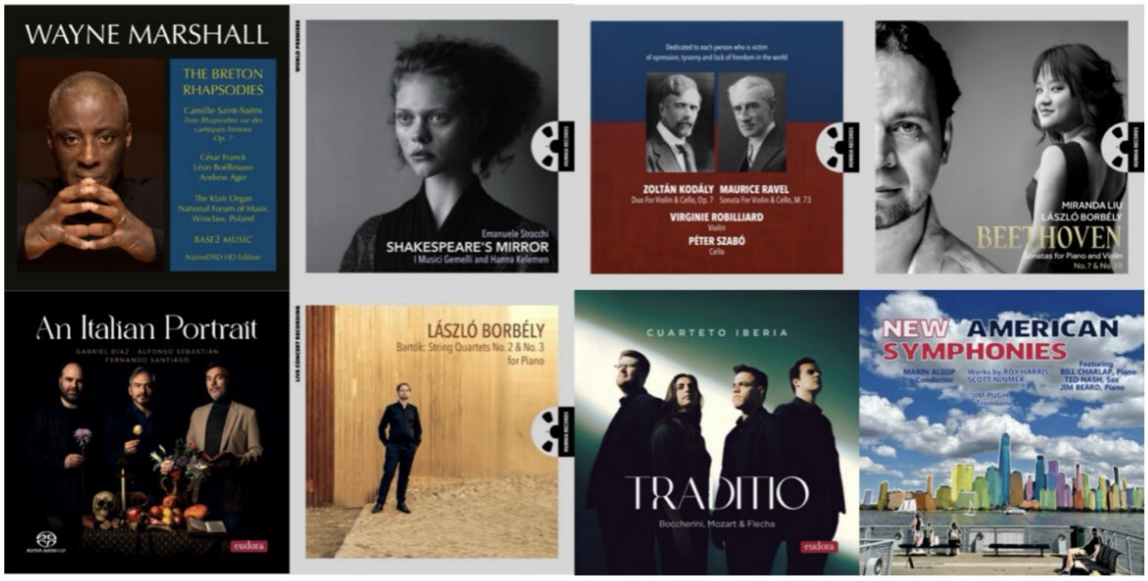


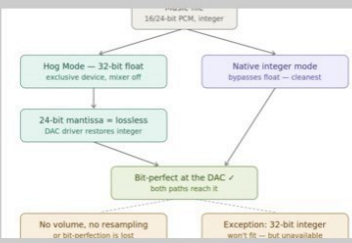
Recent Finds No. 74 Excellent New Recordings with Six in Pure DSD256 and Two in DXD 32-bit

08-13-2026 | By Rushton Paul | Issue 146

Our inimitable editor-in-chief, Dr. David, charged me with focusing on DSD256 and DXD recordings. I mostly follow that brief. And today, I have an abundance of outstanding ultra-high resolution recordings to share: six Pure DSD256 recordings and two DXD 32-bit recordings. Their sound quality gratifies my search over decades for the most discerning playback systems I can afford to assemble. If you share this obsession, I think you will find these releases rewarding. And the music is great. So, join me for a conversation about them...



More Articles by Rushton Paul



A New Solution to Understanding What Your Digital Audio System Is Doing With the Data Stream - Part 3



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Shakespeare's Mirror, Hanna Kelemen, I Musici Gemelli. **Hunnia Records 2026 (Pure DSD256, Stereo)** HERE

I've shared with you several other recordings by the violin duo I Musici Gemelli, all of which I recommend most highly. Today we have a new recording in which they have partnered with Hungarian actress Hanna Kelemen in a very unusual and creative work by composer Emanuele Stracchi.

This recording combines music and theater to bring some of William Shakespeare's most important works to life in sound. Each track is inspired by one of Shakespeare's works, bringing the work forward in time as it combines themes, atmospheres, and emotions into a contemporary musical language. Stracchi's musical compositions are interwoven with recited passages, in which the Hanna Kelemen interprets famous monologues and textual fragments taken from Shakespeare's works.

Composer Stracchi describes the work as follows:

"*Shakespeare's Mirror* began as a 'theatrical' journey in music, divided into an overture and eight scenes inspired by some of the most intense monologues and dialogues from William Shakespeare's plays: Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Tempest. The total duration of the work is approximately 40/45 minutes; each scene, lasting between 4 and 6 minutes, stands alone as an autonomous episode, but at the same time is part of a single dramaturgical structure. The order of the pieces can be changed by the performers: the structure is deliberately open, conceived as a collection of scenes that can be rearranged in different narrative perspectives.

