

December 2013

GRAMOPHONE *Choice*



Informed by our unrivalled panel of critics,
we choose the month's must-hear recordings



Recording of the Month

'This is one of those rare occasions when one is left with a feeling of having been in the presence of the thing itself'

BEETHOVEN

'The Symphonies and Reflections'

Christiane Karg, Mihoko Fujimura, Michael Schade, Michael Volle, Bavarian Radio Symphony Chorus and Orchestra / Mariss Jansons

BR-Klassik 900119

► **RICHARD OSBORNE'S REVIEW IS ON PAGE 60**



BEETHOVEN

Diabelli Variations, etc

András Schiff *pf*

ECM New Series 4811446

'Schiff brings an agenda with him (and why not?), but throughout he delights with insights and a feast of fine playing, excellently recorded; and his focus on the music never wavers.'

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 84**



CHOPIN

Polonaises

Rafał Blechacz *pf*

DG 479 0928GH

'It is not just the nobility and imperiousness of these works that Blechacz captures so well, but also the phrasing of a great singer and the moments of heart-wrenching grief to be found here.'

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 84**



MOZART

'Piano Sonatas, Vol 1'

Christian Blackshaw *pf*

Wigmore Hall Live

WHLIVE0061/2
'Blackshaw's mindful yet spontaneous virtuosity, pinpointed sense of character and utterly alive music-making completely disarmed my scepticism.'

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 87**



PAGANINI

24 Caprices, Op 1

Ilya Gringolts *vn*

Orchid ORC100039

'Where we were once content simply to marvel at the pyrotechnics, now, because of Gringolts's acute sense of timing and close attention to dynamics, we hear the music.'

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 87**



SCHUMANN

Piano Sonata No 2, etc

Mitsuko Uchida *pf*

Decca 478 5393DH

'The sonata passes by at white heat – just as it does when she plays it in the concert hall; yet what makes this such a gripping performance is the contrast between the manic writing and the inwardness.'

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 88**