Wojciech Kilar – Piano Concerto - Choral Prelude - Orawa (1998)

Koncert fortepianowy / Piano Concerto
1 I. Preludium. Andante con moto [8:30]
2 II. Chorale. Largo religiosamente [10:15]
3 III. Toccata. Vivacissimo [6:20]

Preludium chorałowe na orkiestrę smyczkową / Choral prelude for string orchestra
4 I. Choral. Dolce [8:30]
5 II. Choral. Misterioso [3:16]
6 III. Choral. Più largo [5:46]

7 Orawa [8:11]

Peter Jablonski – fortepian / piano [1]–[3]
Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra
Wojciech Rajski – dyrygent / conductor

"The Piano Concerto" is a relatively new work, completed in 1997. It is the 25-minute concerto that will grab you first, I predict. In it, Kilar clearly has absorbed and digested the influence of Górecki and his Third Symphony. The first movement is dominated by a repetitive, music-box-like figure in the piano, over which the strings sing a sad, long-limbed melody. This will be no surprise to those who have heard his Dracula score. The middle movement is in the style of chorale, which becomes more and more intense as it progresses. Then, without a pause, Kilar has the concerto race to the finish line with a driving Toccata movement. Just as it threatens to take on horrific qualities, Kilar pulls the rug out from under it, suddenly bringing the work to an end with one of music's hoariest musical clichés. Interesting.

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Written by bluesever
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"Chorale Prelude" for strings, just as "Krzesany" and "Orawa" - although less obviously so - falls under the trend of Kilar's work inspired by Highlander folk music. It is reflected mainly in harmonies where he uses modalisms typical of Highlander scales, although the prevailing feature of the Prelude is its chorale character especially emphasised by the uniform sound of the strings. The work consists of three parts - Chorales - similar in character: Dolcem, Misterioso and Piu Largo.

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