



For summer listening, check out some exceptional classical CDs

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So you're planning on spending some time in the hammock this summer. With a set of headphones and your iPod. And you'd like to hear some music. In fact, you'd like to check out some new classical recordings — it's time to catch up, right?

Here's a batch of new and recent classical CDs, with performances of music composed as long ago as the Renaissance and as recently as the past year or two. In fact, this roundup of classical releases contains a healthy dose of music by living composers, because classical music, as old as it can be, is also a living, breathing music of right now.

Phil Kline. "John the Revelator" (Cantaloupe Music). If your points of reference include "Pet Sounds," "Beowulf," old Albert Finney movies, William Byrd, Blind Willie Johnson, the Kinks and/or composer Kline's old band, the Del-Byzanteens, you're likely to find yourself mesmerized by this evocative and richly beautiful re-setting of the Mass, which draws on the Lamentations of Jeremiah and texts by Samuel Beckett. Fabulously performed by the male vocal sextet Lionheart and the string quartet Ethel, "John the Revelator" grabs and holds on to you like an old-fashioned concept album.