In the words of Laura Carlo, 2017 has been a year of musical riches. Here's the proof: each member of our staff picked a favorite from this year's catalog of CDs of the Week - and nobody picked the same album! May 2018 provide the same bounty!

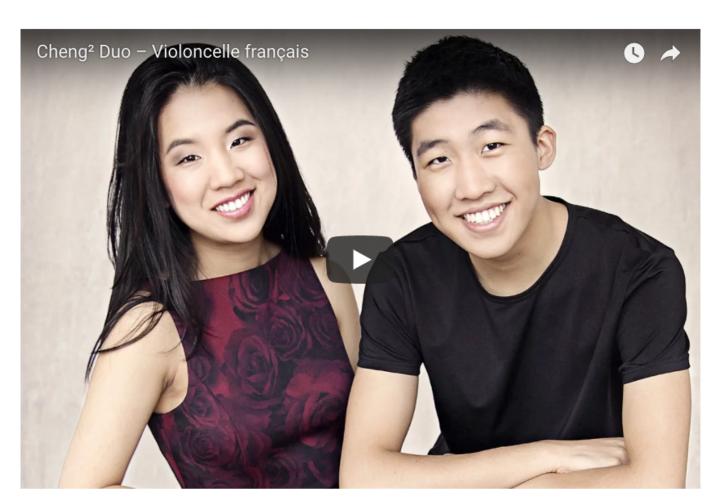
Cathy Fuller: The Borromeo String Quartet: The Well-Tempered Clavier

The Borromeo String Quartet has become a defining element in the musical world of Boston. I've been awestruck by their intelligence and passion for more than two decades now! Witnessing their performances is like receiving a magic blueprint of the very structure of the music, and this Bach recording has the same effect, giving color and character to every voice in Bach's preludes and fugues for keyboard. You'll hear these pieces as though in a dream, thanks to Nick Kitchen's sheer love and reverence for Bach's genius.



Colin Brumley: Cheng2 Duo: Violoncelle Français

We play a lot of music at my apartment, and if you were to bust down the door and come in at any given time, you're almost guaranteed to hear either French Impressionism or death metal. Living with two cellists, they tend to DJ more cellocentric works, especially those of Debussy, Fauré, and Ravel. So when we featured a whole album of French Impressionist pieces for cello, I was thrilled. Even more captivating is the musical maturity of this sibling duo – they're both teenagers, but you'd never know it. It has since become an apartment listening staple. Bien fait!



Brian McCreath: Riccardo Chailly: Overtures, Preludes, and Intermezzi

When, at the beginning of this year, conductor Riccardo Chailly took up the post of music director of La Scala, the legendary opera house in Milan, it was a homecoming. Born and raised in Milan, Chailly, at the age of 20, became Claudio Abbado's assistant conductor at La Scala. Later, he led both the world-class Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam and the equally amazing Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig, with whom he made a series of astonishing recordings. Now, with the Filarmonica della Scala, Chailly brings his infectious and inspiring enthusiasm to the core of both his and the orchestra's artistic identity, the language and passion of Italian opera.



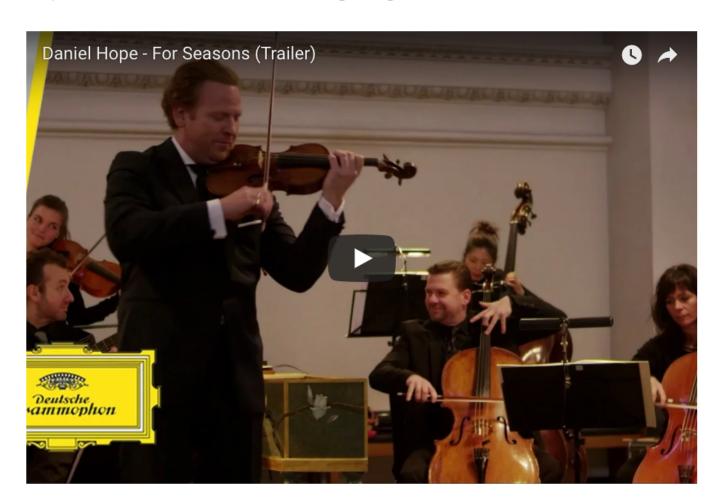
Kendall Todd: Mutterissimo: The Art of Anne-Sophie Mutter

This past spring, I went with a friend to see Anne-Sophie Mutter play Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and it was nothing short of electrifying. As a violinist myself, I'm picky about the soloists I listen to; after that concert, Mutter skyrocketed to the top of my "favorite musicians" list, and she's been there ever since. Of course I had to choose her album "Mutterissimo" as my CD of the Week of the Year - how could I pass up two entire discs of the best of Mutter's best recordings? There's really something for everything here, from Brahms to Kreisler to, yes, Tchaikovsky - and they're all as mind-blowingly dynamic as you'd expect from a violinist who, in an interview for our podcast The Answered Question, laughingly explained, "I just love to play fast!"



Chris Voss: Daniel Hope: For Seasons

To release a new album of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, you really need to have something new to say. And Daniel Hope, in "For Seasons," does. Not that the spirited performance of the Vivaldi that Hope gives doesn't alone make this album worth it, but this album is more much than just *Four Seasons*. In a concept album approach, each month is singled out individually and is paired both with a different composer's music, and with a different visual artists' work: March is dedicated to a minimalist take on Vivaldi's Spring by Max Richter, and the stunningly realistic *Drawn Face VI* by Dirk Dzimirsky; December takes Chilly Gonzales' dark tango *Wintermezzo* and combines it with Silvana Hope's striking *Eloise in Winter*. It's an album you'll want to have in your hands to get the full effect, and with it I promise you, you wont be able to help but listen to "For Seasons," from beginning to end.



At the age of 42, Yannick Nezet-Seguin is a young conductor to watch, in at least a couple of ways. He's immensely fun to watch, because of his limitless passion for the music and the way he demonstrates it on the podium. Just watch him in one of the many videos you can find online. But he's also one to watch, in terms of the trajectory of his career. He began as a piano student at the age of 5, and when he was 10 he decided he was going to be a conductor. He went on to conduct the Orchestre Metropolitain in Montreal when he was 25, and he is still the music director there. But in the meantime he took on conductorships in Rotterdam, Philadelphia, and now the Metropolitan Opera.

These recordings of the Mendelssohn Symphonies show him at his liveliest, channeling the youthful energy of the young Mendelssohn. Listening to them just makes me smile!

