

Szymanowski: Violin Concertos-Stabat Mater-Symphonies (2008)

Written by bluesever

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Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 35 Violin Concerto No. 2, Op. 61 Konstanty Kulka – violin
Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra Jerzy Maksymiuk - conductor
Symphony No. 4, Op. 60 (Sinfonia Concertante)
Piotr Paleczny – piano Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra Jerzy Semkow - conductor

Symphony No. 3 'The Song of the Night', Op. 27
Wieslaw Ochman – tenor Polish Radio Chorus of Krakow Polish Radio National Symphony
Orchestra Jerzy Semkow - conductor
Litania do Marii Panny (Litany to the Virgin Mary), Op. 59
Jadwiga Gatulanka – soprano
Demeter, Op. 37b
Jadwiga Rappe – mezzo-soprano
Stabat Mater, Op. 53
Jadwiga Gatulanka, Jadwiga Rappe Andrzej Hiolski - baritone Polish Radio Chorus of Krakow
& Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra, Antoni Wit – conductor

Well chosen, well performed, and well recorded, this two-disc set is an ideal introduction to the research art of Polish modernist Karol Szymanowski. The pieces include his two violin concertos, his last two symphonies, his Stabat Mater, and two shorter works for singer and orchestra. The performers are all Polish and all deeply committed to doing their best by the composer. Violinist Konstanty Kulka is a persuasive advocate for the exotic themes and shimmering colors of the concertos, and he is subtly and sensitively supported by conductor Jerzy Maksymiuk and the Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra. With Jerzy Semkow directing the same orchestra, pianist Piotr Paleczny delivers a brilliant account of the *Sinfonia Concertante* (Symphony No. 4) and tenor Wieslaw Ochman turns in a stalwart reading of the Symphony No. 3, 'Song of the Night.' In the three works for voices and orchestra, Antoni Wit leads the same orchestra plus the Polish Radio Chorus of Krakow in stirring performances of works that are at once sensual, spiritual, and strangely effecting. Recorded in big, close, and vivid sound, anyone who can imagine enjoying music combining Strauss' colors, Debussy's sonorities, and Scriabin's ecstasies will probably enjoy Szymanowski's music. ~

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James Leonard, Rovi

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