Domenico Scarlatti – Sonatas (Pogorelich) [1992]



K. 20 in E major
K. 135 in E major
K. 9 in D minor
K. 119 in D major
K. 1 in D minor
K. 87 in B minor
K. 98 in E minor
K. 13 in G major
K. 8 in G minor
K. 11 in C minor
K. 450 in G minor
K. 159 in C major
K. 487 in C major
K. 529 in B flat major
K. 380 in E major

Ivo Pogorelich – piano

An attractively played collection, with stunning articulation for the ornaments and plenty of sparkling fingerwork to bring Scarlatti's vivid personality to life.

Although this anthology is weighted towards more familiar sonatas, the programming is sufficiently intelligent and varied for one to sample a fairly comprehensive range of the composer's keyboard style. Five of the sonatas, at least, featured in Horowitz's repertoire, and consequently one is rather tempted to compare the two pianists. Pogorelich really does not come off too badly.

The CD opens with the E major Sonata that was popularized as the second item in Tausig's Pastorale e capriccio (in which the Pastorale was transcribed into E minor). I don't think Pogorelich is quite fast enough for-the presto marking here and some rests in the-opening passages strike me as being fractionally too long. The Pastorale turns up as the third sonata, and in it I thought that some of the loud notes were slightly too insistent; I would recommend the listener to keep the volume control low throughout the CD. Overall, however, this is an attractively played collection, with stunning articulation for the ornaments and plenty of sparkling fingerwork to bring Scarlatti's vivid personality to life. Listen to the D major, Kk119 for a lovely mezzo piano singing tone juxtaposed with bubblingly alive fast passages—then again, the autumnal pathos of the B minor, Kk87 is equally affecting.

Perhaps one could have wished for greater humour and more exploitation of the passages that lend themselves to climaxes, but one respects that Pogorelich has his own way of doing things, and this is without a doubt both musicianly and intelligent. For me, the penultimate sonata of the anthology, a less than familiar one in B flat, Kk529, with its playful leaps and general lightheartedness, demonstrates Pogorelich's style at its best: a unique combination of sophistication and innocence. I didn't care so much for the interpretation of the famous E major, Kk380 that concludes the release—the tempo changes are not wholly convincing to my way of thinking. But this is a fine CD that can be warmly recommended.---Joan Chissell, Gramophone [1/1993], arkivmusic.com

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