



It's not electric:
Hamlet at
Glyndebourne

The Best of 2019.

OPERA NEWS critics reviewed 222 CDs and DVDs last year, from performances of classic Broadway scores to modern choral works. These are the twenty-five you need to hear.

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10 BEST IN OPERA

1. **TCHAIKOVSKY: THE QUEEN OF SPADES** CD (Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Fedoseyev. Melodiya) "Terrifically compelling. Hworostovsky made his Moscow debut at this 1989 concert, and his singing is astonishing." —Fred Cohn
2. **BRITTEN: DEATH IN VENICE** DVD (Teatro Real Orchestra, Pérez. Naxos) "Willy Decker's staging is a miracle of fluidity." —Clive Paget
3. **BERG: WOZZECK** DVD (Vienna Philharmonic, Jurowski. Harmonia Mundi) "William Kentridge's production projects anxiety." —Mark Mandel

4. **MOZART: LA CLEMENZA DI TITO** CD (Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Nézet-Séguin. Deutsche Grammophon) "Exemplary ... a riveting case for an unloved opera." —Fred Cohn

5. **RESPIGHI: LA CAMPANA SOMMERSA** DVD (Orchestra del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Renzetti. Naxos) "A spectacularly conceived and well-executed presentation of a difficult, sprawling work." —Steven Jude Tietjen

6. **SALIERI: TARARE** CD (Les Talens Lyriques, Rousset. Aparté) "An awesome opera from Salieri and Beaumarchais, packed with political and social manifestos." —Judith Malafrente

7. **ROTA: I DUE TIMIDI/LA NOTTE DI UN NEVRASTENICO** DVD (Reate Festival Orchestra, Bonolis. Dynamic) "Nino Rota's scores are appealing, blending his accessible brand of film music with a dash of Puccini." —Clive Paget

8. **TCHAIKOVSKY: IOLANTA / STRAVINSKY: PERSÉPHONE** DVD (Orchestra of the Teatro Real, Currentzis. EuroArts) "Fascinating. Peter Sellars's stagings draw out the emotional ambiguity of both pieces." —Fred Cohn

Wozzeck up the Wazoo
Aside from Kentridge's production, Berg's opera was seen from Dutch National Opera and heard from Frankfurt.



Rota scope:
Nevrastenico
in Rieti

9. **ULLMANN: DER KAISER VON ATLANTIS** CD (Orchestre Musique des Lumières, Agudin. IBS Classical) "A sensitive and dramatic performance that respects the dire circumstances in which the opera was composed." —Steven Jude Tietjen

10. **EINEM: DER PROZESS** CD (ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gruber. Capriccio) "Breathes vigorous life into the core of Kafka's Trial." —Joe Cadagin

Korngold for the Gold

The underloved Austrian composer got his due with two major, opinion-respecting recordings of his 1927 magnum opus, *Das Wunder der Heliane*.

5 BEST NEW WORKS

1. **POUL RUDERS: THE THIRTEENTH CHILD** CD (Odense Symfoniorkester, Schwartz, Starobin. Bridge) "One of the most enjoyable new operas of the past two decades." —Joshua Rosenblum
2. **LAURA KAMINSKY: AS ONE** CD (Fry Street Quartet, Osgood. Bright Shiny Things) "A striking and deceptively simple look at identity, honesty and the human condition." —Clive Paget
3. **BRETT DEAN: HAMLET** DVD (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Jurowski. Opus Arte) "Fated to rank among the great new operas of the twenty-first century." —Joe Cadagin
4. **GREGORY SPEARS: PAUL'S CASE** CD (American Modern Ensemble, Wood. National Sawdust Tracks) "Spears writes in a distinctive and very effective idiom." —Joshua Rosenblum
5. **NATHAN DAVIS: HAGOROMO** CD (International Contemporary Ensemble, DeMaison. New Focus Recordings/Tundra) "Davis reinterprets Noh's theatrical and musical conventions through his own style." —Joe Cadagin

10 BEST IN CONCERT/RECITAL

1. **LISE DAVIDSEN: LISE DAVIDSEN** CD (Philharmonia Orchestra, Salonen. Decca) "For those unable to hear the coruscating Davidsen live, this superb debut recital is the next best thing." —F. Paul Driscoll

2. **CECILIA BARTOLI: ANTONIO VIVALDI** CD (Ensemble Matheus, Spinosi. Decca) "Reflective, digging deeper and roaming wider in emotional and interpretive range." —Clive Paget

3. **ANTHONY ROTH COSTANZO: ARC** CD (Les Violons du Roy, Cohen. Decca) "Half Handel and half Philip Glass, this recital produces just the sort of cross-pollination that such a venture needs to offer." —William R. Braun

4. **JAKUB JÓZEF ORLIŃSKI: ANIMA SACRA** CD (Il Pomo d'Oro, Emelyanychev. Erato) "Makes for luscious listening." —Judith Malafrente

5. **JAVIER CAMARENA: CONTRABANDISTA** CD (Les Musiciens du Prince, Capuano. Decca) "His vocalism offers lively, flexible lines, lulling rhythms and enjoyment of the moment." —William R. Braun

6. **MAGDALENA KOŽENÁ: IL GIARDINO DEI SOSPIRI** CD (Collegium 1704, Luks. Pentatone) "The versatile Czech mezzo meets the works' emotional demands with imagination, fierce commitment and ever-fresh vocalism." —Judith Malafrente

7. **PHILIPPE JAROUSKY: OMBRA MAI FU** CD (Artaserse. Erato) "The French countertenor is in extraordinary form throughout. His technique seems infallible." —Roger Pines

8. **OMBRA MAI FU** CD (Artaserse. Erato) "The French countertenor is in extraordinary form throughout. His technique seems infallible." —Roger Pines

9. **XAVIER SABATA: L'ALESSANDRO AMANTE** CD (Vespres d'Arnadí, Espasa. Aparté) "The Baroque obsession with Alexander the Great is the focus of this fascinating and thoughtfully curated album." —Clive Paget

10. **THOMAS ALLEN: SEPTEMBER SONGS** CD (Stephen Higgins, piano. Champs Hill Records) "Songs that hover in that space between longing, nostalgia and hope, performed with quiet intimacy." —Joanne Sydney Lessner

Swimming in Baráth

Hungarian soprano Emöke Baráth released a solo disc, *Voglio Cantar*, while also appearing on Vivaldi's *Giustino* and on Jaroussky's *Ombra*.



Reality bites:
Cecilia
Bartoli