

BOLESŁAW WOYTOWICZ

David C F Wright PhD

Boleslaw Woytowicz was born in Dunuivtsi, Poland on 5th December 1899 and became a very fine pianist, composer and teacher. Like many Polish composers, he is largely forgotten and another casualty of the promotion of Chopin.

Woytowiicz studied at the Warsaw Conservatory with Aleksander Michalowski

(1916-1917) and Witold Maliszewski (1920-1924) and, thereafter, taught piano and theory at the Conservatory himself. He was a concert pianist of the highest order and toured France and the USA. He entered the first Chopin Competition in Warsaw in 1927. He had further studies with Nadia Boulanger in Paris from 1929 to 1932.



When Poland was freed from German rule, he returned to Poland. His Piano Concerto was denounced by the critics of the left wing persuasion and the concerto was destroyed. He was teaching at the Higher State School of Music in Katowice when he stayed until he retired in 1975.

He wrote three symphonies, the first of 1938 is subtitled 20 variations in symphonic form, the second is called the Warsaw Symphony with its folklore style and dates from 1945, and is on a vast scale, and the third is the Symphony Concertante for piano and orchestra of 1965 which may hint at impressionism but it is a scintillating piece both for soloist and orchestra. His music sometimes has a strong modal flavour

He wrote symphonic-choral works, two string quartets and a popular Flute Sonata, as well as some very impressive piano music. There is also a cantata entitled In Praise of Work.

Under the evil socialism of the Nazis he organised concerts at his own cafe.

As a pianist, he was excellent in repertoire from Mozart to Liszt and some recall his phenomenal performance of the Liszt Sonata. His recordings of Chopin studies are still available.

He was not a 'stick in the mud' composer and sometimes used the 12 note system which only great composers can employ. The composers, musicians and commentators who reject this method do so because they do not have the skill and technique to use it.

His piano music is worthy of constant and regular promotion. His sets of studies are truly amazing and, thankfully, owe nothing to Chopin in that they are not predicable, effeminate or prissy. Woytowicz's studies are strong, virtuosic and not just pretty note-spinning, nor are they superficial. They also succeed from being original.

Occasionally, his guard slipped and, for example, his mazurkas are commonplace, but the Three Dances and the Little Sonata are delightful works. He left editions of the Beethoven sonatas and works of Debussy which are published by PWM.

He died in Katowice on 11 June 1980

PDF scores: [Twelve studies](#)

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