

Justice is Served.

4/5 Stars

Leopold Godowsky:

22 Chopin Studies for the left hand alone;
Ivan Ilić, piano; 1 CD Paraty 311.205; 2009/10
(71'15")

When **Leopold Godowsky** published his 53 studies on Frederic Chopin's Études, there was an outcry among experts in the field: "Sacrilege!" they cried. And yet the outcry was limited to specialists to the point that Godowsky couldn't even profit from it to increase his fame. Admired by the greatest of his colleagues and by many composers - Camille Saint-Saëns even wanted to adopt him, which he declined, not wanting to change his name - Godowsky never became known to a wide audience.

Even today, the name of the man that Jorge Bolet called "the last piano innovator" is not hugely famous. I'm afraid that Ivan Ilić's record will do little to change things. The American pianist plays only the 22 Études for the left hand, considered the most difficult works ever written for the piano. Indeed, Godowsky did not simply transcribe the original pieces, but he recomposed original material for the left hand alone, wanting to show that the left hand could be developed to play what Chopin had conceived for both hands.

That said, the studies not only surprise us by their technical nature, but also by their changes in moods due to strange transformations, the overlapping of materials, the variations of themes, the inversions, etc. Some of the original études are transformed to the point of becoming unrecognizable.

But one can no longer say that such musical tricks will only interest piano specialists, because Ivan Ilić, despite an astonishing technique, does not forget the musical side. He even seems more interested in poetry than pure virtuosity, more interested in refined eloquence than by the brilliance inherent in the music. Ultimately, he proves that those who had declared war on Godowsky were wrong.

Remy Franck
Translated by Simone Therien

The original review in French is available here:

http://ivancdg.com/godowsky/Pizzicato_Magazine_Luxembourg_Godowsky_CD_Review_February_2013.pdf

**AINSI, JUSTICE EST
RENDUE**



**L. Godowsky: 22 Studies
on Chopin's Etudes for the
left hand alone; Ivan Illic, piano; 1
CD Paraty 311.205; 2009/10 (75')**

Lorsque Leopold Godowsky publia ses 53 études sur les Etudes de Frédéric Chopin, il y eut un tollé général parmi les spécialistes en la matière: on cria au sacrilège. Ce tollé