

MUSIC TO MY EARS

What the classical world has been listening to this month



ENGLISH RHAPSODY:
Edwardian composer
Rebecca Clarke

RAPHAEL WALLFISCH *cellist*



Back in 1991 **Robert Simpson** wrote a Cello Concerto for me and I am going to be recording it this September, so I have been immersing myself in his music. His Ninth Symphony is an unbelievable piece with the power of a great Bruckner symphony. It is just colossal, and some people regard it as his best symphony. The version I have features the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra conducted by one of my favourite conductors of all time, Vernon Handley.

■ Another favourite conductor of mine is **Adrian Boult**. I recently listened to his 1957 recording of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* and *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* with Kirsten Flagstad and the Vienna Philharmonic on vinyl. He conducted with an understated style and always followed the score very closely without putting his own ego into it. Sadly, I never got a chance to work with him, but it was watching him conduct the BBC Symphony Orchestra that made me want to be a cellist.

■ **Trio Di Trieste's** recording of Schubert and Brahms trios is fantastic. The cellist Amedeo Baldovino was my teacher and the trio is unique for their non-egoistical approach. Somehow you never listen to the cello, violin or piano separately; it is the music as

OUR CHOICES

The BBC Music team's current favourites



Oliver Condy
Editor

Now the sun has at last started to shine, a visit to Spain is in order, courtesy of **Granados's** evocative, spirited piano suite *Goyescas* performed by the Cuban pianist Jorge Luis Prats. I had the fortune of meeting Prats in Verbier in 2011 and spent an entertaining afternoon shopping for Havana cigars (his) while listening to colourful tales of musical life in 1960s Cuba.



Jeremy Pound
Deputy editor

The sad death of actor Richard Briers earlier this year had me digging out his narration of **Prokofiev's** *Peter and the Wolf*, accompanied by David Coram on the organ of Romsey Abbey. With some deft choices of registration on Coram's part, plus Briers's affable tones, it works well... as, too, does the following **Saint-Saëns's** *Carnival of the Animals*, where pianist David Owen Norris joins in the fun.



Daniel Jaffé
Acting reviews editor

Revisiting **Khachaturian's** symphonies, I was struck by Symphony No. 1 conducted by Alexander Gauk. Composed in 1934 as Khachaturian's graduation piece, it rivals Shostakovich's First for zest and inventiveness – albeit Khachaturian revised it fairly extensively in the 1960s. It's eventful, with captivating themes and strikingly effective orchestration, including a flute and harp motif that anticipates (or cribs?) 'Moonlight' from Britten's *Peter Grimes*.

a whole that comes out at you. I always refer to the Trio Di Trieste as my idealised piano trio, not only because they were the longest existing trio ever, but also for their technical brilliance.

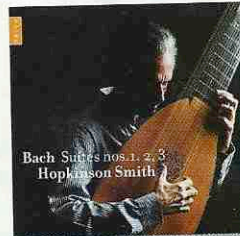
■ This morning I listened to a very interesting piece by **Rebecca Clarke**. I have a particular interest in English music, and in 1923 Clarke wrote her *Rhapsody for Cello and Piano*, which is amazing. She is a wonderful composer and is just being discovered. Her output was mainly of chamber works and is relatively small because she was working in the Edwardian era – once she got married she stopped composing, unfortunately, but there are these few special works to discover.

Raphael Wallfisch plays Bantock's Sapphic Poem at the Proms on 24 July

CHRISTINA PLUHAR *lutenist & director*



I recently went to a concert of the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by **Gustavo Dudamel** in the Salle Pleyel in Paris. I always try to get to any concert by Dudamel because I think he is the most extraordinary conductor. They were performing Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. In any piece he performs, Dudamel shapes the music in a way that makes you understand it completely differently. He makes it transparent and brings out the architecture of the music.



Bach Suites nos 1, 2, 3
Hopkinson Smith

■ **Hopkinson Smith** has just brought out a recording of **JS Bach's** Cello Suites on the theorbo. I picked it up because he's a former teacher of mine and during his long career, although he's recorded so many CDs, his projects are always

surprising. The cello suites are considered part of the repertoire for the lute – they're quite tricky to transcribe for the theorbo because it's not really a melodic instrument, but they sound wonderful here.

■ **Schloss Elmau** is an amazing place in Germany – it's an old castle in the middle of the mountains in Bavaria that's been transformed into a spa. And they do concerts there – trombonist Nils Landgren and pianist Michael Wollny's disc *Fragile at Schloss Elmau* is something I listen to a lot. Landgren is a jazz trombone player as well as a wonderful singer and on this recording they perform 'Everything Must Change' by George Benson in an intimate version