

INSTRUMENTAL

Van Cliburn Competition winner *Nobuyuki Tsujii* shows why he's no flash in the pan; *Konstantin Scherbakov* enchants with songs without words; plus *Dejan Lazić*'s haunting Britten

MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL CHOICE

More than ideal arrangements

Jessica Duchen hails Nadejda Vlaeva's superb Bach transcription recital



BACH PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS, VOL. 10

The complete Bach transcriptions by Saint-Saëns; plus transcriptions of JS Bach's *Concertos in A minor & D minor* (after Vivaldi) by Isidore Philipp

Nadejda Vlaeva (piano)
Hyperion CDA 67873 77:09 mins

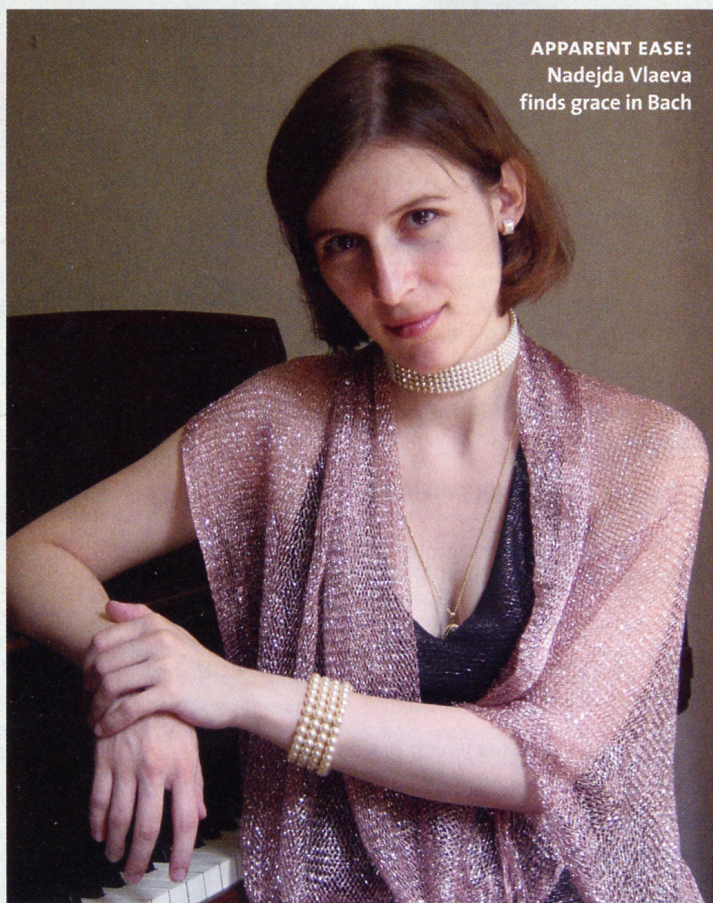
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As soon as Nadejda Vlaeva launches into her first Saint-Saëns Bach transcription, you know you're in for a treat. Sure enough, volume ten of Hyperion's Bach Transcriptions series proves a parade of joys for pianophiles and Bach junkies alike.

A sub-theme is transcriptions of transcriptions: Bach, after all,

This young pianist's terrific CD bodes well for the future

was able to write the same piece of music for a single violin or for full chorus, orchestra and organ, and the opening number is precisely that, transferred to piano. Saint-Saëns took the full-on version from Cantata No. 29, BWV29 – better known in its violin guise in the Partita No. 3 in E major – and transformed it into a pianofest requiring sumptuous tone, concertante awareness and dazzling octaves. Vlaeva gives it the lot. This young Bulgarian pianist is new to Hyperion; her terrific CD bodes well for the future.



APPARENT EASE:
Nadejda Vlaeva
finds grace in Bach

Saint-Saëns discovered Bach's Cantatas via the mezzo-soprano Pauline Viardot, a subscriber to the Bach-Gesellschaft, which began to publish his complete works in 1850. Saint-Saëns's transcriptions capture his delight in his new discoveries with fresh, sometimes breathtaking pianistic inventiveness, clearly apparent in the *Andantino* that opens Cantata No. 8.

Complementing Saint-Saëns's efforts, Vlaeva offers Isidore Philipp's take on Bach's takes

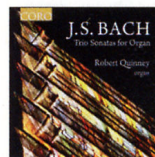
on Vivaldi, along with more ex-cantata and violin gems. Even when Philipp's demanding textures are at their most dense, Vlaeva handles them with clarity, unflappable virtuosity and relish.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



ON THE PODCAST

Hear excerpts and a discussion of this recording on our **BBC Music Magazine** podcast, available free on iTunes or at www.classical-music.com



JS BACH

Trio Sonatas for organ

Robert Quinney (organ)

Coro COR 16095 78:57 mins

Available arkivmusic.com/bbcmusic

Bach's Sonatas BWV 525-530 were probably written to show 'hothouse' son Wilhelm Friedemann's performance prowess and give him a compositional exemplar in flawless three-part writing. They were long the sole province of organists until transcriptions for more 'traditional' trio sonata forces began to appear. Whether three (or four) executant minds are automatically better than one is questionable, though. Part of the Sonatas' challenge and charm lies in the interaction of the three lines, something the organ encourages in its purest form. Fresh from his Elgar disc (reviewed November 2011) with its 'quasi-orchestral' subtext, Robert Quinney embraces the transparency of Bach's trios with an ear for their variety, sparkle and cogency. The Frobenius organ at Queen's College, Oxford, provides him with an enticing palette of sounds, while its mechanical security allows Quinney's lucid and carefully considered articulation to emerge without compromise. His mellow fastidiousness in the First Sonata's opening movement might suggest an 'over-reverential' approach, but in the event the debonair joyfulness of the D minor's Finale or the irrepressible cheerfulness of the C major's *Allegros* protest otherwise – and Quinney isn't averse to ornamentation. He affectionately captures Bach's magic, from the lovely *Siciliano*-like lilt of the First Sonata's slow movement, and the pastoral reassurance of the D minor Sonata's *Adagio e dolce*, to the clarity of the E minor Sonata's first movement – all among the most amiable music Bach wrote. *Paul Riley*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

