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## On record: Classical

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A revelatory selection: the Kodama and Nemtanu sisters perform double concertos by Martinu

JEAN-BAPTISTE MILLOT

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**ALBUM OF THE WEEK**  
**MARTINU**

**Orchestre Philharmonique de Marseille, cond Lawrence Foster**  
*Pentatone PTC5186658*

Martinu's prolific output includes concertos for diverse instruments, but the double concertos recorded here — for pianos composed in 1943, for violins in 1950-51 — are examples of the Czech composer's fascination with the baroque "concerto grosso", in the wake of Stravinsky's preoccupation with the genre. Although he studied with Dvorak's pupil and son-in-law, Josef Suk, Martinu produced music that rarely sounds specifically Czech, yet there are touches of his native folk idiom in the highly virtuosic concerto for two pianos, brilliantly played by the Kodama sisters. The later pieces for strings are more typical of the eclectic cosmopolitan style that he assumed under Albert Roussel in Paris in the 1920s. Of the two works here, the viola Rhapsody-Concerto is the better known — Magali Demesse's version is a worthy successor to Josef Suk Jr's — but the Franco-Romanian Nemtanu sisters play the double violin concerto in the spirit of Bach's masterpiece for the same combination. A revelatory selection of some of Martinu's most accessible works. *HC*

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## **DVORAK**

### **Moravian Duets**

**Simona Saturova (soprano), Marketa Cukrova (mezzo), Petr Nekoraneč (tenor), Vojtech Spurný (piano)**

*Supraphon SU4238-2*

These early duets established Dvorak as a composer for "domestic" use. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Irmgard Seefried made a recording of Op 32 with Gerald Moore, sung in German, of course, but here Saturova and Cukrova — with the help of Nekoraneč in three of the Op 20 set — bring native linguistic flair and "Slavonic" sound to these delightful miniatures, revealing Dvorak's bounteous melodic gift in his early thirties. Delectable. *HC*

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## **The Mozartists, cond Ian Page**

*Signum SIGCD534*

This ingenious “musical exploration of Mozart’s childhood visit to London” interweaves three early symphonies and the concert aria K21 with music performed in the city during the family’s stay. Those 15 months were crucial to his development. While steeping himself in the rich concert and opera life, the eight-year-old became a composer — one who would soon leave JC Bach, Abel, Arne and others far behind, but who absorbed their styles into his own. *DC*

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## **RIHM, CLEMENTI ET AL**

**Songs and Poems**

**Trio Accanto**

*Wergo WER73642*

The trio admirably presenting itself here is the unusual combination of piano (Nicolas Hodges), sax (Marcus Weiss) and percussion (Christian Dierstein), and the stylistic orientation is European late modernism, rather than any vibraphone-inflected reminiscence of the Modern Jazz Quartet. Among the items are Walter Zimmermann’s As I Was Walking I Came Upon Chance, Wolfgang Rihm’s Gegenstück, with its amazing contrabass saxophone, and Aldo Clementi’s hypnotic, mobile-like Tre ricercari. *PD*

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## **BACH**

**Mass in B Minor**

**Les Arts Florissants, William Christie**

*Harmonia Mundi HAF8905293.94*

Recorded live in Paris, Christie’s performance with Les Arts Florissants of Bach’s masterpiece, as much a compilation of approach as a work of devotion, is both tinglingly exciting and deeply moving. Crisply articulated yet sonorous orchestral playing and choral singing help to achieve clarity within even the most exuberantly complex textures, while the soloists bring

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