

# Recorded Sound Reviews

**Editor's note:** In the February Recorded Sound Reviews column there were three reviews audio excerpts that should have accompanied the reviews. They are listed below.

***Evensong at New College, Oxford***

The Choir of New College, Oxford  
Edward Higginbottom, conductor  
Novum NCR 1379 (2008; 66'31")

**Audio excerpt:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzJl3rdNFg4>

***Henry Desmarest: Grands Motets***

Le Concert Spirituel  
Hervé Niquet, conductor  
Glossa Cabinet GCD C81607  
(2011; 61'54")

**Audio excerpt:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vI6EsD-V7P8>

***Trinity Requiem: Robert Moran***

Trinity Youth Chorus and members of Trinity Choir, Trinity Wall Street  
Robert Ridgell, conductor  
Musica Sacra;  
Richard Westenburg, conductor  
The Esoterics;  
Eric Banks, conductor  
Innova 244 (2011; 68'08")

**Audio excerpt:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8yFLE2TYWc>

## ChorTeach

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***Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber: Vesperae Longiores ac breviores***

Yale Schola Cantorum and Yale Collegium Players  
Simon Carrington, conductor  
Robert Mealy, violin;  
Stephen Fraser, Organ  
Carus 83.234 (2011; 59'30")

Heinrich Biber's *Vespers* come to life in this marvelous performance by the Yale Schola Cantorum and the Yale Collegium Players. Scored for four vocal soloists, chorus, two violins, two violas and continuo, Biber's intimate setting is handled with great care and grace. Recorded in 2004 in both New Haven and New York, this performance, which omits the *colla parte* wind parts, was the work's North American premiere.

This disc is a must-have for scholars and performers. It serves as a window into thoughtful Baroque performance-practice technique. Unlike many other Baroque recordings that offer up dry, sterile performances, this particular interpretation by the Yale ensembles is intricately designed and musically sensitive.

Of particular note is the near-perfect tuning of the chorus. Simon Carrington has proven himself a master of intonation. Whether it is a contrapuntal or homophonic passage, each particular pitch is beautifully focused and balanced in each choral part. In addition, the soloists and chorus are also extremely agile in their vocal abilities. Instead of thick vibrato and heavy tone, we hear light and delicate singing, which lends itself beautifully to Biber's dynamic score.

The instrumental ensemble is a beautiful partner with the chorus and solo voices. Led by the extraordinary Robert Mealy, the orchestra is extremely intuitive, knowing when to support the chorus, when to step back or when to shine forth as soloists. This

balance of forces is particularly exceptional during the "Laudate Dominum."

In addition to the Biber *Vespers*, this recording also includes some other choral gems, including Biber's *Magnificat* and Legrenzi's *Salve Regina*. I highly recommend this recording; like the work of Biber himself, it shall surely stand the test of time.

Brian E. Katona  
Princeton, New Jersey

***Johannes Brahms: Secular Choral Songs***

RIAS Kammerchor  
Marcus Creed, conductor  
harmonia mundi HMG 501592.93  
(2010; 2 discs; 126')

**Audio Excerpt:** <http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalACDA#p/u/1/aos-cmWvbYA>

The RIAS Kammerchor has established itself as one of the world's finest choral ensembles. Although this Berlin-based group was founded to specialize in contemporary music, this recording provides evidence that the ensemble has a special affinity for the music of Brahms. Originally recorded between 1995 and 1997 and re-released in 2010, this two-CD set is wonderfully nuanced. The Kammerchor's singing style ranges from wildly robust to minutely sensitive, depending upon the nature of each passage. Pitches are continually shaped with a healthy, but fitting, dose of *mesa di voce* and the ensemble establishes a true sense of musical line by leading toward harmonic and textual arrival points. It is through this musical sensitivity that the Kammerchor brings out the very best within the poetry. This result is particularly evident in their rendition of one of Brahms's most concise and straightforward choral pieces, *In stiller nacht*, which