other details will be announced soon on our newsletters page [here](#), where you can also find links to all our previous PDF, video and audio newsletters.

This newsletter is an occasional PDF 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.

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