

THE WORLD'S BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS

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GRAMOPHONE

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BEETHOVEN

*His symphonies explained
and explored by nine
leading Beethoven
conductors of today*

Sir Roger Norrington

David Zinman

Mariss Jansons

Osmo Vänskä

Sir John Eliot Gardiner

Iván Fischer

Michael Tilson Thomas

Paavo Järvi

Riccardo Chailly

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Reaching new audiences in unexpected ways

This month I attended two entirely contrasting events, one steeped in tradition and symbolism, the other oozing contemporary chic, but both shared a common theme.

On June 11 Westminster Abbey held a Service of Thanksgiving for Sir John Tavener, a composer whose music inspired listeners far beyond usual classical audiences, weaving itself even into the lives of many who might not have considered themselves classical listeners at all. The event encapsulated both the grandeur and intimacy which, paradoxically, lie at the heart of Tavener's music – characteristics that co-exist not in tension but in dialogue, perhaps reflecting life itself.

The artists who performed represented many of Tavener's important musical partnerships: Stephen Layton, who had conducted *The Veil of the Temple*; Steven Isserlis, whose 1989 Proms premiere of *The Protecting Veil* (and subsequent *Gramophone* Award-winning recording) changed perceptions of cellist, composer and in many ways contemporary classical music alike; and Patricia Rozario, whose soprano voice had brought such passion to so much of Tavener's work. The service was a moving, rewarding reminder of how listening to his music compels us to adjust our comprehension to a contemplative pace.

From medieval magnificence to the cool of Berlin's Apple Store – solid wood benches displaying stylish gadgets, surrounded by a buzz of on-trend youth and hip T-shirted staff. Built out of a former cinema, one of its auditoriums has been turned



Martin

into a concert venue. I was there for a performance by Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Philharmonia (brought over specially!), of Sibelius, Lutosławski and Salonen's own Violin Concerto, performed with intense physicality by Leila Josefowicz. Prior to the concert Salonen took part in a public conversation, and afterwards sat down to a Twitter Q&A. But his biggest outreach to audiences – both Apple's and beyond – has been an iPad advertising campaign, in which he is seen contemplating, composing and then conducting his Violin Concerto. This vivid burst of classical music at its most contemporary has been airing in primetime programmes on mainstream TV, and served up by some of the highest-profile websites.

Getting the message to the young and otherwise culturally engaged that classical music can be thrilling and fascinating is a constant battle. Here, Apple, which has an enviably powerful resonance among that very demographic, is not only channelling that message directly to them, but adding a veneer of Apple cool to it.

What ties these two vastly different occasions together is simply that each represents the triumph of the belief that classical music can reach large and unexpected audiences, without having to dumb down. Viewers of Apple's ad (or audiences in its store) aren't given 'crossover': in Salonen they're getting new music without compromise. Likewise, Tavener's music was a strongly personal modern voice, one that was never alienating but could still challenge.

Sometimes, it seems, music's greatest opportunities for outreach are found where we least expect them.

martin.cullingford@markallengroup.com

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



'The thing that struck me most about Steven Osborne and Alina Ibragimova was the freeness of their musical

thinking,' says **CAROLINE GILL**, who has written this month's Musician and the Score. 'They surfed through the pages of the score with the familiarity to know exactly where everything was, at the same time as looking at it as if for the first time.'



'Romain Rolland dubbed the Second Act of *Orfeo* "the most moving act in all opera",' says this month's Collection

writer **RICHARD WIGMORE**. After listening to 20-odd recordings of Gluck's opera, Richard concluded Rolland was exaggerating – 'but not by much. The work's balancing of chaste beauty and violent forces exerts a unique fascination.'



MICHAEL MCMANUS is a self-confessed Beethoven addict, so this month's cover story was a

pleasure to write. As he says, 'In the right hands, a combination of words and music – as in Beethoven's Ninth – can be so much more than the sum of its parts. I hope these nine very individual testaments provide further evidence of that.'

THE REVIEWERS Andrew Achenbach • Nalen Anthoni • Mike Ashman • Philip Clark • Alexandra Coghlan • Rob Cowan (consultant reviewer) • Jeremy Dibble • Peter Dickinson • Jed Distler • Duncan Druce • Adrian Edwards • Richard Fairman • David Fallows • David Fanning • Iain Fenlon • Fabrice Fitch • Jonathan Freeman-Attwood • Caroline Gill • Edward Greenfield • David Gutman • Lindsay Kemp • Philip Kennicott • Tess Knighton • Richard Lawrence • Ivan March • Ivan Moody • Bryce Morrison • Jeremy Nicholas • Christopher Nickol • Geoffrey Norris • Richard Osborne • Stephen Plaistow • Peter Quantrell • Guy Rickards • Malcolm Riley • Marc Rochester • Julie Anne Sadie • Edward Seckerson • Hugo Shirley • Pwyll ap Siôn • Harriet Smith • Ken Smith • David Patrick Stearns • David Threasher • David Vickers • John Warrack • Richard Whitehouse • Arnold Whittall • Richard Wigmore • William Yeoman

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EDITORIAL
Phone 020 7738 5454 **Fax** 020 7733 2325
email gramophone@markallengroup.com
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER Martin Cullingford
DEPUTY EDITOR Sarah Kirkup / 020 7501 6365
REVIEWS EDITOR Andrew Mellor / 020 7501 6367
ONLINE AND FEATURES EDITOR
 James McCarthy / 020 7501 6366
SUB-EDITOR David Thresher / 020 7501 6370
ART DIRECTOR Dinah Lone / 020 7501 6689
PICTURE EDITOR Sanita Sharma-Gibson / 020 7501 6369
AUDIO EDITOR Andrew Everard
EDITORIAL ADMINISTRATOR Lily McPhoe
THANKS TO Marija Duric Speare, Hannah Nepil and Charlotte Smith
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF James Jolly

ADVERTISING
Phone 020 7738 5454 **Fax** 020 7733 2325
email gramophone.ads@markallengroup.com
SALES MANAGER
 Esther Zuke / 020 7501 6368
SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE
 Luke Battersby / 020 7501 6373

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BACK ISSUES
 0800 137201 (UK) +44 (0)1722 716997 (overseas)
subscriptions@markallengroup.com

PUBLISHING
Phone 020 7738 5454
GROUP BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
 Luca Da Re / 020 7501 6362
PUBLISHING EXECUTIVE Rachel Cramond / 020 7501 6372
DIGITAL AND MARKETING DIRECTOR
 Matthew Cianfaran
DATA AND DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
 Tom Pollard
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Richard Hamshere / 01722 716997
PRODUCTION MANAGER Jon Redmayne
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Sally Boettcher / 01722 716997
SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER Chris Hoskins / 01722 716997
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Sián Harrington
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Ben Allen
CHAIRMAN Mark Allen

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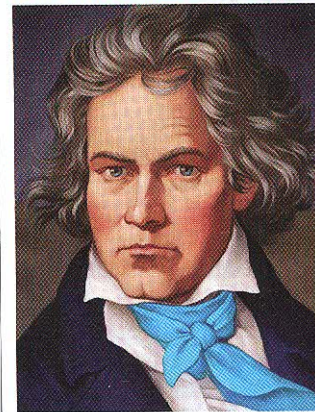
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