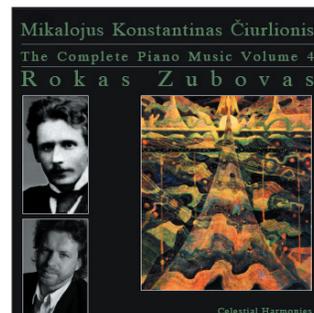


celestial harmonies

the complete piano music of
mikalojus konstantinas ĉiurlionis,
vol. 4
rokas zubovas
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the artist

Recorded in München, as a co-production between Celestial Harmonies and Bayerischer Rundfunk, this is volume four of the first ever recording of the complete piano music of Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis.

The pianist, Rokas Zubovas, has been a faculty member at the Piano Department of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre since 2000. From 1994 to 2000 he taught at the Music Department of San Xavier University in Chicago, Illinois.

Occupying a special place in his repertoire are the works of his great-grandfather, the famous Lithuanian composer and artist Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis.

Born in Lithuania, Zubovas started his piano studies in Kaunas under Rimantė Šerkšnytė. He received his undergraduate degree from the Lithuanian Academy of Music under Prof. J. Karnavičius, and later earned a Master of Music degree from DePaul University in Chicago under Prof. D. Paperno. In addition, he has studied extensively in Zurich, Switzerland, at the International Heinrich Neuhaus Institute where his teacher was pianist Esther Yellin. In the United States he also studied with the pianists Edward Auer and Andrius Kuprevičius.

Zubovas has appeared in recitals and various festivals throughout the United States, Canada, Argentina, Uruguay, Switzerland, Norway, France, Italy, Greece, Lithuania, Russia, and other European countries. He also regularly performs in a piano duo with his wife, pianist Sonata Deveikytė-Zubovienė, and also as a chamber musician with various soloists and ensembles.

the project

Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875-1911) was born in the southern Lithuanian town of Varena, near Vilnius. Doubly talented, he was a visual composer who could hear colours and see sounds and whose life was comprised of the close interaction between musical and artistic composition.

In his homeland of Lithuania, Čiurlionis was celebrated as an exponent of musical modernism and the founder of a national school of music. Yet he was without doubt an avant-garde artist of European standing, an artistic visionary between the late Romantic and Modern ages. Many prominent personalities of that time—Romain Rolland, Ivor Stravinsky, Jacques Lipchitz, Isadora Duncan—were interested in Čiurlionis.

Trained in Warsaw and Leipzig, he worked as a composer and painter in Warsaw, Vilnius and St. Petersburg. In the mere fifteen years prior to his untimely death in a Polish sanatorium in 1911, he produced an immense number of artistic and musical works including 200 paintings, 80 drawings and more than 270 musical compositions, about 170 of which were scored for solo piano.

This, the fourth recording in the complete piano music of Čiurlionis, is dominated by works from his mature period. In 1904, Čiurlionis turned towards modern tendencies in music. In his piano preludes, and variations of following years, one can find origins of the compositional techniques and expressive means that were later exploited by the composers of the Second Viennese School, and representatives of other tendencies of the first half of the twentieth century. The most striking feature of Čiurlionis's compositions written in these years could be called artistic constructivism: here every short prelude or variation becomes a sort of mathematical riddle, solved by the composer with musical means.

The programme of this recording is made up of three sections: Sonata in F major, piano pieces from 1903-1906, late preludes from 1908-1909, and compositions notated from memory by Čiurlionis's contemporary Viktoria Hemplowa.

