

StudioSecrets



Tenor on top:
Benjamin Bernheim
has signed with DG

We reveal who's recording what, and where...

Resonus Classics has launched its first ever sub-label. Inventa Records, which has a special focus on early music, will also be home to the choral group *Alamire*. The first release features them performing music by Hieronymus Praetorius with His Majesty's Sagbutts & Cornetts and organist Stephen Farr. This debut disc will be followed by an EP of 'Tudor Miscellany'.

Benjamin Bernheim has just been signed exclusively to Deutsche Grammophon. The 33-year-old French lyric tenor is one of the leading voices of his generation and his first album for DG looks to the classic young tenor roles. The autumn release will feature arias by Gounod, Massenet, Donizetti, Puccini, Verdi and Tchaikovsky.

Is it too early to think about Christmas? Not for Regent Records, which has been in the studio recently capturing premiere recordings of seasonal works by Bob Chilcott, Sarah Quartel and David Bednall. Doing the honours behind the microphones were the *Benenden Chapel Choir* under Edward Whiting, *London Metropolitan Brass*, cellist **Rebecca McNaught** and **David Bednall** himself on piano and organ. Festive.

Naxos recently launched an enticing new series at a special event in London. 'Music from Brazil' is a 30-album project presented in association with the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and seeks to expose listeners to hitherto unheard music. The first album was released prior to the launch at the Brazilian Embassy, while the next is set for release in September.

Thomas Søndergård continues his winning run as principal conductor of the RSNO as they continue a new series for Linn Records. An album of Prokofiev symphonies is due to be recorded this month and marks Søndergård's first symphonic recordings with the Scottish ensemble. It follows their take on works by Richard Strauss, released in April.

JULIEN BENHARDT, ROBERT SMITH, JULIE KIM



REWIND

Great artists talk about their past recordings

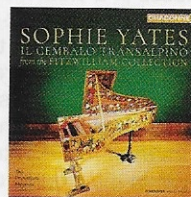
This month: **SOPHIE YATES** harpsichordist

MY FINEST MOMENT

Il Cembalo Transalpino
Music from the Fitzwilliam Collection
Sophie Yates (harpsichord)
Chandos CHAN 0819 (2019)

I've made it my business to play antiques all the way through my career and I always tell my students it's important to play the originals, because they communicate directly to you. This recording gave me the opportunity to get to know the wonderful Italian 17th-century harpsichord at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. We recorded at Downing College because the then Master of the college is a keen

harpsichordist. It meant we could take the instrument out of the museum, but it was still at Cambridge University and didn't have to be expensively re-insured. It was just one of those lucky



combinations where you think it's meant to be. I'm also delighted to have been able to learn more about Fitzwilliam and get him out there a bit. I think he's a real unsung hero of British musical culture, especially from an early keyboard point of view. He collected the core repertoire



The old ones are the best: Sophie Yates has enjoyed playing antique instruments throughout her career

and, crucially, made it available; he didn't just go on his grand tour and pick up these manuscripts, he had them published. It has also given me a new interest in Italian repertoire, so it has set me off on a new phase in my own work, which is exciting. It has been a real journey and I feel very lucky.

MY FONDEST MEMORY
French Baroque Harpsichord

Sophie Yates (harpsichord)
Chandos CHAN 0545 (1993)
This was my first recording for Chandos and there was a genuine saga to getting it made. It started as two radio programmes I recorded for a German radio station, which someone suggested would make a fantastic recital CD. Chandos was interested and it was all wonderful, but then it couldn't be issued because there were legal complications. This amazing chance that I'd been working towards for all my student years was whisked away, so I

had to raise funds and do the recording all over again. I had fantastic support from my friends and my brilliant harpsichord maker Andrew Garlick, and we got it made. Every time I listen



to it I can hear this sense of relief. We recorded it at Ford Abbey, which was another seminal thing because we found our sound,

and coined the style of subsequent recordings. It's a wonderful acoustic there and such a fabulous place to record. When I made the original radio programmes I had a completely free choice of repertoire, which is so rare; there was no agenda and no trying to fulfil anyone's brief. It was just full of the love I had for that repertoire at that time, which is such a luxury.

I'D LIKE ANOTHER GO AT...

Romanesca
Italian Pieces for Harpsichord

Sophie Yates (harpsichord)
Chandos CHAN 0601 (2013)
In view of what I've just been doing on the Fitzwilliam instrument, I'd quite like to do this again on that instrument; also in terms of what I've learned about Italian repertoire. One of the great joys and difficulties of being a musician is you're always constantly learning; so, inevitably, you're going to look back at some things and think 'well, if I'd known this instrument then, or if I'd



known of this, I would've included that'. Recordings are very much snapshots of where you are at that time in your career.

I did a lot of Neapolitan chromatic repertoire on this disc and in an ideal world I would like to re-do that on the Boni instrument from the Fitzwilliam, but also on a split-keyed Boni instrument. So in my fantasy re-doing of this disc I'd have two Bonis and I would also re-do it with my research into Italian fingering in mind; it's a paired fingering, completely different to the one we use in England.

Sophie Yates's album Il Cembalo Transalpino is out now on Chandos Records and will be reviewed next month

Buried Treasure



Pianist **Clare Hammond** shares three recordings from her own collection

Christopher Simpson
Ayres & Graces

Cheyls Consort of Viols BIS-2153
Christopher Simpson is not a well-known composer. His pieces are real gems, full of grace, emotion and pathos. It has a real sense of elegance, but beneath that there's a great deal of pain. You can interpret it on many different levels; it can be comforting and serene, but if you listen to it in more detail it covers the whole gamut of human experience in a very particular way that I find appealing.



Valentin Silvestrov Piano Sonatas
Simon Smith (piano)

Delphian DCD34151
The quality, breadth and range of things Silvestrov has written for the piano is astonishing. The pieces here deal with themes of memory, loss and reconciliation. He also uses quite interesting sound effects. I often spend quite a lot of time trying to create a full sound, but in the first sonata he indicates you should do



precisely the opposite and really explore some of the percussive and otherworldly elements of the instrument.

Albéniz, Turina, Montsalvatge et al
Concertos from Spain

Alicia de Larrocha (piano) et al
Eloquence 476 2971
When I was a teenager I went on a solo trip to Córdoba in Spain; it was a seminal experience for me. When I got home I recaptured the thrill of the trip by listening to a lot of Spanish music. These concertos are all quite similar in style; there's the very characteristic rhythms and a kind of fanfare opening to each one. They have this feeling of freedom and vigour that comes with Spanish



dance, and strong elements of folk and flamenco. It's just a completely different, flamboyant approach to music-making.

Clare Hammond's album of works by Mysliveček is out now on BIS Records and reviewed on p97