



## **THE BEST OF 2004**

### **Classical Music**

#### **Singing Stars**

**Vocalists stood out in myriad commanding performances that connected with audiences**  
BY JUSTIN DAVIDSON

...Then there was the downtown vocalist Theo Bleckmann, whose slender, plangent coo gave Phil Kline's "Zippo Songs" and "Rumsfeld Songs" gentle eeriness. At Merkin Hall and on a Cantaloupe CD, Bleckmann gave a ghostly, deadpan dignity to the secretary of defense's memorable testimony: "As we know, there are known knowns, there are things we know we know."

## **THE TOP 10**

### **Classical Music CDs**

5. Zippo Songs: Airs of War and Lunacy by Phil Kline. Theo Bleckmann, vocals, with Phil Kline Ensemble. One of the only overtly political CDs to come out of the concert-music world, this startlingly restrained suite of electric lieder uses poems - some noble, others obscene - that Vietnam GI's scratched on their Zippo lighters. Another set sweetly lynches Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld with his own Gertrude Steinian words.