



FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

Twenty-five-year-old Russian pianist Yevgeny Sudbin's latest recording is of music by Rachmaninov

Did you always want to be a pianist?

Both my parents are pianists and I grew up hearing them practicing. I really wanted to play. When I was about four or five I was sitting improvising and my mother noticed that I had perfect pitch. She took me to a music teacher and I made rapid progress. I auditioned for the specialist music school in St Petersburg and was accepted, and from there things went quickly.

Why Rachmaninov for your latest recording?

I have always felt an affinity with his music; it's the intense emotional quality and also the wonderful structure. I've discovered a sense of architecture within each work that is very logical. The logic and the emotion really complement each other. To me, there's not a single unnecessary note. I think Rachmaninov is misunderstood; there is more to his music than people think. Certain music intellectuals in the western world are afraid of his direct language.

Why did you decide to include Rachmaninov's rarely heard Chopin variations?

Because it's a wonderful piece, and I am surprised that it is not played more often.

Are you familiar with Rachmaninov's own recordings?

I have been shocked by some of his recordings, but I have great admiration for them. I don't copy him.

Why do you write your own booklet notes?

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

What has been the most significant aspect of your development?

The most important thing is a good teacher. But you have to break free and know it's OK to have your own ideas. It's about absorbing what you learn and what you are taught; later you should become independent.

COLIN ANDERSON

CD details: Rachmaninov – *Variations on a Theme of Chopin, Piano Sonata No 2*, Various arrangements; **BIS-SACD-1518**, release date 31 October 2005

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