

Classical Records

The best classical records of the year — so far

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BEFORE the onslaught of Christmas-season recordings, it's time for a fall review of the best classical discs of

the past year. They appear below in three categories: best single LPs, best multiple-disc albums and best new orchestral music by living composers.

Any such list omitting the Bruckner Seventh Symphony made

by conductor Herbert Blomstedt in East Germany probably risks public rebukes by the faithful of the San Francisco Symphony. But if you sit and listen to Riccardo Chailly's lively handling of the same symphony with his RSO Berlin ensemble on a far more widely circulated label, the basis of choice will crystalize.

Lists are alphabetical except for the new orchestral music, which is in order of preference. The composers therein are three Americans, an Estonian (Arvo Part) and a Soviet (Alfred Schnittke).

All the discs are digital and also available on cassette, unless otherwise noted. Some are available on compact discs (CDs), too.

The San Jose Symphony's music of Henry Brant recorded at the Center of Performing Arts in 1983, under George Cleve, cannot be on the list for one very compelling reason: It has yet to be released.

BEST SINGLE ALBUM

Bruckner: Symphony No. 7. Riccardo Chailly conducts the RSO Berlin (London 414 290-1 LH); also on CD.

NEW ORCHESTRAL MUSIC BY LIVING COMPOSERS

First Choice: Arvo Part: "Tabula Rasa, Fratres, Cantus," Gidon Kremer, violin (ECM 25011-1 F).

Second Choice: John Adams: "Harmonium," Edo de Waart leads the San Francisco Symphony, (ECM 25012-1); also on CD.

Third Choice: Joseph Schwanter: "Magabunda," William Schuman: American Hymn, Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony (Nonesuch 79072).

Fourth Choice: Alfred Schnittke: Violin Concerto No. 2, Basler Symphonie with Gidon Kremer and Heinz Holliger (Philips 411 107-1).

Fifth Choice: Morton Gould: "Apple Waltzes," "Burchfield Gallery," Morton Gould leads the American Symphony (RCA ARC 1-5019). ■

Chausson: Songs, Jessye Norman, soprano (Erato NUM 75059).

Chopin: Songs, Op. 74. Teresa Zylis-Gara, soprano (Erato 71527).

Gregorian Chant, Vienna Hofburg Choralschola (Philips 411-140-4).

Janacek: "Diary of One Who Vanished," Grayson Hirst, Shirley Love, vocalists, with Columbia Pro Cantare Women's Ensemble (Arabesque 6513); also on CD.

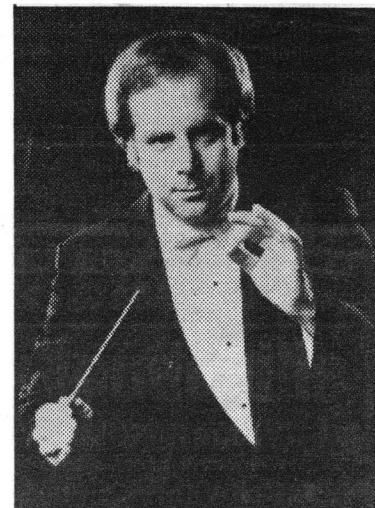
Jongen: Symphonie Concertante; Franck: Fantaisie in A; Pastorale, Edo de Waart leads the San Francisco Symphony (Telarc DG-10096).

New Music with Guitar, Vol. 2, David Starobin, guitar (Bridge BDG 2004). Not digital, not available on cassette.

McNabb: "Dream Song" and other works, computer synthesizer at Stanford University (1750 Arch S1800); also on CD.

Rameau: Pygmalion (Ballet), Nicholas McGegan conducts English Bach Festival Orchestra and Singers (Erato STU 71507).

Schumann: Davidsbündler-



Leonard Slatkin

taenze, Robert Taub, piano (Harmonia Mundi 5133).

BEST ALBUMS, MULTIPLE

Barber: "Antony and Cleopatra" (Opera, in English), Esther Hinds, Jeffrey Wells; Christian Badaea Conducts (New World 322-24, three discs).

Brahms: "German Requiem," Robert Shaw leads the Atlanta Symphony (Telarc DG 10092-2, two discs); also on CD.

Britten: "War Requiem," Simon Rattle leads Birmingham Symphony, with Elisabeth Soderstrom, Richard Allen, Robert Tear (Angel DS 3949, two discs); also on CD.

Giordano: "Andrea Chenier" (opera, in Italian), with Luciano Pavarotti, Montserrat Caballe, Leo Nucci (London 410-117-1, three discs); also on CD.

Mahler: Symphony No. 3, Georg Solti leads the Chicago Symphony and Chorus; with Helga Dernesch (London LDR 72014, two discs).

Purcell: "King Arthur," John Eliot Gardiner leads Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists (Erato NUM 751272, two discs).

Stravinsky: "The Rake's Progress" (opera, in English), Riccardo Chailly leads the London Sinfonietta and Chorus (London 411-644-1, three discs).