



**SUPERLATIVE PIANISM:**  
Yevgeny Sudbin takes  
on Scriabin's full range

(DG) and Vladimir Ashkenazy (DG) command attention in the sonatas for gravitating Scriabin's flights of fancy towards a more stable, Rachmaninovian ecstasy, while Hamelin (Hyperion) provides the best of all worlds with his ultra-refined disentangling of Scriabin's multi-layered explosions of hyper-activity. Richter, whose various recordings on BBC, Praga, Melodiya and Urania et al may require some tracking down, played Scriabin's music with a uniquely dark, menacing bravado rooted in the grand Russian tradition. Yet for playing as terrifyingly changeable and emotionally all-engulfing as the music itself, Horowitz (RCA & Sony), Ogdon (EMI) and Sudbin truly galvanise the attention. The engineering BIS provides for Sudbin is astonishingly lifelike throughout, especially in surround-sound, when the SACD track is activated.

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**SOUND** ★★★★★

## Q&A YEVGENY SUDBIN

**DANIEL JAFFÉ** *talks with the pianist about interpreting Scriabin's sonatas*

### How did you choose your programme?

Scriabin went through so many different phases and stages in his life and it's very hard to compile a representative mixture of pieces for just one CD. But all three sonatas on the album are from completely different periods of Scriabin's life, and they are like milestones in his development; the shorter pieces counter-balance the sonatas – none of them are really long, but the music is really condensed.

**Talking about Scriabin's periods, it strikes me that although there's a world of difference between his Second Sonata and his Ninth Sonata, the evolution between those two works is absolutely seamless.**

**How does one divide his career into periods?** Scriabin always based his music on a text, usually on difficult-to-grasp philosophical ideas. As you go through his opus numbers you can see how his music evolves, sometimes quite drastically, as it reflects

the texts and poems on which he based his works: for instance the Fifth Sonata was written as he wrote a lot of poems on eroticism. Then towards the end of his career you suddenly find quite dark pieces of music associated with his 'Satanic Poem'. He didn't see music as an independent art; he really wanted to pull and synthesise all arts together. Actually I find it's easier to discern what the music is about when I actually play it! But these texts gives you a flavour – I think the way the words interact and what sort of emotion each word evokes is more important than their actual meaning.

**Have you been influenced or inspired by other pianists playing Scriabin?**

I listened to a lot of Sofronitzky recordings in the past. But when I started to play Scriabin's music for myself, I actually stopped listening to recordings because there are just so many things to discover in his music that I didn't want to be distracted by other recordings.

## FURTHER LISTENING YEVGENY SUDBIN & SCRIBIN



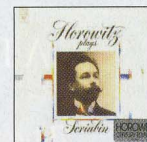
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