

Horowitz cut some passages that I have put back in! The Sonata is a difficult work to bring off; you can get caught up in details and lose overall sight of the piece. It's a special piece that I have always wanted to play. You could really analyse the Sonata in a way that only applies to Beethoven.

**What do you think of Rachmaninov's Chopin Variations?**

It's a wonderful piece and I am surprised that it's not played more often. It's based on one of Chopin's Preludes, one that Rachmaninov didn't play in public.

**You're not playing the complete Variations, though?**

Well, no! There is one fugal variation that doesn't fit, and there's also the coda, which Rachmaninov himself didn't play; to me it sounds vulgar so I have left it out.

**'Rachmaninov's music has an intense emotional quality and also wonderful structure. To me, there's not a single unnecessary note'**

**Your new CD mixes some of Rachmaninov's large-scale works with a selection of his transcriptions.**

It's a healthy balance; the Sonata is so condensed and powerful, and the expansive Chopin Variations' leaner textures complement it. I was amazed to find how much the Variations were influenced by Schumann – I had expected Tchaikovsky – probably because Rachmaninov played a lot of Schumann around the time he wrote the Variations.

**What are your recording plans?**

There's a concerto recording in February with the São Paulo Orchestra, which will probably be Tchaikovsky No 1 and Medtner's First Concerto. Then there's a Scriabin CD and one of Haydn.

**Does making a recording affect the way you play?**

I try to do what I do in a concert.

**I notice that you write the notes for your CDs.**

It brings me closer to the composer when I have a chance to study his music away from the keyboard; the booklet notes are separate from the playing.

**How would you describe the process of becoming a concert artist, or at least what your own experience has been like?**

It's most important to have a good teacher, but you have to break free at some time and know that it's okay to have your own ideas. It's about absorbing what you learn and what you are taught; later you should become independent. It happened to me with Christopher Elton at the Royal Academy of Music; he gave me a lot of freedom to decide on interpretation, and at the same time he kept me in check; that's when I started to think independently. ■

*Yevgeny Sudbin's new BIS recording includes Rachmaninov's Variations on a theme of Chopin op 22, Sonata No 2 op 36 (based on versions played by Horowitz from the 1913 Rachmaninov edition), Daisies op 38 No 3, Lilacs op 21 no 5 and the composer's arrangement of Kreisler's Liebeslied and Liebesfreud (BIS Records BIS-SACD-1518). For details about Sudbin's concert schedule, visit [www.yevgenysudbin.com](http://www.yevgenysudbin.com)*