

NEW IN MUSIC THIS WEEK: MAY 1ST AND 8TH

"Canto de Todes" by Dorian Wood and Min Kwon's "America/Beautiful" top this week's list

By **Craig Byrd** - May 10, 2026

Life and travel got in the way of my getting last week's *New in Music This Week* done, so I've combined the best of last week and this week into *New In Music This Week: May 1st and 8th*.

Here is the best of both weeks with a quick recap of vinyl reissues available at the end (and fans of both jazz and classical music have some great options.)

MY TOP PICKS (there must be two, of course):

CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL MUSIC: **CANTO DE TODES – Dorian Wood** – New Amsterdam Records

Dorian Wood calls herself an anti-disciplinary artist. She's certainly a boldly adventurous one. *Canto de Todes* offers 70 minutes from Wood's 12-hour piece of the same name. The first movement is performed live for voice, cello and guitar. The second movement runs ten hours and features prerecorded music featuring three voices. The final movement, performed live, was for cello and three voices.

Listening to this extraordinary album makes me wish I had seen the full work. This is a haunting work that honors the ghost of Chilean singer/songwriter Violeta Parra and invites our own ghosts to make themselves known to us freely. (Parra was an enormous figure in Chilean folk music who killed herself in 1967.)

Anonas, the second track, is a mesmerizing love song. The entire 75 minutes of *Canto de Todes* offers music that presents ideas of one's home, culture and identity in a fully realized way. That the music invites us in to do the very same thing, makes this album essential listening.



CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL: **AMERICA/BEAUTIFUL – Min Kwon** – Delos

I felt both skeptical and overwhelmed at the prospect of listening to 76 world-premiere recordings of music inspired by *America the Beautiful* by Samuel Ward. We are talking about nearly five hours of music to get through.

Here the journey is what's important, even if the destination is a realization that the melting pot of America is perfectly reflected in these 76 pieces.

My favorite pieces are mostly those that are more than variations. They include *American Code* by Timo Andres, *No Longer Stain* by Anthony Cheung; *Playing with Fire* by Juston Dello Joio; *Four Windows into America* by Fred Hersch; *Meditation* by Ruo Huang; *Crown Thy Good* by Vijay Iyer; *America the Polarized* by Texu Kim; *America, the Changing Same* by George Lewis; *America, the Work in Progress* by Paul Moravec; *Refine* by Nico Muhly; *America the* by Qasim Naqvi and Robert Sirota's *Two Variations: ...Alabaster Cites and God Men Thine Every Flaw*.

Kwon plays every piece as if she's been playing them for years. She gives life to the love, wonder, concern, fear and gratitude that this vast country's citizenry, with all its differing views, possesses.

America is beautiful, with all its flaws. This album is not just a shrewd way of acknowledging the 250th anniversary of our birth, but to examine the good, the bad and the ugly that life in 2026 offers us.

Both these albums offer us time to be introspective about life at this moment in history. There are countless questions worth asking and many answers that need to be spoken. Both *Canto de Todes* and *America/Beautiful* ask those questions and offer up possible answers – as long as we're willing to listen to what Dorian Wood and Min Kwon are offering us.

Here are the other fine releases that are *New In Music This Week: May 1st and 8th*:



CLASSICAL: **MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 5 – Grand Teton Music Festival Orchestra/Donald Runnicles** – Reference Recordings AND **WIENER PHILARMONIKER – Andris Nelsons** – Deutsche Grammophon

It isn't often that two recordings of the same work are released in the same week. Mahler's *Symphony No. 5* is certainly amongst the composer's most popular works. There are well over 230 recordings and we can add these two to the list.

Runnicles' recording took place in 2024 at Walk Festival Hall in Teton Village, Wyoming. The run time is 72:57. Nelsons' recording took place in 2022 and runs 78 minutes.

Nelsons will be releasing a complete Mahler cycle in October and this is a taste of those recordings.

My personal preference between the two is Runnicles' recording. I prefer the slightly faster pace, though I'm sure there are those who will find Nelsons' recording to be more emotional.

CONTEMPORARY CLASSICAL MUSIC: **MOTHERLOAD – Tasha Warren / Dave Eggar** – Bright Shiny Things