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Sony Music Masterworks Announces March 2019 US Classical Releases

Available March 1:

Lara Downes: *Holes in the Sky*

Robert Casadesu: The Complete Columbia Album Collection
Reviewer Rate: \$138.85

Available March 8:

Yo-Yo Ma: Salonen Cello Concerto

Available March 15:

Cameron Carpenter: Rachmaninoff & Poulenc

The World of Hans Zimmer: A Symphonic Celebration
Reviewer Rate: \$11.20

Available March 22:

Khatia Buniatishvili: Schubert

Danny Elfman: Violin Concerto "Eleven Eleven" and Piano Quartet

Lara Downes: *Holes in the Sky*
Release Date: March 1

American pianist **Lara Downes** releases her new album, *Holes in the Sky*, on Portrait, an imprint of the Sony Music Masterworks label. *Holes in the Sky* is a genre-fluid collection of music written and performed by today's leading female artists, celebrating the contributions of phenomenal women to the past, present, and future of American music.

This music tells the story of what women and girls can contribute to the world when they are given a chance - their dreams can make holes in the sky. The album is presented in support of with PLAN International Because I Am A Girl, supporting the rights and empowerment of girls and young women around the globe; Women's Empowerment, ending homelessness one woman - and one family - at a time; and the Lower East Side Girls Club, breaking the cycle of poverty by training the next generation of ethical, entrepreneurial, and environmental leaders.

Lara Downes collaborates with an extraordinary multi-generational group of female guest artists on this album, including the iconic singer/songwriter Judy Collins, boundary-breaking violinist Rachel Barton Pine, singer/instrumentalist Rhiannon Giddens (2018 MacArthur Fellow), pianist Simone Dinnerstein, fast-rising cellist Ifetayo Ali-Landing, and the urban youth vocal ensemble Musicality. The album includes music by Margaret Bonds, Judy Collins, Jennifer Higdon, Billie

Holiday, Mary Kouyoumdjian, Abbey Lincoln, Joni Mitchell, Meredith Monk, Paola Prestini, Florence Price, Hazel Scott, and Nina Simone, and many more.

Robert Casadesus: The Complete Columbia Album Collection

Release Date: March 1

Reviewer Rate: \$138.85

“You have to be a composer yourself to understand the music of others so well,” said Maurice Ravel of **Robert Casadesus**, the great French pianist-composer. This prolific recording artist, who was born in 1899 and died in 1972, is the subject of a major new release from Sony Classical: **Robert Casadesus – The Complete Columbia Album Collection**. 65 CDs honor Casadesus’s substantial legacy, with numerous albums – including recordings from as early as 1940 – reissued by Sony Classical on CD for the very first time.

Casadesus’s close association with Ravel began in 1922, when the composer invited him to record piano rolls of his music and collaborate in performance. His recording of the complete solo piano works dates from 1952 and is complemented by additional Ravel recordings made both earlier and later, including two recordings of the Concerto for Left Hand with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Casadesus also recorded most of Debussy’s solo piano works with great success, as well as works by compatriots including Franck, Saint-Saëns, Satie, d’Indy, Chabrier and Fauré. Casadesus’s Mozart was especially renowned. Solo recordings complement numerous concerto readings, many made with Ormandy, George Szell and Charles Munch, and a 1951 recording of the B-flat major Piano Concerto No. 27 with the New York Philharmonic and John Barbirolli is here given its first Sony CD release. Beethoven is also well represented, with sonatas including the “Moonlight”, “Appassionata” and op. 110 as well as the First and Fourth Concertos with Eduard van Beinum and the Concertgebouw Orchestra. Another recording of the Fourth, with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1948, is also new to CD; and the Fifth, “Emperor” Concerto is performed with Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic.

Casadesus’s many Schumann recordings include *Waldszenen*, the Symphonic Etudes, *Carnaval* and the Fantasia in C, and *Dichterliebe* with Pierre Bernac; and his Chopin Ballades are also reissued here, alongside the Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3. Casadesus also recorded Liszt’s Second Concerto and Weber’s *Konzertstück* with Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, and Falla’s *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* was another Mitropoulos/New York Philharmonic recording. Baroque recordings include Scarlatti, Bach and Rameau. One of Casadesus’s most important musical partnerships was with violinist Zino Francescatti, with whom he recorded the newly remastered Beethoven sonatas. The pair also recorded Ravel miniatures, Fauré, Franck and Debussy sonatas, Chausson’s Concert for solo violin and piano quintet, Bach’s A major sonata, and the three sonatas of Brahms. Additionally, they perform each other’s compositions: two of Casadesus’s own works, and Casadesus plays Francescatti’s Three Preludes. Casadesus’s other frequent collaborator was his wife, Gaby Casadesus. Again they perform some of Casadesus’s own music, as well as pieces by numerous French composers including Ravel contemporary Florent Schmitt, plus Schubert and Bartók. Three concertos for three pianos are included: two by J. S. Bach and W. A. Mozart and one by Casadesus himself; for these, husband and wife are joined by their son Jean. Gaby and Jean Casadesus are further represented on four additional CDs: Jean plays Debussy and Chabrier on three of them, accompanying Anna Moffo in Debussy songs, and the set’s final disc is devoted to Gaby’s recordings of her late husband’s Piano Sonata No. 4, op. 56 and 8 Études, op. 28. Other compositions by Casadesus include his Nonet and Sextet for chamber ensembles, and concertos for one and two pianos.

