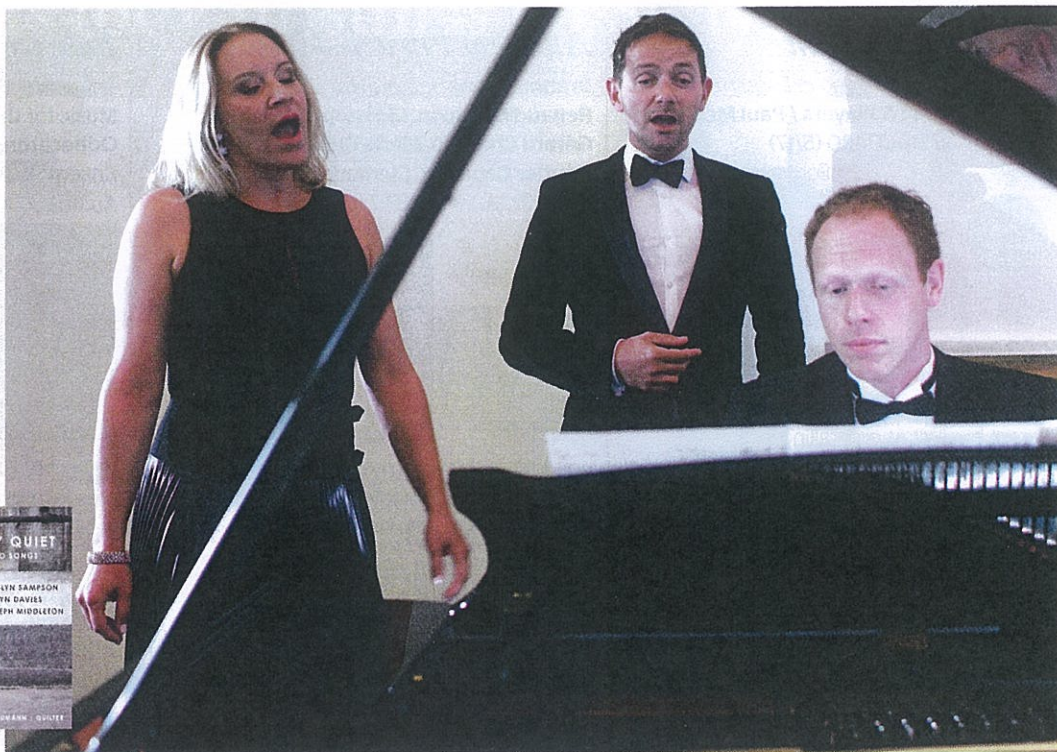


Alexandra Coghlan

'Lost is my quiet'

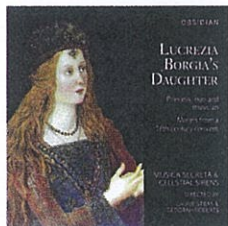
Carolyn Sampson *sop*
Iestyn Davies *countertenor*
Joseph Middleton *pf*
BIS ④ BIS2279 (11/17)

A late contender from me – Iestyn Davies and Carolyn Sampson's flawless recital of songs and duets by Purcell, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Quilter. The programming may seem diffuse, but there's an alchemy to these performances that transforms this into quite the most engaging (and just a little offbeat) release of the year.



Edward Breen

'Lucrezia Borgia's Daughter'
Musica Secreta; Celestial Sirens /
Laurie Stras, Deborah Roberts
Obsidian ④ CD717 (05/17)

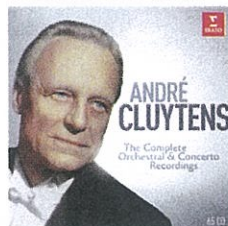


This album represents all that is trailblazing about early music: creative research and thrilling performances uniting sopranos and altos from different generations of

leading British vocal ensembles. The passionate and, frankly, sensual vocal polyphony from the convent of Corpus Domini in Ferrara, home of Lucrezia Borgia's daughter, is a revelation.

Jed Distler

'André Cluytens: The Complete Orchestral & Concerto Recordings'
Erato ③ (65 discs)
9029 58866-9 (7/17)

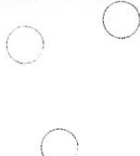


Few conductors were so equally authoritative and vital in Russian, German and French music as André Cluytens, as this vast, eclectic and unfailingly interesting collection consistently proves. It also preserves the all-but-vanished performance tradition of French orchestras, whose crisp sonorities and pronounced timbral diversity flourished under Cluytens's watch.

Liam Cragney

'Crane' 6 Trios, 2 Solos and 1 Quintet'
Ives Ensemble
Nimbus Alliance ④ NI6337 (4/17)

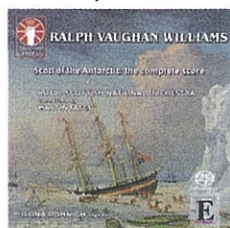
Laurence Crane
6 Trios, 2 Solos and 1 Quintet
Performed by the Ives Ensemble



The seemingly prosaic surface of Laurence Crane's music belies its strange depths. These chamber works repeat ostensibly simple melodic and rhythmic motifs to a vivifying end. If comparisons to Satie and Feldman come to mind, the music is distinctively Crane's own, by turns whimsical, obsessive, pensive and sincere.

Adrian Edwards

Vaughan Williams Scott of the Antarctic
Ilona Domnich *sop* Christopher Nickol *org*
Royal Scottish National Women's Chorus
and Orchestra / Martin Yates
Dutton Epoch ④ CDLX7340 (9/17)



The music for the film *Scott of the Antarctic* was a notable addition to the RVW discography this year with Martin Yates an assured guide to the polar landscape familiar from the *Sinfonia antartica*, as he is to the portraiture of those explorers and their wives captured in the music omitted from the symphony and the final edit of the film.

Rob Cowan

'In Schubert's Company'
Yakov Katsnelson *pf* Riga Sinfonietta /
Maxim Rysanov *va*
Onyx ② ONYX4183 (9/17)



For me, 'In Schubert's Company' must ultimately take the palm, principally because of Dobrinka Tabakova's *Fantasy Homage to Schubert* where the tremulous opening of the violin *Fantasy* emerges as if out of a dream. Schubert 'straight' and Schubert 'reimagined' coexist for an absorbing programme, superbly performed.

David Fanning

Ustvol'skaya Piano Sonatas Nos 1-6
Antonii Baryshevskiy *pf*
AVI Music ④ AVI8553357 (11/17)



This year's reviewing has brought me several near-misses. Closest to the bull's-eye, I reckon, is the young Ukrainian Antonii Baryshevskiy's survey of the six piano sonatas by Galina Ustvol'skaya, which restores to the catalogue some of the hardest-hitting music ever composed in the Soviet Union, performed here with exemplary intransigence.