



## The RIAS Bach Cantatas Project

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### Recordings Of The Year 2012

Either this has been a particularly rich year or else I've been extremely fortunate in the quality of the discs that have come my way for review. My shortlist, compiled as the year went along, eventually extended to over a dozen releases. With great difficulty – and even greater regret – I have discarded such excellent releases as Herreweghe's latest account of the B Minor Mass and Sir John Eliot Gardiner's new versions of the Bach Motets and Brahms Requiem. Similarly, Juanjo Mena's impressive Turangalila-Symphonie narrowly missed the cut, as did Stephen Layton's wonderful recording of the serene Requiem by Howells and a very fine set of music by Alec Roth from Ex Cathedra. Andris Nelson's superb DVD of the Shostakovich Eighth Symphony was one of my six choices until the very last minute when his DVD of War Requiem became an even more urgent selection.

All the releases that I've chosen, which I've deliberately listed in alphabetical order – and those mentioned above – have given me particular pleasure and I hope that if you acquire them they'll have the same effect on you.

#### Johann Sebastian Bach: The RIAS Bach Cantatas Project

This set was a revelation: Bach cantatas recorded between 1946 and 1953 but in a style that puts the performances closer to that of the period performance revolution that lay years ahead. The conductor, Karl Ristenpart, used a chamber choir and orchestra and the results are light and fresh. Outstanding among the soloists are Agnes Giebel, Helmut Krebs and the young Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Ristenpart conducts with great distinction and with a real feeling for the spirit of Bach. These performances constitute a major addition to the discography of Bach's cantatas. [...]