

## The New York Times

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# Classical Playlist: Bach, Anders Koppel, Mahler and More

The New York Times

## CLASSICAL PLAYLIST

Times critics share what they've been listening to lately.

**Classical Playlist: Rihm, Brahms, Glass and Messiaen**

**Classical Playlist: Sibelius, Dvorak and Zorn**

**Classical Playlist: Haydn, Grieg and Morton Feldman**

### **BACH: English Suites Nos. 1, 3 and 5**

Piotr Anderszewski, pianist

*(Warner Classics 0825646219391; one CD)*

The Polish-Hungarian pianist Piotr Anderszewski brings superb facility and probing musicianship to everything he plays. His deeply personal Bach performances are especially compelling. In this essential new recording of three of Bach's English Suites (No. 3 in G minor, No. 1 in A, No. 5 in E minor), he uses the full tonal and colorist resources of the modern piano while vividly conveying Baroque style and sensibility. I particularly admire the way he combines articulate rhythmic vitality with lyrical treatment of inner voices. *(Anthony Tommasini)*

### **ANDERS KOPPEL: Marimba Concertos**

Marianna Bednarska, marimbist; Aalborg Symphony Orchestra; Henrik Vagn Christensen, conductor

*(Dacapo 6.220595; one disc)*

The Danish composer Anders Koppel wrote his first Marimba Concerto in 1995 for the finals of a percussion competition. The piece, dramatic, exuberant and colorful, became an instant hit with marimbists, who have given it over 300 performances to date. Three more concertos for the instrument followed over the years, reflecting a kaleidoscope of stylistic influences but also Mr. Koppel's very distinct, melodically generous, language. All are represented on this sparkling recording featuring the gifted young Polish percussionist Marianna Bednarska and the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Henrik Vagn Christensen. (*Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim*)

### **MAHLER: 'Das Lied von der Erde'**

Christa Ludwig, Waldemar Kmentt, singers; Wiener Symphoniker, Carlos Kleiber, conductor

(*Wiener Symphoniker, WS 007*)

Yes, you read that right: Carlos Kleiber, arguably the greatest of them all, conducting Mahler. His most avid fans — we salivate over this kind of thing — already know that he conducted Mahler just once, on June 7, 1967, with Vienna's "second" orchestra. Bootleg recordings have long been available. For this first official release, the previously execrable sound has been remastered from a taping of a taping, and the results are still far from pleasant. But they are good enough to recognize Kleiber's characteristic lightness, glorious directness and rhythmic incision. (*David Allen*)

### **TRIOS FOR PIANO, VIOLIN AND PIANO BY RAVEL AND CHAUSSON**

Trio Solisti

(*Bridge 9440*)

The insight and intelligence of Trio Solisti's account of Ravel's often-played yet very challenging Trio in A minor (1914) comes through at the start of the first movement. There is plenty of milky Impressionist colorings and fluidity. But the way these impressive musicians (the violinist Maria Bachmann, the cellist Alexis Pia Gerlach, the pianist Adam Neiman) shape the elusive main theme and tease out inner details, taking a restrained tempo, is startlingly fresh and fascinating. Fear not, though, there is plenty

of fire and excitement as the piece continues in this standout recording, which also offers the seldom-heard Chausson Trio in G minor, an impetuous, teeming 1881 piece. Even the magisterial slow movement is restless and surging. *(Tommasini)*

### **BEETHOVEN: Symphonies No. 2 and 8**

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner, conductor  
*(Soli Deo Gloria, SDG 721)*

Dissertations will be written on how John Eliot Gardiner's first Beethoven cycle — released in 1994 on Archiv — compares with his ongoing second. What do the differences tell us about Beethoven scholarship? About the development of the period movement? No answers from me, yet, except to say that these new recordings, taken live from London's Cadogan Hall in 2013, feel conceived on a zestier, more astringent, frankly smaller scale than the first. *(Allen)*

### **ALEXANDER RASKATOV: Piano Concerto 'Night Butterflies'; STRAVINSKY: 'The Rite of Spring'**

Tomoko Mukaiyama, pianist; Seattle Symphony; Ludovic Morlot, conductor

*(Seattle Symphony Media SSM1005; one disc)*

A 12-movement piano concerto is a rare specimen of the genre. But it's an apt form for one inspired by butterflies, as was the case with this colorful, nervous and at times alluringly ethereal concerto by the Russian composer Alexander Raskatov. The pianist Tomoko Mukaiyama gives a compelling performance alongside the vibrant Seattle Symphony led by Ludovic Morlot. Mr. Morlot also offers a lean, crisp and tightly coiled reading of Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring" that forgoes much of the usual brutish force but brims with a lither kind of erotic menace. *(Fonseca-Wollheim)*

### **CZERNOWIN: 'Shifting Gravity'**

Various ensembles and conductors

*(WERGO, WER 6726 2)*

Only one of the Israeli-born, Massachusetts-based composer Chaya Czernowin's "Wintersongs" — three of which I heard recently in concert —

has so far made it onto a recording, on this disc that focuses mostly on works collected under the title “Shifting Gravity.” This is dark and forbidding stuff, but it’s powerful and engrossing nonetheless. (*Allen*)

### **SPOTIFY PLAYLIST**

Tracks from the recordings discussed this week. (Spotify users can also find it here.)

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