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Classical Playlist: ‘Siegfried Idyll,’ Rachmaninoff and ‘I Have Set My Hert So Hy’

By THE NEW YORK TIMES AUGUST 11, 2015 5:11 PM

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‘SIEGFRIED IDYLL’

Works by Liszt, Wagner and Brahms; [David Deveau](#), pianist
(Steinway & Sons)

There is some misunderstanding today about the 19th-century art of transcribing operatic and orchestral works. As practiced by Liszt, these transcriptions were not show-off pieces, though they require enormous virtuosity. Rather, they refract the original symphonic works and opera scenes through the piano; Liszt invites you to hear the essentials of the music without its orchestral colorings. Many composers in Liszt’s day wrote such works.

On this recording, the pianist [David Deveau](#) gives a sensitive

CLASSICAL PLAYLIST

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

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account of a fascinating solo piano transcription of Wagner's "[Siegfried Idyll](#)," originally written for chamber orchestra as a birthday gift for Cosima, Wagner's wife. The arrangement is by Josef Rubinstein, a devoted assistant to Wagner. It's a revelation to hear this sublime, intimate work played on the piano. The harmonic and contrapuntal intricacies come through with beautiful transparency.

The album also offers refined, accomplished performances of three Liszt works, including "Funérailles," and a well-chosen selection of seven capriccios and intermezzos by Brahms. (*Anthony Tommasini*)

RACHMANINOFF PIANO CONCERTO NO. 3

Byron Janis, piano; Antal Dorati, conductor; London Symphony Orchestra (Mercury Records)

For years, the signs have been clear: Vinyl LP recordings, having been sidelined by compact discs, are returning. Now it's unmistakable: They're back. Hang on to your turntables.

Among the stream of releases in classical music, Universal has issued several historic LPs on 12-inch vinyl formats with their original jacket covers. A standout among these is the Mercury Living Presence recording of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, with the American pianist [Byron Janis as soloist](#), and Antal Dorati conducting the London Symphony. It was recorded in London in 1961 when Mr. Janis was 33, and released that year.

At the time, the phenomenal Van Cliburn version, recorded live at Carnegie Hall in 1958 following his triumph, at 23, in the Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow, was still among the

' Fargo '	' Sleepy Hollow '
' Game of Thrones '	' The Affair '
' Girls '	' The Americans '
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most popular classical albums in America. Both pianists had studied with Rosina Lhévinne at Juilliard. But Mr. Janis had also been among a select few pianists to study with Vladimir Horowitz, and that influence comes through. Mr. Janis's playing has Horowitzian fire and stunning clarity, even when he whizzes impetuously through elaborate passagework.

Yet, there are also directness and assurance, qualities that somehow seem American. The sound on this vinyl recording is natural and warm, without a trace of the clinical, cool clarity that critics of digital technology attribute to many CDs. (*Anthony Tommasini*)

'I HAVE SET MY HERT SO HY: LOVE AND DEVOTION IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND'

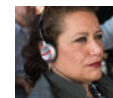
Voice, Dufay Collective, directed by William Lyons (Avie)

It is a cruel turnabout. Medieval music – which, in the hands of Noah Greenberg's New York Pro Musica Antiqua and others, helped set the modern early-music movement in motion – has largely been left behind as that movement has carried the aesthetic of period performance to ever later repertory. Here four expert instrumentalists of the [Dufay Collective](#) are joined by the female vocal trio [Voice](#) in a varied selection of conjectural reconstructions from old England. Especially delectable are the jazzily swinging chaconne-based “Maiden in the Mor Lay” and two a cappella numbers, “Nowel: Owt of Youre Sleep Aryse” and “Hayl Mary, Ful of Grace,” all rendered much in the style pioneered in recent decades by the Trio Mediaeval. (*James R. Oestreich*)

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Cynthia Lopez has stepped down from her role as commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment.[Read more...](#)



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Wiz Khalifa was arrested in the Los Angeles International Airport during a confrontation involving a hoverboard. [Read more...](#)

'Compton' Spends Second Week at Top of Box Office

The film, about the rap group N.W.A., which counted Dr. Dre as a founding member, collected an estimated \$26.8 million over the weekend, for a two-week total of \$111.5 million, according to Rentrak, which compiles box office data.[Read more...](#)

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For the first time, right near the end, the show feels a little stale.[Read more...](#)



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