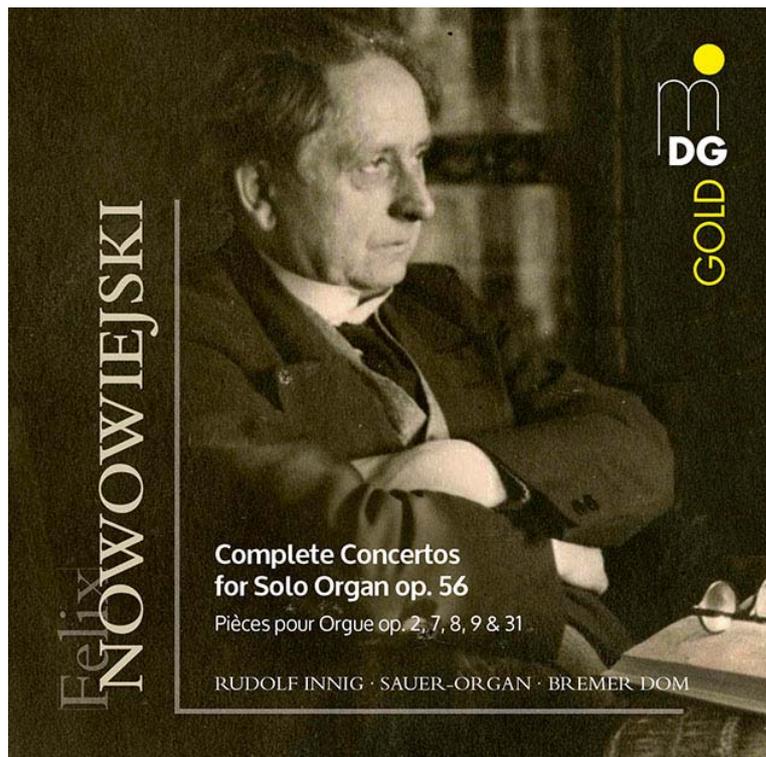


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02/17-(5)

Felix Nowowiejski (1877-1946)

Complete Solo Concertos
for Solo Organ op. 56
Pièces pour Orgue op. 2, 7, 8, 9 & 31

Rudolf Innig,
Sauer Organ Bremer Dom

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Discographic Feat

A few years ago Rudolf Innig accomplished a grand discographic feat with his complete recording of the nine organ symphonies of Felix Nowowiejski, thereby rehabilitating an almost entirely forgotten master of late romantic organ sound. He later presented a recording of smaller-format organ compositions by Nowowiejski. The four "Concerti" recorded here conclude this valuable edition now for the first time presenting the Polish master's complete organ oeuvre on CD on MDG.

Concerted Effort

Those who expect an orchestra for the concerto form are in for a genuine surprise. Innig employs the magnificent Sauer organ in the Bremen Cathedral with so much color that the strings and winds will not be missed for a single moment. In harmonic respects they are also highly ambitious. Why Nowowiejski entitled these large-format, multi-movement works "Concerti" must remain speculation. Might he have been apprehensive about extending the number of his symphonies beyond the magical "Number Nine"?

Personal Chronicle

Nowowiejski composed his concertos during difficult times. World War II had just begun with the German army's invasion of Poland, and the composer, who had developed close ties to Germany over the years, became a professional and personal outsider under the new regime. It is thus hardly surprising that these works repeatedly display autobiographical elements –

even if the consoling optimism of the fourth concerto of Easter orientation appears to be somewhat premature in view of the year of its composition in 1941.

Interpretive Finesse

Nowowiejski also achieved great things in pieces of small format. Whether the Chorale Prelude (op. 9) or Character Pieces (op. 31), whether pieces for religious services (*Offertoire*) or suitable for concert performance (*Marche solennelle*) – again and again he found individual forms of expression that Rudolf Innig succeeds in interpreting with profoundly felt musical sensibility. And, as always on MDG, the finely balanced sound picture in the magnificent acoustics of the Bremen Cathedral makes for an absolutely enthralling musical experience.

Felix Nowowiejski

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