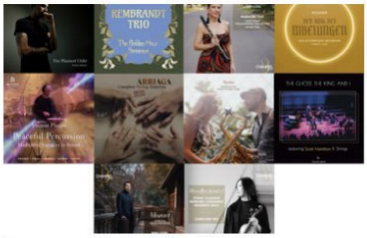
"The fundamental starting point is the Overture, conceived as a true introductory symphony to an opera. It synthesizes the main themes of all eight subsequent scenes. The two violins, playing solo, dialogue and almost argue with each other, presenting the thematic material and general character of the entire work in concentrated form. In just a few minutes, the listener is immersed in a sound universe that anticipates tension, lyricism, contrasts, gravity, and lightness: the Overture is intended to be an instrumental introduction and a key to understanding the entire work.

"The central idea of the project is that of the mirror, or rather the speculum: the music does not accompany the text, but reflects it, distorts it, illuminates it from different angles. Like a speculum, it does not return a neutral image, but amplifies the inner cracks, conflicts, and ambiguities of Shakespeare's characters. In this game of refractions, what is said finds an echo, what is left unsaid finds a sound form. The musical structures do not merely describe; sometimes they suggest what does not appear explicitly in the text, creating a constant tension between presence and absence...

"...Two violins and a voice are enough to construct a world, an *essential* and intense theater, in which love, madness, violence, and destiny are transformed into vibration, gesture, and sound."



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Recent Finds No. 73 Some Delightful New Releases, With Three in Pure DSD256



A New Solution to Understanding What Your Digital Audio System Is Doing With the Data Stream - Part 2

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The Overture, played by I Musici Gemelli, launches this work – at first gently, then aggressively, astringently, urgently. The violins clash violently, harshly, gratingly, then pull back into harmony, only to clash again as the Overture progresses. Delicate pizzicato on one is complemented by short, stiff bow strokes on the other. Then the music gently drifts into harmonic sympathy toward a unified conclusion.

The Overture is followed by vignettes of spoken word, interspersed with the violins interpreting, commenting on, and highlighting the text. Sometimes gently, lyrically, and lovingly, as in "Romeo and Juliet." More frequently, harshly, with dissonance – tense, clashing, and unresolved – for this is the nature of much of Shakespeare's explorations of human nature.

I Musici Gemelli capture the intention of their musical efforts succinctly:

"The work is complex because each protagonist in Shakespeare's plays represents virtues and vices of the human soul such as jealousy, love, greed, lust, etc. Playing this album was a profound and engaging journey for us. From a technical point of view, it was really complex to reproduce and convey the idea of dramatic effects, which require a technique that goes beyond the classical way of playing. It is necessary to create something new from a musical point of view. It is always complicated to weave a dialogue with only two instruments and make it stand on its own and make complete sense."

This is a most unusual musical journey – and completely engrossing in its complexity and creativity. The playing by I Musici Gemelli is searching, emotionally charged, and filled with portent. As always in their recordings, they play with sublime technique and incredible precision. With each new recording from these twin brothers, I find myself in awe of what they accomplish with just two instruments.

Hanna Kelemen is marvelous. She voices the selected text with perfect enunciation, superb phrasing, and compelling interpretive skills. Each voiced segment is brief, but remarkably well chosen to convey the most intense emotional content and meaning. Kelemen is a pure delight in her ability to deliver this so effectively.

Composer Emanuele Stracchi has created quite a remarkable musical experience ,blending theater and sound. His explanation of what he sought to accomplish is very descriptive – perhaps even predictive – of my listening experience.

Overall, this was an artistic exploration that I was gratified to experience. I was not sure what to expect, but I was so very glad to have committed the time for a dedicated listen to this recording, and then yet another. It is a recording I expect to come back to because there is still so much content, so much complexity, yet to unravel. Two sessions listening all the way through are not sufficient. In another several days, after I've had time to digest this a bit, I'm sure I will be back for a third and a fourth listen.

After all, Shakespeare is not so easily plumbed. And the interpretive art applied here adds yet another significant layer of complexity to sort through.

As always, recording engineer Sándor Árok has given us immense detail and clarity in this Pure DSD256 recording from the Hunnia ProVibe Studio. Is Kelemen's voice a bit too forward in the balance? Hmmm, perhaps. But her presence seems completely unforced and natural. And the front and center placement of her voice in the acoustic envelope supports the drama that she unfolds. The violins of I Music Gemelli are well balanced in the overall mix. The result is a recording in which the technical excellence serves the music, the drama, and the remarkable artistic conception behind it.

Postscript: Yet another few listens to this recording have now passed, and each time I enjoy hearing it. Each time I find some further nuance, a bit more to unpack in the content. And, surprisingly to me, I find the violins less astringent, less intensely dissonant than in my first listens. Go figure.



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