



British soprano Grace Davidson  
SCHMOPERA

ALBUM REVIEW

## Grace Davidson: Sacred Chants review — a voice so pure you might think yourself in heaven

Also reviewed — Alina Ibragimova: Telemann

Geoff Brown

Wednesday October 12 2022, 5.00pm, The Times

Share    

Save 

### Grace Davidson

Sacred Chants

★★★★☆

### Alina Ibragimova

Telemann

★★★★☆

You cannot get a solo recital that feels as intimate as one for a single voice. Unless the performer specialises in the guttural delights of throat singing, there's never going to be the sensation of seeming to hear two pitches at once. A monophonic line has to suffice. But who would consider that a drawback listening to Grace Davidson? Here is a British soprano with a voice so radiantly pure in colour and tone that you might think yourself in heaven.

And since she's singing the floridly eloquent music of the medieval abbess Hildegarde von Bingen, the visionary ecstasy of Hildegarde's chants meeting the ecstasy of Davidson's voice, nothing could be more appropriate. The warmly resonant recording, captured at Davidson's own home, is pretty heavenly in itself. Where on earth does she live? In a church? A catacomb? An empty loft?

Most of the repertoire here — hymns to the Virgin Mary and some lesser known saints — duplicate the material of Gothic Voices' 1982 album *A Feather on the Breath of God*, a milestone in Hildegarde's modern revival. The vocal textures on offer there had more variety than Davidson's endlessly golden gleam, but I know which recording I would turn to if I wanted to knock myself out with beauty and rise to a higher plane. Even after a single track, I had to press "pause" to recover.