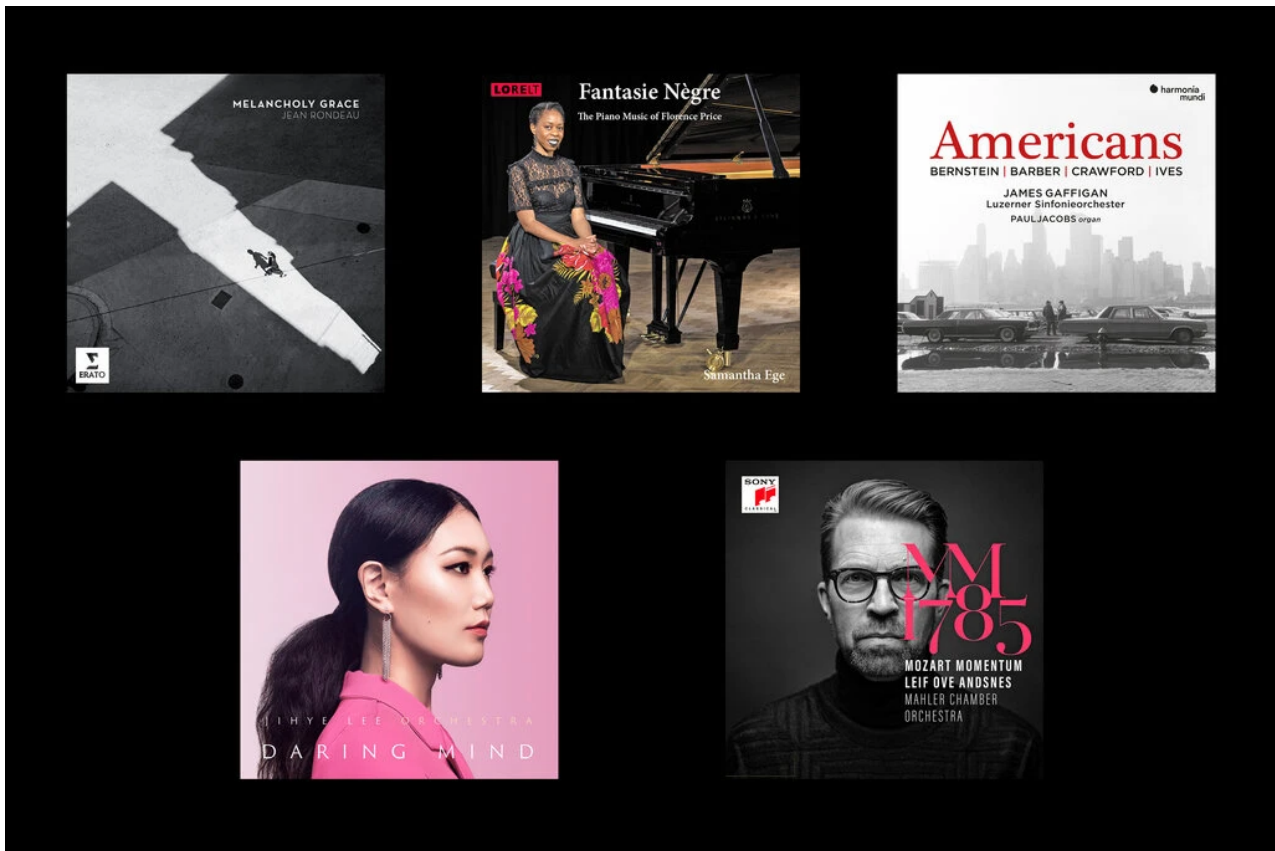


5 Classical Albums to Hear Right Now

[nytimes.com/2021/06/03/arts/music/classical-music-recordings-albums.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/03/arts/music/classical-music-recordings-albums.html)

3 June 2021



'Fantasie Nègre: The Piano Music of Florence Price'

Samantha Ege, piano (Lorelt)

The Florence Price revival continues apace. In just the last few weeks, the Philadelphia Orchestra announced that it would record Price's symphonies under Yannick Nézet-Séguin; the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective released a gorgeous premiere recording of her Piano Quintet in A minor on Chandos; and the musicologists Douglas W. Shadle and Samantha Ege gave notice that they are writing a biography of this long-overlooked composer.

Much of this fresh prominence is because of the labors of a community of scholar-performers like Ege, nine-tenths of whose new album is based on manuscripts rescued from Price's former summer home in 2009. There are intriguing miniatures here, including a suite of "Snapshots" written just before Price's death, in 1953, but the focus is on four pieces named "Fantasie Nègre," dating from 1929-33.

Loose sets of variations on spirituals and similar melodies set in Price's late-Romantic language — one perfumed with pentatonic scales and enriched with a teeming sense of form — these are huge works. Especially the fourth, which Price at one point marked "Out of the Crucible" — a nod, Ege writes, to "her own triumphs over adversity." Triumphs

indeed, and if one can now imagine some of this music being performed with a dash more flair, that's a testament to how Ege has brought this music to the life it more than deserves. DAVID ALLEN