



The best classical albums of 2025 so far

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Our critics' pick of the latest releases

19th August 2025

La Rêveuse

London circa 1760

Harmonia Mundi

London's public transport, sanitation, internet connections ... none of these in 1760 would meet our modern standards. But the music-making? I'd jump back in time any day to experience the tuneful sparkle of the pieces gathered by the French ensemble La Rêveuse in their latest survey of the capital's 18th-century offerings. The dominant composer is Carl Friedrich Abel, who joined the retinue of his fellow German Queen Charlotte and specialised in writing enjoyable works featuring his own instrument, the viola da gamba.

His replacement here is Florence Bolton, who bounces with honeyed splendour and gusto through quartets, a bustling concerto, and odds and ends. Her companions prove equally lively, painting the air in multiple colours armed with flute, lute, assorted strings, harpsichord, the pear-shaped English guitar, and the eerie glide of the briefly fashionable musical glasses. A lively programme note conjuring up London's bustling musical night life — concerts, masked balls, licentiousness — only adds to the fun. **GB**