

Yevgeny Sudbin:
a wholly
individual artist



Brilliant BEETHOVEN

Sudbin and Vänskä launch their concerto cycle in style

Beethoven

Piano Concertos –

No 4, Op 58; No 5, 'Emperor', Op 73

Yevgeny Sudbin *pf*

Minnesota Orchestra / Osmo Vänskä

BIS ④ BIS-SACD1758 (70' • DDD/DSD)



With this release Yevgeny Sudbin and Osmo Vänskä launch their Beethoven concerto cycle in a novel and intriguing fashion.

Going in at the deep end with the most lyrical and magisterial of the concertos, Sudbin makes it clear that he has little use for Beethoven weighed down, as it were, with excess baggage, with the heft and earnestness of a more conventional view. Instead, his delectably light-fingered brilliance and virtuosity shines a new light on some of the most familiar scores in the repertoire, making a supposed division between Mozart's Apollonian and

Beethoven's Dionysian genius seem little more than a cliché.

True, listeners used to a greater intensity and expansiveness may balk at the nervy rapidity of Sudbin's reflexes, recalling the greater ease and breadth of past masters of the Beethoven concertos such as Gilels or Arrau, or the more speculative or interior stance of, say, Radu Lupu. But if Sudbin occasionally suggests "time's winged chariot hurrying near", the mother-of-pearl sheen of his pianism is backed by a special underlying sensitivity. In the grandest of Beethoven's two cadenzas for the Fourth Concerto, Sudbin's spine-tingling pace takes him close to the edge; but hearing him in the phantom entry to the *Emperor* Concerto's finale reminds you that you are listening to a wholly individual artist. Such mercurial pianism keeps Vänskä and the Minnesota Orchestra on their toes but they follow their soloist as to the manner born. BIS's sound and balance are excellent and the rest of this cycle is eagerly awaited. **Bryce Morrison**