

Their top 10 albums, from rock to world to classical

BY MARK LEPAGE, THE GAZETTE DECEMBER 20, 2008

Arthur Kaptainis - classical

This list is assembled with a ear for fresh repertoire. The absence of Gustavo Dudamel's overrated *Fiesta* (DG) and Yannick Nézet-Séguin's overstretched Bruckner Ninth Symphony (ATMA) is deliberate.

1. Rachel Barton Pine, violin: Beethoven and Clement Violin Concertos (Cedille). Does the 1805 Violin Concerto of Franz Clement - who played the world premiere of the 1806 Beethoven Concerto - have legs? This important disc says yes.

2. Alain Lefèvre, piano: André Mathieu Concerto No. 4 (Analekta). Another successful revival of the approachable music of André Mathieu, 1929-1968, Quebec genius gone to seed. Made in Tucson, of all places.

3. Angela Hewitt, piano: Schumann Works (Hyperion). Fiery accounts of the not-so-overplayed Humoreske and Sonata in F sharp minor. Ravishingly realistic sound.

4. MSO, Kent Nagano: Ideals of the French Revolution (Analekta). Even if you like your Beethoven Fifths a bit bigger, this double-header includes the Egmont-based melodrama *The General*, with a compelling reading (of prosaic words) by Maximilian Schell.

5. Gerald Finley, baritone: Samuel Barber Songs (Hyperion). The British-based and Montreal-born baritone treats Barber's lush *Dover Beach* and epigrammatic *Hermit Songs* with high artistry.

6. Jean-Efflam Bavouzet,

piano: Debussy Piano

Works Vol. 3 (Chandos). Classics (like *Clair de lune*) and rarities (like *Élégie*) coexist peacefully in this plummy-sounding issue from a master colourist.

7. Alison Balsom, trumpet: Haydn, Hummel, Torelli, Neruda Trumpet Concertos (EMI). Young British bombshell with a velvety legato and a sure sense of articulation reminds us of the classical

viability of the trumpet.

8. Anton Kuerti, piano: Haydn Sonatas (Analekta). Probing performances by the Toronto sage of perennially witty works.

9. Ewa Kupiec and Maria Lettberg, pianists: Schnittke

Piano Concertos (Phoenix Edition). Interesting effusions from the late Russian-born "polystylist," including a youthful repertoire-worthy score that could be mistaken for Prokofiev.

10. I Musici de Montréal under Yuli Turovsky: Shostakovich, Weinberg, Ichmouratov (Analekta). Early Shosta-kovich and two distant stylistic relatives, done to a turn.