

CD Review by [Bertil van Boer](#)

Want List for Bertil van Boer [2013]

Once again, this has been a year that has seen a plethora of excellent recordings, all done with a degree of musicianship that is often astounding. Given that I focus my attention on the Baroque and Classical eras, my want list of necessity is derived therefrom. Over the last two decades the former issues of correct performance practice have been ironed out (though of course many remain subject to debate), allowing the performers, soloists, and ensembles alike to focus upon finely nuanced performances that are musical and effective. This is a trend that I see continuing as the repertory expands delightfully to include the vast world of music from this time, and excellent groups that have sprung up throughout Europe and the Americas (and elsewhere, of course) devoted to bringing this to the public. I admit to finding an embarrassment of riches here, which is making the five choices each year more difficult. Although I have indeed chosen the list for this year, I will close by saying that there are more discs that could have been added, had I but more room.

My first disc is one that just showed up on my desk this very month. The Norwegian ensemble Barokkanerne has delivered an exciting and powerful performance of C. P. E. Bach, characterized by energy and precision. The sound is quite edgy, just as Bach would have liked, with emotion and drama infused into the symphonies, and a careful reading by the soloists in the two concertos. By using the critical edition now in the process of being published, the ensemble has emerged with a performance that is both accurate to the composer's intentions and highly musical, just the way Bach needs to be played.

There is a wealth of Classical-period music that is now emerging from Spain, thanks to the achievements of several new period instrument ensembles and research that is beginning to delve into the vast (and largely unexplored) musical archives. One new disc explores the music of two composers who worked at the Cathedral in Malaga, Juan Francés de Iribarren (1699–1767) and his successor Jayme Torrens (1741–1803). The former is represented by several *cantadas*, one of which concludes with a typical Spanish cry (“Ay!”) in a minor key. The Torrens pieces, mainly *villancicos*, reflect awareness of the Neapolitan style, but the manner in which he composes them retains much of the Spanish flavor. The performances by the Baroque Orchestra of Seville, when coupled with the gorgeous, flexible soprano of Maria Espada, give a memorable rendition of music that should be better known, and will be if this group continues down the path posted by this recording.

For the third year in a row, this want list includes the next installment of Bergen Barokk's complete set of Telemann's *Harmonischer Gottesdienst*. Like the other discs, this one retains the excellent quality of performance that is both musical and filled with technical precision. Mona Julsrud's clear and vibrant soprano handles both the sensitive, slower arias and the virtuoso displays with taste and


accuracy. She blends so well with Bjarte Eike's dexterous violin that they sound as one, even in the often tortuous contrapuntal lines. The tempos are lively and sensitive to the *Affekt* of the text. The continuo likewise is an omnipresent partner, never overbearing but well integrated into the overall texture. At this juncture, I will state that this will be the last time I include them in my Want List, lest I begin to be perceived as monomaniacal in my praise of their series. I will only say that this has shown how sensitive a job the composer did for everyday Lutheran Church musicians of his day.


Conductor Marcello di Lisa has teamed up with soprano Daniela Barcellona to produce a selection of arias from the operas of Giovanni Pergolesi, arranged sort of like miniature "cantatas," opening with a sinfonia and followed by examples of his stunning vocal writing. No one writes *furore* like Pergolesi (though one may also make a case for Vivaldi and Handel), with vocal pyrotechnics that are under anyone's definition stunningly virtuosic. Barcellona handles both musicality and technique with deceptive ease, leaving me wanting to hear the complete operas.


The last disc for this year is the fabulous performance by the Camerata Köln of André-Danican Philidor's neat and unusual quartets for a woodwind, strings, and bass. Although entitled *The Art of Modulation*, it is in reality a highly focused set of movements that explore all aspects of music, from harmony to fragmented melody, from stylized dances to strict fugues, and from dramatic *lamentos* to sprightly and surprisingly airy tunes. The ensemble does an absolutely stellar job in clearly performing these eclectic pieces, which in turn gives a whole new perspective on the chamber music of the period.


 **C. P. E. BACH** Symphonies: in e, Wq 178; in D, Wq 183/1.

Oboe Concerto in E b, Wq 165. **Harpsichord Concerto in d**, Wq 17 • Bernardini, Kjos / Barokkanerne • LAWO 1038

 **ARDE EL FUROR INTREPID** • Diego Fasolis / Espada, Hernández-Pastor / Orquesta Barroca de Sevilla • OBS PROMETEO 01

 **TELEMANN** *Harmonischer Gottesdienst, Vol. 5* • Julsrud / Bergen Barokk • TOCCATA 0102

 **PERGOLESI** Opera Arias and Sinfonias • Di Lisa / Barcellona / Concerto de' Cavalieri • DEUTSCHE HARMONIA MUNDI 88691965082

 **PHILIDOR** *L'art de la modulation: Six Quatuors* • Camerata Köln • CPO 777 439

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