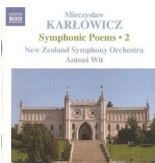


Mieczyslaw Karłowicz - Symphonic Poems Vol.2 (2008)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 30 December 2010 20:02 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 January 2014 11:04

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Powracające fale (Returning Waves), Op. 9

1. *Powracające fale (Returning Waves), Op. 9* 00:24:12
2. *Smutna opowiesc, "Preludia do wieczności" (A Sorrowful Tale, "Preludes to Eternity"), Op. 13* 00:11:00

Odwieczne pieśni (Eternal Songs), Op. 10

3. *I. Pieśń o wiekuistej tęsknocie (Song of Eternal Longing)* 00:10:51
4. *II. Pieśń o miłości i o śmierci (Song of Love and Death)* 00:11:37
5. *III. Pieśń o wszechbycie (Song of Eternity)* [play](#)

New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
Antoni Wit – Conductor

All but unknown when Stanislaw Wislocki first recorded his music in 1965, shadowy composer Mieczyslaw Karłowicz has emerged as the major voice in Polish orchestral music before Karol Szymanowski on the basis of only about a dozen works. Naxos' Symphonic Poems 2, featuring the New Zealand Symphony under conductor Antoni Wit, combines three of the best orchestral pieces Karłowicz produced, the symphonic poems Returning Waves (1904), A Sorrowful Tale (1908), and Eternal Songs (1906), the last-named being a multi-movement composition more like a short symphony that has become among his most popular creations. These recordings are not recycled from Marco Polo; they were recorded in 2006 for the main Naxos label, and the disc also includes a prompt for a free bonus download track. The sound quality is terrific, and so are the performances. The strings at the end of "Song of Love and Death" (the second movement of Eternal Songs) seems to shimmer upward into the stratosphere and vanish at the movement's conclusion.

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Karlowicz was neither a latter-day standard-bearer of romantic tradition like his idol, Richard Strauss, or a wild-eyed visionary of the future like Alexander Scriabin; his music rather falls in between these poles with more of an orientation toward Strauss, but on Karlowicz's own stylistic terms. His ability with orchestration was phenomenal. Whole movements build patiently and continuously toward climax points and Karlowicz pursues a constant sense of forward evolution, rather than an episodic succession of sections. Had he not perished in an avalanche at age 32 while hiking in the Tatras in 1909, perhaps Karlowicz' musical legacy would have gained attention somewhat sooner than a full century afterward. Nevertheless, for those who despair that they have reached the end of worthwhile romantic tradition once they've traversed the output of mainstream composers like Mahler and Bruckner, Karlowicz will provide a pleasant and engaging surprise. Likewise, this disc provides a cost-effective and utterly worthy medium through which to sample Karlowicz' music.

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