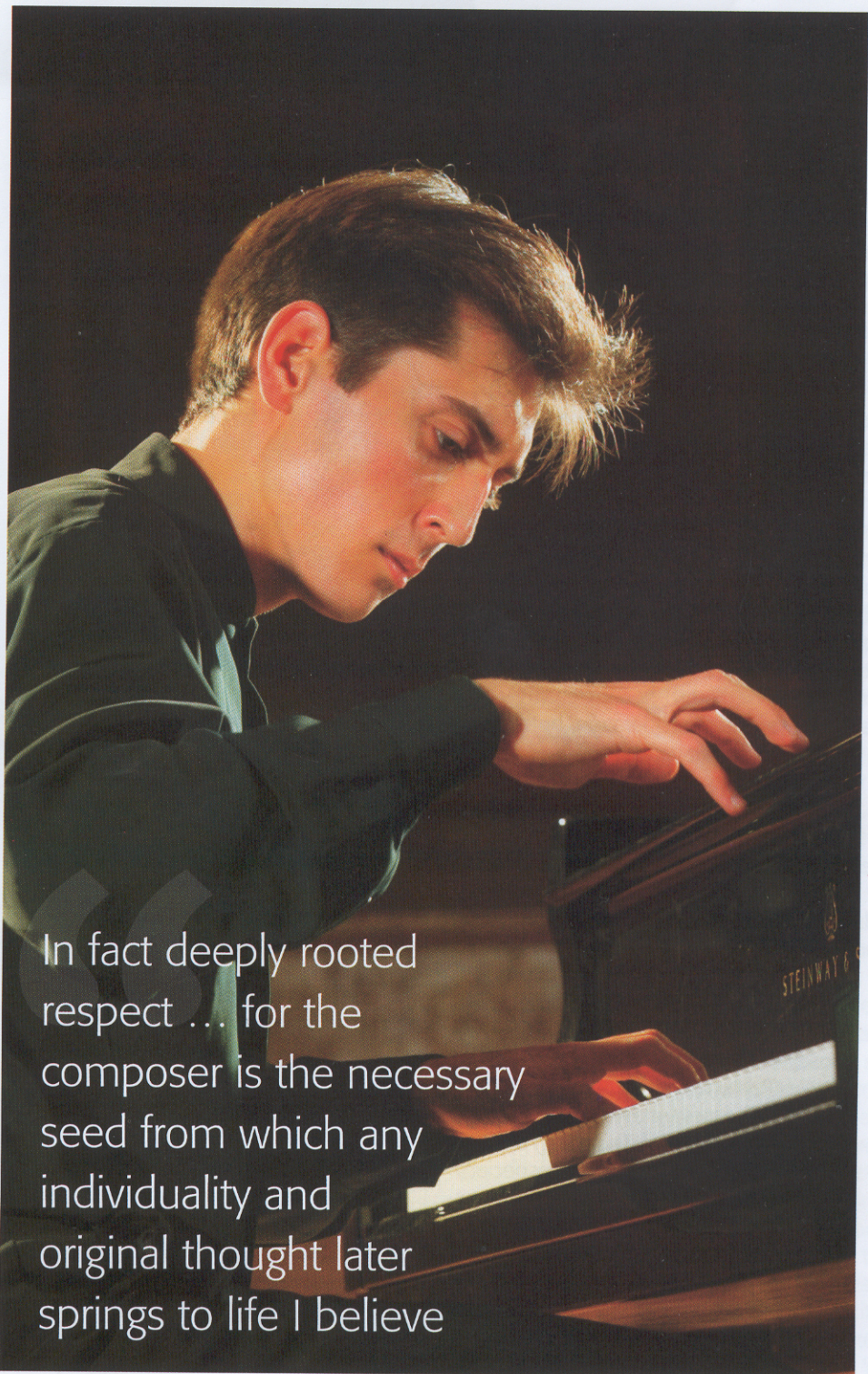


As for Nos 1 & 2, I think that Number 1 will probably be the hardest Concerto to record – as I have said, it was the first Beethoven concerto I ever played, and I always find coming back to those works I played when I was much younger more difficult for me – I now have very different ideas, but you are usually set in your ways – your brain is telling you one thing, but your fingers are telling you another, so I may have a bit of schizophrenia when I come to Number 1! The cadenza I played in the first movement for that first performance was the third, the biggest, of the three Beethoven wrote. Later, I composed a cadenza for the Concerto myself. I have not yet decided which cadenza to play when we come to record it. In that first movement there is a right hand octave glissando leading to the recapitulation, which was much easier to play on pianos of Beethoven's day because the action was much lighter. Nowadays, the action is heavier which makes it much more difficult.

With Beethoven's other works for piano and orchestra we might well do them, including the *Choral Fantasia*, but we are also thinking of doing the piano version of the Violin Concerto. There have been so many recordings of these works that people might not be rushing out to buy another one, and that of course puts us under a lot of pressure, but I think that with modern recording technology – with the latest microphones and recording techniques – recordings today sound very different from those of just five years ago. I also feel that Osmo has so much to say in Beethoven's music: his recordings of the Symphonies with the Minnesota Orchestra are fantastic, and when I first came to Minnesota to perform with him, without even thinking about a recording project, musically we clicked straight away. So when we began discussing recording projects it seemed natural that we should do the Beethoven Concertos, and it made sense because he and the orchestra had also done the Symphonies for BIS.

I have not recorded for any label other than BIS. I like the fact that they give me *carte blanche* in terms of repertoire; I can come to them and say 'I would like to record this' and they fix it up for me – I would not be able to do that with any other label. The Beethoven Concertos will take a few years, and in terms of other



In fact deeply rooted respect ... for the composer is the necessary seed from which any individuality and original thought later springs to life I believe

Photo: Clive Barcla

repertoire I am also recording all the Medtner Concertos for them; I have done No 1 with Tchaikovsky 1, and No 2 with the Rachmaninoff Fourth in the original version, and I am going to do No 3 with the Scriabin Concerto, which is a concerto I love. I have recently played the Scriabin Concerto in Singapore with Kristjan Järvi – he was very good to work with: he is a pianist as well, and what was encouraging was that the Orchestra also was very enthusiastic about the Concerto. I have played it now a few times, including with

his father Neemi in London, but the recording will take place in Bergen with Andrew Litton.

I have sometimes found that composers are less popular in some countries than in others – Scriabin is much more popular in Germany than he is in America, for example – but with regard to solo recitals – live concerts or on disc – I am so lucky that there is such a huge range of repertoire for piano that one is I am literally spoilt for choice when it comes to choosing repertoire.