Yo-Yo Ma: Salonen Cello Concerto

Release Date: March 8

On March 8, Sony Classical will release a recording of **Esa-Pekka Salonen's cello concerto** featuring **Yo-Yo Ma** and the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Salonen's baton. Co-commissioned for Ma by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Barbican Centre, and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Salonen's cello concerto premiered on March 9, 2017 with Salonen himself conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Ma and the concerto then came to the New York Philharmonic on March 17, 2017, with then-Music Director Alan Gilbert conducting; Ma and Gilbert continued the premiere season with performances at London's Barbican Centre and Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie. This recording captures the live performance in Los Angeles on February 8, 2018.

The approximately 30-minute concerto includes scoring for electronics and begins with "a simple thought emerging out of a complex landscape. Almost like consciousness developing from clouds of dust," in Salonen's words. The second, main movement follows with "slow cello arches...looped to create harmony from single lines." This is followed by the third movement of music that is "often dance-like; sometimes gesticulating wildly, perhaps from the sheer joy of no longer having to do with clouds and processes." Salonen concludes, "Finally the kinetic energy burns itself out gently, the rapid movement slows down, and the cello line climbs slowly up to a stratospherically high B-flat, two centimetres to the left from the highest note of the piano."

Salonen has noted that some ideas for the piece "can be traced back by at least three decades, but the actual material for the piece was mostly developed in the summer of 2015 when I decided to spend a few months researching new kinds of textures without a concrete plan for how to use them." Salonen and Ma are long-time friends and collaborators, having worked together on many projects in the 27 years since Salonen first led Ma in a performance at the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1992. Salonen says, "It has been a very great pleasure and honour to write a concerto for one of the most unique life-givers and communicators of our time, Yo-Yo Ma. It has been inspiring to know that his technique knows no limits. Perhaps more important: nor does his imagination."

Cameron Carpenter: Rachmaninoff & Poulenc
Release Date: March 15

Sony Classical announces the release of the new album by exceptional American organist **Cameron Carpenter**, with both his first orchestral recording and his first live-concert recording. This release features an original version of **Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini***, recorded live at Berlin's Konzerthaus, paired together with **Poulenc's popular Concerto for Organ, Strings and Timpani**. This world premiere version of Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody* demonstrates Carpenter's extensive musical skills: he arranged the original piano part for organ himself. The album is completed with Vierne's Organ Symphony No. 1, recorded live as the concert encore. Carpenter is joined by the Konzerthausorchester Berlin under renowned conductor Christoph Eschenbach, and all works were performed on his innovative International Touring Organ.

Rachmaninoff's arranged work is paired here with a key organ work originating from the same year (1934) – Poulenc's Organ Concerto. This recorded version remains faithful to Poulenc's original score, but Carpenter explores his own ideas for the registrations rather than using the original published indications. Hence the Concerto may still sound new to those already familiar with the work.

The International Touring Organ was built to Carpenter's own specifications in collaboration with American digital organ pioneers Marshall & Ogletree and launched in 2014. Like Carpenter himself, it represents a seismic shift in the organ world. This custom-built instrument dispenses with traditional pipes and instead uses digitized sounds from instruments from across the globe, crucially allowing the exceptional sound definition required for the rapid virtuosic finger and

footwork that these pieces demand. Just as his instrument is redefining the organ world, so too is Carpenter. As the public broadcaster Kulturradio Berlin noted in their review of the live concert, “Carpenter is a breathtaking virtuoso. . . He can do everything.”

The World of Hans Zimmer: A Symphonic Celebration

Release Date: March 15

Reviewer Rate:

Sony Classical releases the double-album ***The World of Hans Zimmer: A Symphonic Celebration***. The album features the music from the Zimmer-curated “World of Hans Zimmer” international concert tour by Semmel Concerts. For this new set, Zimmer has newly arranged his greatest hits and made them into electrifying concert suites for orchestra, choir and an impressive list of soloists.

