

Brilliant BEETHOVEN

Sudbin and Vänskä launch their concerto cycle in style

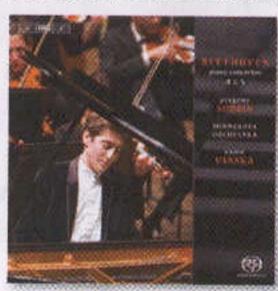
Beethoven

Piano Concertos -

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

Yevgeny Sudbin pf

Minnesota Orchestra / Osmo Vänskä
BIS 🖲 🥮 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-ofpearl 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 spinetingling 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