

## Dobrzynski, Kilar, Lessel - Polish Chamber Music for Wind Instruments (2011)

Written by bluesever

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Ignacy Feliks Dobrzyński Duo na klarnet i fortepian op. 47 (Duo for clarinet and piano) 1 I *Agitato* 10:00 2 II *Adagio doloroso e molto espressivo* 4:02 3 III *Allegretto mosso e animato* 7:52

Wojciech Kilar Sonata na róg i fortepian (Sonata for horn and piano)

4 I *Allegro* 3:03 5 II *Recitativo e arioso* 5:50 6 III *Allegretto* 3:51

Franciszek Lessel Grand Trio na fortepian, klarnet i róg op.4 (Trio for piano, clarinet and horn)

7 I *Allegro con spirito* 9:43 8 II *Adagio espressivo* 8:12 9 III *Allegro* 6:50

Roman Widaszek - clarinet Tadeusz Tomaszewski - horn Joanna Domańska – piano

The pieces on this disc span three different styles, Franciszek Lessel's trio being written in 1806, Ignacy Dobrzynski's duo in the mid 1840s, and Wojciech Kilar's sonata in 1954. One oddity is that it is packaged in the unusually configured jewel box that denotes a hybrid SACD, but nowhere on the insert or booklet does it say it is an SACD. (Amazon, ArkivMusic, and the British website MDT all list it as "stereo," with no SACD indicator.) The sound seems to be good, clear, but conventional digital stereo, but since these are duos and a trio I could be wrong.

Dobrzynski's clarinet-piano duo turns out to be a charming piece in the style of Mozart or Mendelssohn. A slightly older contemporary of Chopin, Dobrzynski also studied with Józef Elsner at the Warsaw Conservatory, but it is obvious that his musical thinking was much more conventional and not nearly as imaginative as Chopin's. Nevertheless, this is a nice sonata, played with real charm and sparkle. The minor-key variations in the first movement add some interest, but Dobrzyński's rather conventional, almost unrelenting ostinato rhythm and apparent abhorrence of passing tones or out-of-chord sequences make it less interesting than it could have been. I do, however, like the running minor-key chromatic bass in the Adagio, and the final Allegretto has a certain folklike charm about it.

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Kilar's Horn Sonata, written in 1954, is also available in a recording by the superb Polish hornist Zbigniew Żuk (Żuk 250332), which unfortunately I've not heard. The notes state that the composer was, at that time, "under the far-reaching influence of Stravinsky and Bartók." The sonata was written for Józef Brejza, who was apparently a technical wizard, thus the solo horn part has a high degree of difficulty. Fortunately, Tadeusz Tomaszewski is up to the challenge, and produces a splendid performance in which lyrical expression and virtuosic display are properly and well balanced. Oddly enough, the last movement is more playful than serious. I like it as a stand-alone piece, but don't think it fits into the scheme of the sonata. Just an opinion.

Lessel's Trio for Piano, Clarinet, and Horn, composed in 1806, shows the influence of Haydn, who was one of his teachers. The Trio strongly resembles Haydn's style, but that's not necessarily a bad thing—in fact, harmonically it is more interesting than the later duo sonata by Dobrzynski. Lessel clearly knows how to write for this unusual combination of clarinet and horn, and its more interesting harmonic construction makes this a nice Romantic-era piece for hornists to add to their repertoire. Some of the running bass passages in the piano part resemble early Beethoven—again, not a bad thing. Here, however, Tomaszewski's horn playing is a little too recessed in sound. I think the engineers were afraid that the horn, which has a more powerful sound, would overpower the clarinet otherwise, but they balanced it a little too much in favor of the reed instrument.

Overall, a pleasant disc without being exceptional or indispensable, but since there are no other available recordings of the Dobrzynski or Lessel pieces, you may want this if you're a fan of early 19th-century Polish chamber music. ---FANFARE: Lynn René Bayley, arkivmusic.com

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