Each concert suite features the most recognizable parts and melodies of a film score in the cohesive form of a new symphonic work. The album features such legendary scores as *The Dark Knight*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *Lion King*, *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *M:i-2 Mission: Impossible 2*. Among the accomplished performers are several of Zimmer’s long-time musical collaborators such as Gavin Greenaway (musical director), Lisa Gerrard, multi-instrumentalist Pedro Eustache, and renowned opera singer Valentina Nafornta.

The recording took place at the famous traditional concert hall Wiener Konzerthaus featuring renowned ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra and choir Neue Wiener Stimmen conducted by Martin Gellner in the course of the “Hollywood in Vienna” festival. *The World of Hans Zimmer: A Symphonic Celebration* also includes concert suites of the scores of *King Arthur*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Rush*, *Madagascar*, *Spirit*, *Kung Fu Panda*, *The Holiday*, *Hannibal*, *Gladiator*, and *Inception*.

Khatia Buniatishvili: Schubert

Release Date: March 22

Having blazed her way into public consciousness with her fearlessness on stage as well as on record, Georgian-born pianist **Khatia Buniatishvili** has become known for her distinctive artistic approach and bold interpretive flair, which combine to make her playing and performances both unmistakable and unmissable. Celebrated by media around the world, she has been described by *The Observer* as “one of today’s most exciting and technically gifted young pianists,” while *Madame Figaro* has called her “the popstar of the classical music world,” adding that “with Khatia Buniatishvili, only the repertoire is classical. As for the rest, there’s no limit.”

This brilliant young musician now turns her attention to **Franz Schubert** (1797–1828) in her eagerly anticipated first recording of the composer’s works, including his great last Piano Sonata D 960, the four popular Impromptus D 899, and Liszt’s arrangement of “Ständchen” from *Schwanengesang*. The Schubert album follows on from Buniatishvili’s acclaimed series of single-composer albums for Sony Classical already featuring Liszt, Chopin and Rachmaninoff, as well as her two fascinating collections *Motherland* and *Kaleidoscope* (Mussorgsky, Ravel and Stravinsky).

Khatia Buniatishvili made her début as a soloist with an orchestra when she was only six years old; by the age of ten she had played in Europe’s most prestigious halls, as well as in Israel and the United States of America, and has never looked back. Her career has advanced into many new dimensions, especially since receiving the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award in 2010 and participating in the pioneering BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists scheme (2009–11), as well as twice receiving the ECHO Klassik Award. Much in demand internationally, she performs regularly at leading halls around the world with top orchestras and conductors of the day. In 2018 she performed at the BBC Proms with Paavo Järvi. She is as likely to be invited to grace the front

covers of high-end fashion magazines as classical music magazines and appears regularly on French TV.

Danny Elfman: Violin Concerto "Eleven Eleven" and Piano Quartet
Release Date: March 22

Two years ago, the Prague orchestra commissioned well-known film composer **Danny Elfman** to compose a violin concerto for Sandy Cameron. Elfman responded by composing the concerto as his first freestanding orchestral work, "**Eleven Eleven**." That he loves the late Romantic idiom and especially its masters shines through clearly in the violin concerto. But here it's more like Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev have run into the groove of *Beetlejuice*.

The opening movement of his violin concerto "Eleven Eleven" already has a surprise in store with a remarkably complex sound – those only expecting sound effects from a film composer should look elsewhere. Initially, a number of sparing lines flow softly into each other, reminiscent of Samuel Barber or the famous late *Metamorphosen* by Richard Strauss. Elfman's music takes listeners by the hand and draws them deeper and deeper into a fairytale world – and then the virtuoso violin soars to dizzying heights. Only later when bells and low brass come in can a sense of Hollywood pomp be felt. But of course in this case it's a master musician referencing his own background with subtle irony.

However, this music is always dancing along the boundary between Late Romantic music and the emergence of atonal music over a hundred years ago. Today, this has an exceptionally invigorating effect. The big question about what direction classical music would take, which Mahler, Schoenberg and others were wrestling with, finds a new answer in this music once again. This time brimming over with joy and playful energy – but just as complex and smart.

Elfman's second work on this new release is merely entitled **Piano Quartet**, and also has movement titles such as "Kinderspott" (Scorn of Children) or "Die Wolfsjungen" (The Wild Boys). As a piano quartet it makes a nod to Robert Schumann but also to the second flowering of New Music in Germany – for Wolfgang Rihm, too, adds illustrative titles to the movements of his chamber music works. Elfman's tonal language reveals his profound knowledge of musical tradition, and also his musical sense of humor.

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