



## Jonathan Plowright on a Polish discovery

### **Ludomir Różycki seems quite a find. Why is he not better known?**

His music was well received in Poland and some of it quite popular in the 1930s, particularly a song from his operetta *Lili Wants to Sing*, which he uses in the first movement of the Second Piano Concerto. However, like a lot of post-Chopin composers, the rest of the world seemed uninterested in music from Poland until the likes of Szymanowski and Lutosławski made people sit up and take notice.

### **What surprised you most when you first explored the works you have recorded here?**

The overall quality of the writing is consistently high throughout all of the three works, there are no obvious weak spots, which is unusual. The orchestral writing is quite distinctive in its voicing of wind instruments and is not what you would expect. The Second Concerto is quite a departure from the late-Romantic style and he is striving much more for dissonance and effect.

### **If people were curious about Różycki's music, who might you suggest as reference points?**

I feel that there are strong French elements, and I would lean towards Fauré or César Franck for comparison. Some of the writing is also quite Brahmsian. If anyone would like to know more, the CD liner notes by Adrian Thomas are an excellent guide.

### **Are there other intriguing works by Różycki waiting to be discovered?**

There is a very fine Piano Quintet, which happily I have just recorded with the Szymanowski Quartet for Hyperion! It's a very demanding work, and by comparison with the other quintet on the same CD by Ignaz Friedman, it is far more orchestral with longer, sweeping unison lines for both strings and piano.

### **You have a remarkable reputation for playing the music of Polish composers. How did you get involved with the country and its music?**

I have always been fascinated by the life and works of Paderewski, which led me quite naturally to his contemporaries; composers who, through changing fashions in music and world events, were forgotten. Stojowski, for example, was very popular in his early career, but he refused to join the *avant-garde* and as a result was considered old fashioned.