

Akademie fur alte Musik Berlin: Bach, Brandenburg Concertos (Harmonia Mundi) by Michael Tumelty

A perfect recording of Baroque masterpieces.

These recordings of the six Brandenburg Concertos by Berlin's Academy for Ancient Music are among the greatest performances of Bach's fantastic compositions. Now they are brought together on a two-for-one double CD in Harmonia Mundi's HM Gold series. Stylistic preferences in Baroque performance are a very personal issue.



The Berliners' real strength is that **they strike exactly the right note across the extraordinary range of expression enshrined in these deathless masterpieces.** The natural horns in the first concerto have the **right degree of punch**; the group's pacing eschews the philosophy that "fast is best"; though when they do turn it on they go like the wind.

The dark-textured drive of the sixth concerto is the best I've ever heard, with its chugging momentum judged to perfection; while the famous midpoint cadence of the third concerto is elaborated by the harpsichordist into a development of the concerto's main theme. **This is the perfect complement to the group's recording of the Orchestral Suites. A reference set.**