W.F. Bach - Polonaises & Fantasies

1. Fantasy in c minor 2. Fantasy in a minor 3. Polonaise in C Major 4. Polonaise in c minor 5. Polonaise in D Major 6. Polonaise in d minor play 7. Polonaise in E flat Major 8. Polonaise in e flat minor 9. Polonaise in E Major 10. Polonaise in e minor 11. Polonaise in F Major play 12. Polonaise in f minor 13. Polonaise in G Major 14. Polonaise in g minor
Harald Hoeren - piano

Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, the eldest of J.S. Bach's sons, had great promise as a composer and was highly regarded as a performer in the 18th century. Yet due to his erratic temperament, he never fully realized his potential and spent the last twenty years of his life without formal employment, having abruptly walked away from his position in Halle in 1764. He also dissipated his legacy from his illustrious father, much of whose music is lost simply because Friedemann was such a poor custodian of it. Nevertheless, the music that Friedemann himself left us is of great value, both historically and due to its own merit.

Harald Hoeren gives us here two fantasies (note that the track listing is incorrect and that actually the A minor fantasy is track 1, the C minor track 2) and the 12 polonaises which were so celebrated in the 19th century. His playing is remarkable, especially given what sounds like intensely difficult music. It has often been remarked that Friedemann's music vacillates between the baroque traditions of his father's time and the newer roccoco and classical styles. One can even see this in the very form taken by the polonaise set on this recording: there are twelve keyboard pieces in the majors and minors of, respectively, C, D, Eb, E, F, and G (shades of the systematic planning of the "Well-Tempered Clavier"), but the form of the pieces is a dance form rather than preludes and fugues (shades of the lighter roccoco style).

Hoeren negotiates the sudden twists and turns of this music like the pro that he obviously is and

makes an excellent case for it. Anyone interested in Friedemann at all should definitely investigate this disc. --- Molly the Cat "Meow", amazon.com

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