

# Welcome

We at *Songlines*, *Jazzwise* and *Gramophone* love discovering new music as much as you. Just one recording can open a door to years of musical discovery, and that is why we have come together to produce this special digital edition. Featuring interviews with some of the most adventurous and exciting musicians of the last 12 months, you will also find lists recommending the most outstanding recordings of 2015 – essential guides to your next great musical discoveries



**T**his year saw the 150th anniversary of Sibelius's birth and the premiere of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, plus 50 years since the birth of minimalism and of Jacqueline du Pré's iconic recording of Elgar's Cello Concerto. Four diverse but key turning points in repertoire or recording (or both), which *Gramophone* marked with major features.

But the two articles we've included in this special digital magazine bring the story of classical music right up to date. Earlier this year, Sir Antonio Pappano and a line-up of starry soloists made a no-expense spared recording of **Verdi's *Aida***. The results were thrilling – I named the set Recording of the Month – and a strong statement both about the power of studio recording and the operatic excellence that exists today.

And finally, few figures in the world of classical music excite people as much as **Sir Simon Rattle**. As the maestro prepares to take over the London Symphony Orchestra, we met him to find out how he might transform the city's musical life.

**Martin Cullingford**  
Editor and Publisher of *Gramophone*



**T**here's been a wealth of new musical talent featured within the pages of *Songlines* since coming under the Mark Allen Group umbrella in February. From Songhoy Blues, the bright young Malian band and stars of the much talked-about documentary *They Will Have To Kill Us First*, to the Tibetan monk-turned-singer Ngawang Lodup who recently performed for the Dalai Lama.

But it's not just about keeping our finger on the pulse of who's making waves on the scene, but also staying abreast of artists we've championed from the beginning of their careers, such as the queen of Portuguese *fado*, **Mariza**, who graces the cover of our December issue and we first featured back in 2002.

Sometimes the sheer breadth of music we cover can be frankly a little bewildering so our **A to Z of world music** is an endeavour to guide you through the maze and highlight some essential listening from around the world.

**Jo Frost**  
Editor of *Songlines*



**A**fter what initially appeared to be a sluggish start to 2015 for new jazz recordings with the necessary 'wow' factor, a tornado-sized wind blew in from America by the name of **Kamasi Washington** and the rushes are still being felt today. Welcome then to this LA-based saxophonist's debut triple album, *The Epic*: a gloriously expansive, sense-tickling spiritual jazz masterpiece encompassing three CDs, 17 tunes, a 10-piece band, a 32-piece orchestra, a 20-piece choir and 172 action-packed minutes that had writer Kevin Le Gendre awarding it a 4-star 'recommended' accolade when he reviewed it in *Jazzwise*'s May issue. And judging by the colossal amount of votes that helped it win our annual Critics Poll, he wasn't the only writer whose block was severely rocked. The year also delivered rich pickings with inspired previously unreleased live recordings from Miles Davis, Weather Report and John Coltrane, and substantial new albums from **Courtney Pine**, Charles Lloyd, **Keith Jarrett** and Cécile McLorin Salvant among many others. Well, what are you waiting for?

**Jon Newey**  
Editor-in-Chief of *Jazzwise*



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