

CC recommends

selected by [Carl Grapentine](#) in the [December 15, 2009](#) issue

In Review



Mendelssohn: Church Music (Vol. 8)

Stuttgart Chamber Choir, German Chamber Philharmonic, Frieder Bernius Carus



Bach: Cantatas

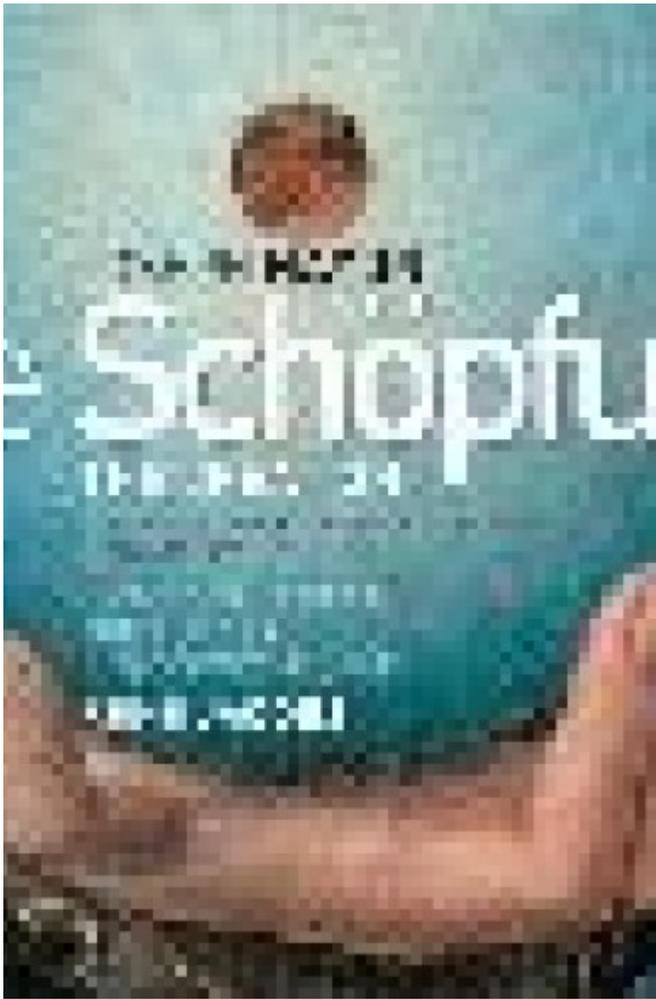
the Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner
Soli Deo Gloria



Handel: Coronation Anthems and other selections

The Sixteen, Harry Christophers

Coro



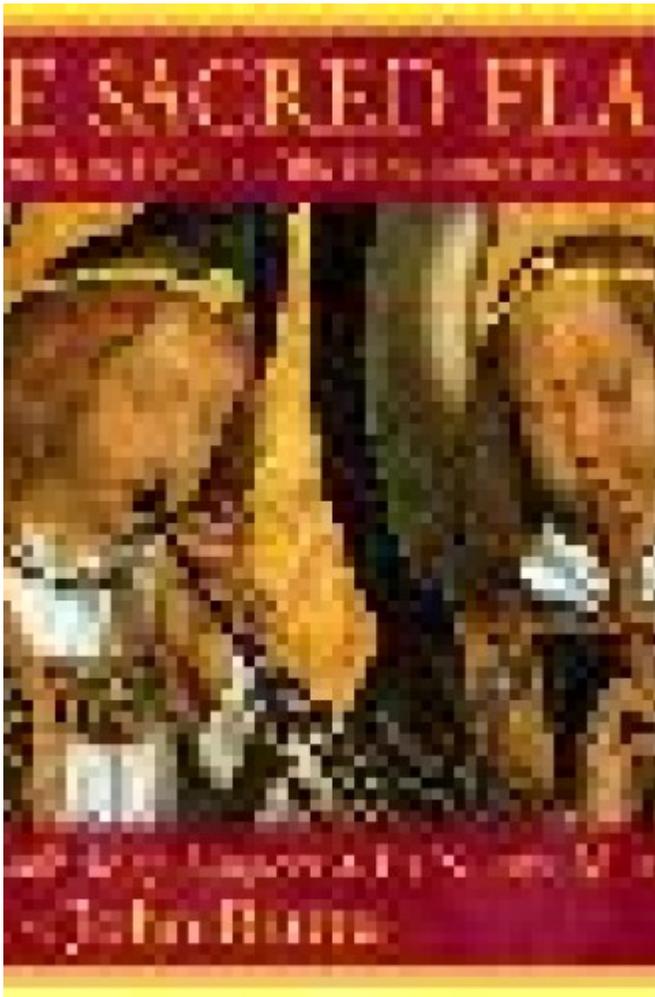
Haydn: The Creation

RIAS Chamber Choir, Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, René Jacobs
Harmonia Mundi



Faure: Requiem/Cantique de Jean Racine

Accentus Chamber Choir, French National Orchestra, Laurence Equilbey
Naïve



The Sacred Flame: Choral Works by Gabrieli, Monteverdi, Palestrina, Bach and others

Cambridge Singers, John Rutter
Collegium

Here are choral works by a teenaged Felix Mendelssohn, including large-scale settings of the *Magnificat* and *Gloria*, along with some shorter works. The influences of Bach and Haydn are evident in the early work of the composer, who would go on to write *Elijah* and *St. Paul*.

A series of recordings have come out of Gardiner's 2000 Bach Cantata Pilgrimage. These are vital, energetic performances, recorded at historic sites, and the discs are accompanied by thorough and entertaining notes written by Sir John himself. (The complete series is available at solideogloria.co.uk.)

The four anthems Handel composed for the coronation of King George II in 1727, along with an organ concerto, some overtures, and the final choruses from the oratorio *Messiah*. The choral performances are vivid and stylish; the orchestral playing is brilliant.

A follow-up to Rene Jacobs's highly acclaimed recording of *The Seasons*. Haydn's brilliant depiction of the creation—from the representation of chaos to the creation of light to the beautiful Garden of Eden—is given a detailed, colorful reading.

Faure's two best-known choral works recorded in the perfect acoustical venue, the church of St. Clotilde in Paris. Equilbey uses the original scoring of the work, which employs organ and chamber orchestra. One of the very best recordings of these familiar works.

The program demonstrates what Rutter calls “the marvelous wealth of sacred music created out of the ferment of the Reformation.” Selections from the Renaissance to the Baroque, all beautifully sung and recorded.

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