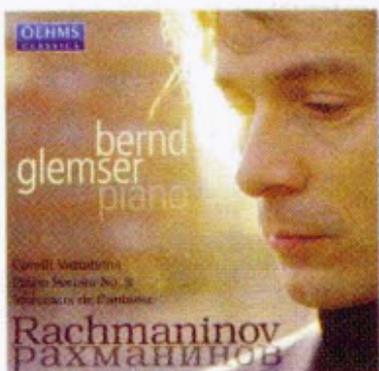


Bernd Glemser:
a treat for
the ears



Magnificent playing,
but there's
something shifty
about the booklet

Rachmaninov



Piano Sonata No 2. Variations on a Theme
of Corelli. Cinq Morceaux de fantaisie

Bernd Glemser *pf*

Oehms © OC558 (75' • DDD)

Bernd Glemser is presented to us in the booklet's approximate English as the winner of '17 competitions and special prizes in a row', a record 'that has been on the books since 1890', apparently. It implies that he won the Tchaikovsky and ARD competitions (as well as six others listed). He didn't, and is far too gifted an artist to have such tawdry hyperbole attached to his name.

On one point the booklet-writer is correct: 'The pianist has a particular affinity for the works of Sergei Rachmaninov.' This is a recording which allows you to concentrate purely on the music and the artist's interpretation, and not be distracted by any worrying deficiencies in recorded sound, piano tone or pianistic technique: it's all there. Glemser's golden, burnished sound is a treat for the ears in the *Corelli* Variations and, indeed, throughout.

The Piano Sonata No 2 is heard in its original version with a few references to and additions from the revised version. Glemser's impassioned reading is as tempestuous as it is heartfelt, among the most magnificent I have heard. It is

'Glemser's impassioned reading of the Second Sonata is as tempestuous as it is heartfelt'

also a pleasure to hear the complete Op 3 – the famous C sharp minor Prelude is the second of the set (and a fine, fiery account it is, too) – the highlight of which, for me, is the *Mélodie*, No 3. A fleeting magical moment at 1'39" makes you catch your breath. The revised version of this and the *Sérénade*, No 5, concludes the disc, the former amounting to Rachmaninov's transcription of his own work. All in all, then, a disc to relish. **Jeremy Nicholas**