

nam's Schubert Ninth

ained intensity, while the finale
tes something of the lump-in-the-
spectacle of Walton's film music (and
nderous *tutti* around five minutes in
ibly calls to mind the shattering apex of
ter's First Symphony).

oth works, the RSNO responds
eaps of spirit and commendable
for Martin Yates, and the sound is
esely realistic to match. This bold
enerous pairing merits an enthusiastic
mendation. **Andrew Achenbach**

ber

Concerto, Op 22^a. Medea, Op 23.
ony No 2, Op 19

Nelsova *vc*

ymphony Orchestra / Samuel Barber

Historical © 8 111358 (80' • ADD)

ed December 11-13, 1950. From Decca originals

**er conducts Barber, including
phony he was later to destroy**

It is fascinating to hear
Barber's own recordings
of three works from
the 1940s, made for
Decca in London as
long ago as 1950,
although they were

issued by Pearl. At that time Barber
conducting seriously and brought his
to the sessions. The performances are
ent and Naxos's remastered sound
Obert-Thorn) is astonishingly good,
ally in the symphony.

Selsova had already played the Cello
erto before she made this recording
Barber, which confirms that the first
ment should be a continuous sweep
than indulgently wayward. From this
of view the best modern version is still
ly Yo-Yo Ma (Sony, 6/89^R), while
Kirshbaum (Virgin, 10/89^R) delivers
peccable, rapt slow movement (see my
arisons, 4/01). *Medea*, Barber's ballet
for Martha Graham, is not often
ed complete in the full orchestral
n but for sheer beauty of sound – in
f a gruesome subject – other versions,
s Marin Alsop and the RSNO (Naxos,
must be preferred.

Second Symphony (1944) is a curious
because Barber destroyed the material
publisher's in New York in 1964. After
f parts was found in England in 1984

the work was reinstated and recorded. Barber
had retained the slow movement as *Night
Flight* but his judgement against the
symphony as a whole was wrong. Later
recordings, such as Alsop again (6/00),
confirm that this is a strong piece, eloquently
expressive of its wartime genesis, that should
be heard more often.

Peter Dickinson

Beethoven

Violin Concerto, Op 61.

Romances – No 1, Op 40; No 2, Op 50

Liza Ferschtman *vn* Netherlands Symphony
Orchestra / Jan Willem de Vriend

Challenge Classics © 2002 CC72384 (58' • DDD/DSD)

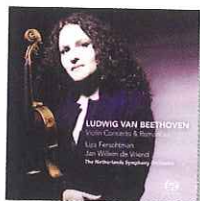
Selected comparisons – coupled as above:

Zehetmair, OAE, Brüggén (4/99) (PHIL) 462 123-2PH

Tetzlaff, Zürich Tonhalle Orch, Zinman

(ARTN) 82876 76994-2

**Constantly illuminating performances
of Beethoven's Concerto and Romances**



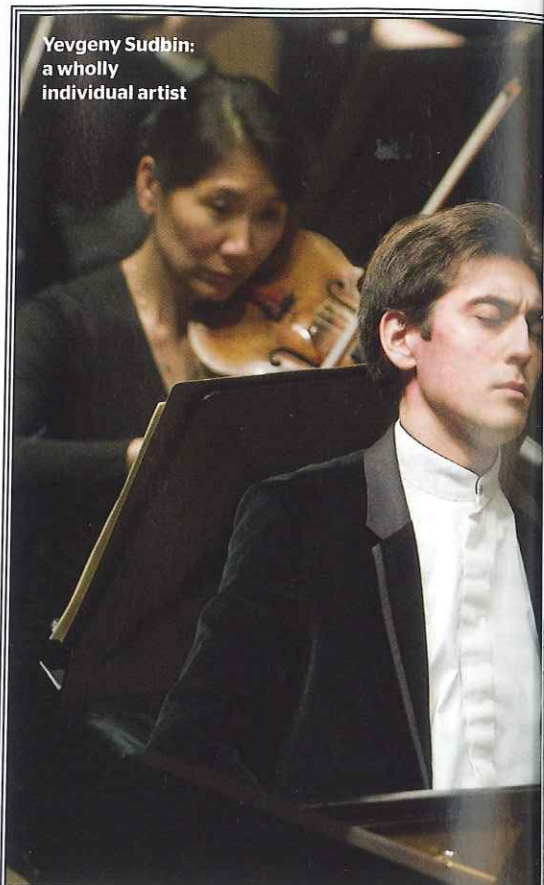
These are fine,
thoughtful
performances,
noteworthy in several
respects. The balance
between orchestra and
violin is very natural,

giving the soloist no special advantage; this,
and the fact that the wind instruments are
given a particularly prominent profile,
imparts an unusual but not unwelcome
perspective. The passage in the Concerto's
first movement where the violin soars aloft
over a soft string accompaniment (track 1,
11'58"), and where most violinists slow right
down, is here played, most delicately, at a
speed closer to the basic tempo – and we can
hear with unusual clarity the horns intoning
the opening drum motif. And when the key-
changes and the timpani, along with trumpets,
reclaim the motif, the effect is magical.

Liza Ferschtman chooses for her
first-movement cadenza the adaptation by
Wolfgang Schneiderhan of Beethoven's
cadenza for his arrangement of the work as a
piano concerto. It's not easy to bring off this
wonderful piece on the violin but, aided by
the NSO's timpanist, Peter Prommer, she
succeeds triumphantly. I also warm to her
playing of the finale – not as fast as Thomas
Zehetmair but tremendously spirited –
and, throughout the programme, to the
way the orchestra matches her clear, unfussy
phrasing. In both Concerto and Romances,
Ferschtman's tempi are almost identical to
Christian Tetzlaff's. Tetzlaff, however,
sounds rather more suave, matched by the
more blended sonority of the Zürich Tonhalle
under David Zinman. It's impossible to
give a top recommendation for such
often-recorded music but Ferschtman's
interpretation is constantly illuminating.

Duncan Druce

**Yevgeny Sudbin:
a wholly
individual artist**



Brilliant BEETHOVEN

Sudbin and Vänskä launch their c

Beethoven

Piano Concertos –

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

Yevgeny Sudbin *pf*

Minnesota Orchestra / Osmo Vänskä

BIS © 2002 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
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