

# Brief notes

Our collection of 25 further reviews, from Chopin to Coke and Virtaperko

## Aho Concerto for Soprano Saxophone; Quintet

Anders Paulsson (saxophone); Lapland CO/John Storgards *BIS BIS-2216*



Aho's concerto combines dissonance with an elegant Nielsen-like sound-world. The Quintet disappoints, the performance lacking cohesion. (FP) ★★★

## Albéniz Piano Concerto No. 1 Mignone Piano Concerto

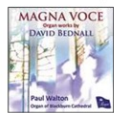
Clélia Iruzun (piano); RPO/Jac van Steen *Somm SOMM265*



Big-boned and unwieldy, Mignone's Piano Concerto leans a little too heavily on Rachmaninov, but the sultry Albéniz is worth getting to know. Passionate performances of both. (JP) ★★★★★

## Bednall Magna voce cane et magno cum jubilo etc

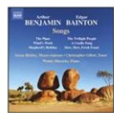
Paul Walton (organ) *Regent REGCD498*



Howells, Messiaen and Eben all inform Bednall's thrilling, richly layered music. Paul Walton does him proud on Blackburn Cathedral's Walker instrument (OC) ★★★★★

## Benjamin • Bainton Songs

Susan Bickley (mezzo), Christopher Gillett (tenor), Wendy Hiscocks (piano) *Naxos 8.571377*



Susan Bickley and Christopher Gillett gamely eke out every ounce of character from these rarely performed songs, but even that isn't enough to make them particularly memorable. (JP) ★★★

## Cage Chess Pieces; Four Dances T Johnson Rational Melodies etc

Trio Omphalos *Wergo WER 7370 2*



The unusual combination of clarinet, percussion and piano in an arrangement of a Cage work plus music by the minimalist Tom Johnson is an enveloping listening experience. (FP) ★★★★★

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## Chopin Ballade No. 4 etc

Finghin Collins (piano) *Claves 50-1719*



Nocturnes, Mazurkas and a Prelude frame the Ballade No. 4 and Polonaise-Fantaisie. Collins builds tensions subtly with a sense of melodic line. The recorded sound is a tad harsh. (OC) ★★★

## Coke

Piano Concertos Nos 3, 4 & 5

Simon Callaghan (piano); BBC SSO/ Martin Brabbins *Hyperion CDA 68173*



Rachmaninov meets Ivor Novello – these suave, sophisticated works are beautifully orchestrated, and lavished here with playing of unstinting poise. (OC) ★★★★★

## Mahler Symphony No. 4

Genia Kühmeier (soprano); Munich Philharmonic/Valery Gergiev *Munchner Philharmoniker MPhil0005*



The Munich Philharmonic gives a nuanced and colourful performance, in which Gergiev gives the music room to breathe. (FP) ★★★★★

## Mendelssohn

Motets; Piano Trio No. 2 etc

Pekka Kuusisto (violin), Pieter Wispelwey (cello), Alasdair Beatson (piano); Flemish Radio Choir/Hervé Niquet *Evil Penguin EPRC 0024*



An imaginative programme of chamber and choral music, designed to highlight links between them, is capped by a superb Second Piano Trio. (JP) ★★★★★

## Rachmaninov • Shostakovich Cello Sonatas

Audun Sandvik (cello), Sveinung Bjelland (piano) *Lawo LWC 1131*



Cello and piano are equal partners on this disc, and both players find an admirable delicacy. Compelling interpretations of 20th-century Russian cello classics. (FP) ★★★★★

## Rimsky-Korsakov Romances

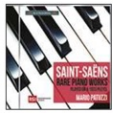
Anush Hovhannisyán (soprano); Yuri Yurchuk (baritone); Sergey Rybin (piano) *Stone Records 506019780772*



A gorgeous feast of Rimsky-Korsakov's neglected Romances, rich in melody and colour. The two terrific, impassioned young singers are ones to watch. (RF) ★★★★★

## Saint-Saëns Suite for piano in F etc

Mario Patuzzi (piano) *Dynamic CDS7796*



Playing a 1923 Pleyel for this disc of rarities, Patuzzi occasionally lacks a lightness of touch, but these are largely lively performances. (FP) ★★★

## Saint-Saëns • Offenbach

Works for cello and orchestra

Camille Thomas (cello); Orchestre National de Lille/Alexander Bloch *DG 479 7520*

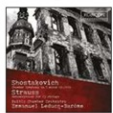


Forget the Saint-Saëns concerto – it's not the finest performance. Delve instead into the rarities here, including the same composer's Suite. (OC) ★★★

## Shostakovich

Chamber Symphony in C minor Strauss *Metamorphosen*

Baltic Chamber Orchestra/Emmanuel Leducq-Barôme *Rubicon RCD1009*



Played here with sensitivity and intent these elegiac works have a haunting quality. The recorded sound is slightly foggy. (FP) ★★★

## Steinberg

Symphony No. 4; Violin Concerto

Sergey Levitin (violin); Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Martin Yates *Dutton CDLX 7341*



Inspired by the opening of a new railway, the filmic 'Turksib' Symphony bears the marks of the Stalinist era in which it was written. It's an enjoyable listen nonetheless, as is the autumnal Violin Concerto. (JP) ★★★

## Virtaperko Romer's Gap;

Multikolor; Ambrosian Delights

Perttu Kivilaakso (amplified cello) et al; Jyväskylä Sinfonia/Ville Matvejeff *Online ODE 1305-2*



Amplified cello and orchestra sounds iffy on paper, but in practice there's something rather striking about this rock-meets-classical concerto. (RF) ★★★★★

## A due alti Chamber duets by Bononcini, Steffani, Marcello et al

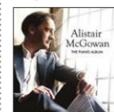
Filippo Mineccia, Raffaele Pe; La Venexiana *Glossa GCD920942*



A glorious treat of a disc, with the mellifluous, intertwining voices of countertenors Filippo Mineccia and Raffaele Pe transporting us to magical realms. Baroque duets at their finest. (RF) ★★★★★

## Alistair McGowan – The Piano Album Satie, Grieg, Bach et al

Alistair McGowan (piano) *Sony Classical 88985396192*



Given that McGowan is just beginning to learn the piano, the pieces here are all pretty simple. He plays them, though, with admirable sensitivity and grace. (JP) ★★★

## Bavardage Pärt, Murphy et al

Flautadors Recorder Quartet *FHR55*



With a mix of traditional songs and contemporary works, this disc explores the varied potential of the recorder. The ensemble creates a controlled sound and clean tone. Lots of fun. (FP) ★★★★★

## Bohemian Rhapsody

Neruda, Dittersdorf et al

Gábor Boldoczki (trumpet); PKF – Prague Phil *Sony Classical 88985443362*



In a programme of Czech rarities and arrangements, Boldoczki proves himself the real deal, fleet of tongue with a tone in turns silvery and velvety. (OC) ★★★★★