
Johanna Soller

Selected Reviews

JC Bach *Zanaida*, Kammerakademie Potsdam, Potsdamer Winteroper (February 2026)

"The musical crown of the evening belongs to Johanna Söller as the conductor who transformed Johann Christian Bach's score into a highly vibrant, theatrical performance. With the superbly prepared and well-staffed Kammerakademie Potsdam (strings, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, harpsichord), she succeeded in breathing new life and evocation into a beautiful, hitherto completely unknown opera with compelling direction, rhythmically precise edges, and finely detailed instrumental nuances." - **Dr. Ingobert Waltenberger, *Online Merker***

"Johanna Soller has audibly inspired the Potsdam Chamber Academy and the vocal ensemble... Soller and the Potsdam Chamber Academy masterfully handled the reverberant acoustics of the Friedenskirche Sanssouci, the venue for this opera, given its intricately crafted music. Johann Christian Bach's music comes across with a wild energy, strong gestures, and powerful contours. The wind instruments are crisply emphasized, and the harmonic shifts and structural changes are underscored. The music's inherent richness shines through. At the same time, a sensitive interaction between the orchestra and singers is achieved." - **Ecki Ramón Weber, *concerti.de***

CD: *Johann Ludwig Bach: The Leipzig Cantatas*, Capella Sollertia, Ricercar RIC482 (January 2026)

"It's not every day that a classical recording company produces something that could be designated a boon to civilisation. But I'm tempted to paste that label onto Ricercar's four-disc presentation of the 18 surviving church cantatas of Bach — Johann Ludwig Bach, that is, distant cousin of the great Johann Sebastian — and music never recorded in bulk before. The box offers a treasure chest of delights, dispatched with scrupulous care and tremendous vim by Johanna Soller's Capella Sollertia... The performers' enjoyment of Ludwig's music is palpable and discovering these 18 cantatas has given me five of the happiest hours of my listening life. Civilisation, take note." - **Geoff Brown, *The Times********

"So many delights in these recordings from Johanna Soller and her Capella Sollertia. The first of the 4 CDs delivers us two contrasting cantatas that sold me the whole set, nothing that followed let me down." - **Andrew McGregor, *Record Review BBC R3***

"Johanna Soller and Capella Sollertia engage unerringly with this extensive project... unceasing advocates for an oeuvre that has, until now, remarkably escaped our attention... The spirit of warmth and affection is especially evident when voices and orchestra dance around each other with their light, genial aplomb under Soller's impressive direction." - **Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, *Gramophone (Recording of the Month)***

Handel *Susanna*, Opera North (October 2025)

"That's all matched by excellent playing from the Opera North orchestra. The young conductor Johanna Soller is clearly a baroque specialist with a real gift for dramatic pacing. The two don't always go together." - ***The Times***

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"Meanwhile, Johanna Soller does an excellent job in the pit, instruments scrupulously balanced, nature imagery deftly conjured, and tempi judiciously chosen. The Opera North Chorus are outstanding, singing and acting with enormous power and precision."

- **The Guardian**

"Conductor Johanna Soller's judicious tempos allowed the passion and stateliness of Handel's music to shine through."

- **The Telegraph**

"Johanna Soller conducted the Orchestra of Opera North with a sensitive, responsive touch that made the music feel alive. Handel's score can so easily become esoteric and ornate, but last night it felt supple and human. It's easy to take fine orchestration for granted, but when every section feels perfectly balanced, you realise how rare it is when everything simply fits."

- **Northern Arts Review**

"Johanna Soller, a specialist in baroque style, conducts from one of two harpsichords and obtains both suitably weighty tone and periodic contrasting lightness from the Orchestra of Opera North, with skilfully chosen tempi."

- **The Arts Desk**

"The orchestra conducted by Johanna Soller was appropriately sensitive to the needs of an essentially intimate, relatively understated drama with tragic and euphoric moments."

- **Bachtrack**

Bach *St Matthew Passion*, Munich Bach Choir, Isarphilharmonie (April 2025)

"(...) unprecedented orchestral nuances, vocal colour and dynamic differentiation, and fluid, naturally correct tempi: she achieves the miracle of intensification through restraint."

- **Peter Krause, *concerti***

Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Munich Bach Choir, Basilika Ottobeuren (July 2024)

"Premiere in the basilica: for the first time, a woman conducts a large orchestral concert in Ottobeuren. Johanna Soller conducted the interpretation magnificently. Mendelssohn's oratorio "Elijah" is a musical delight in the Ottobeuren Basilica. Conductor Johanna Soller played a large part in this. Sing to the Lord a new song! This call from the psalmist was heard in Ottobeuren. Not only was Johanna Soller the first female conductor to stand at the podium of a major orchestral concert. The way she conducts the Munich Bach Choir and Bach Orchestra, which she took over in 2023, can be described as a quantum leap. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's *Elijah* sounded transparent and sensuous, perfectly crafted down to the last detail. A pioneering performance in every Detail. Even in Ottobeuren, it is rare to experience an interpretation that is so intelligently staggered, so well organised down to the last detail and adapted to the space. And the choral voices were of excellent quality - a real treat. (...) Much could be written and praised. About the angel choirs, for example. Or about the reminiscences of Bach (fugue of the overture, folk scenes). In short: this was a world-class performance. An exciting, dramatic sacred opera in the best sense of the word. The development of the Munich ensemble under Johanna Soller is something one would like to follow regularly in Ottobeuren. She is effortlessly travelling in the big shoes of her predecessors, on her own path."

- **Allgäuer Zeitung**

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Göttinger Händel-Festspiele (2020)

„(...) Johanna Soller played the harpsichord in a heart-rending way. With her movements, it was as if she carried her feelings into the sounds: she brought the harpsichord to new life. “ - **Hessische Niedersächsische Allgemeine**

Bavarian Arts Award 2020, Jury Statement

„(...) her stylistic range and her unique combination of emotion, focused energy and intelligent probing of the score “