

From The House of the Dead



## Best (and worst) of opera and classical music

And what we're looking forward to in 2010.

By Steve Smith and Olivia Giovetti

### **In Vain at Miller Theatre, Feb 6**

The Argento Chamber Ensemble was characteristically brilliant in this Composer Portrait concert, featuring a powerful, mysterious and evocative modern musical rite by Austrian composer Georg Friedrich Haas.—SS

### **Ensemble Intercontemporain at the Rose Theater; May 8, 9**

Susanna Mälkki conducted this extraordinary French ensemble in two concerts that mixed Ligeti masterpieces with important recent works by Bruno Mantovani, Unsuk Chin and Michael Jarrell.—SS

### **Green Aria at the Guggenheim Museum of Art, May 31**

The traditional pairing of composer and librettist became a threesome with perfumer added, for the world's first "scent opera." Far from being a one-note gimmick, Nico Muhly's score delighted ears as much as Absolute Zero delighted noses.—OG

### **So Percussion at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Oct 14**

Urban angst was soothed in the percussion quartet's evening-long Imaginary City. At once quirky and probing, So created a multilayered portrait of a city, using everything from wine bottles to toy pianos to a Monopoly set.—OG

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## **New Amsterdam Records takes Brooklyn**

This inventive label filled the void of its discontinued VIM: Tribeca series twofold. This summer's Undiscovered Islands series was crowned by Missy Mazzoli's Song from the Uproar, while fall saw the start of Archipelago, a monthly event at Galapagos.—OG

ubiquitous even in the concert hall, 140 characters at a time. (Twitter even helped get this editor her job.)—OG

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## **Alan Gilbert's arrival at the New York Philharmonic**

Beyond the effects of any one concert, the Phil's new music director has created a welcome buzz with his vitality, openness to fresh ideas and earnest intent to reassert the orchestra's prime position in New York's artistic conversation.—SS

## **New York City Opera's welcome return**

George Steel still has a huge job ahead in restoring City Opera's fortunes. But a successful opening volley with Hugo Weisgall's severe Esther and a brash, cheeky Don Giovanni proved that Steel knows exactly what the company needs right now.—SS

## **21c Liederabend at Galapagos Art Space, Nov 19**

Three ambitious grassroots organizations—Beth Morrison Projects, VisionIntoArt and Opera on Tap—mounted an expansive, at times explosive survey of contemporary art song, musical theater and opera.—SS

## **Twitter takes the classical-music world**

From Bang on a Can's marathon tweet team to the New York Phil's blogger's night at Contact!, the bird and the whale became