

The New York Times

December 18, 2014

Classical Critics Pick the Top Music Recordings of 2014

HERE it is: the annually anticipated choices from the classical music critics of The New York Times of the best recordings of 2014. First, though, a qualification: None of us remotely claims to have heard all the recordings of note released this past year. Still, among the ranks of music lovers, we are probably more aware than many of the range of what's been issued. In the end, these are personal choices. The only ground rules were that we agreed not to duplicate one another's selections, and that we would not pick more than five each.

CALMUS ENSEMBLE: 'MADRIGALS OF MADNESS' (Carus). Renaissance and Baroque songs of heartbreak, despair and war receive strikingly vivid performances by five singers from Leipzig, Germany. There is action aplenty in the pitched battle of Clément Janequin's "La Guerre" and the shipwreck of Mateo Flecha's "La Bomba," but the wry detachment of Josquin's "Scaramella" burns brightest in memory. **JAMES R. OESTREICH**

