

czech music

quarterly magazine

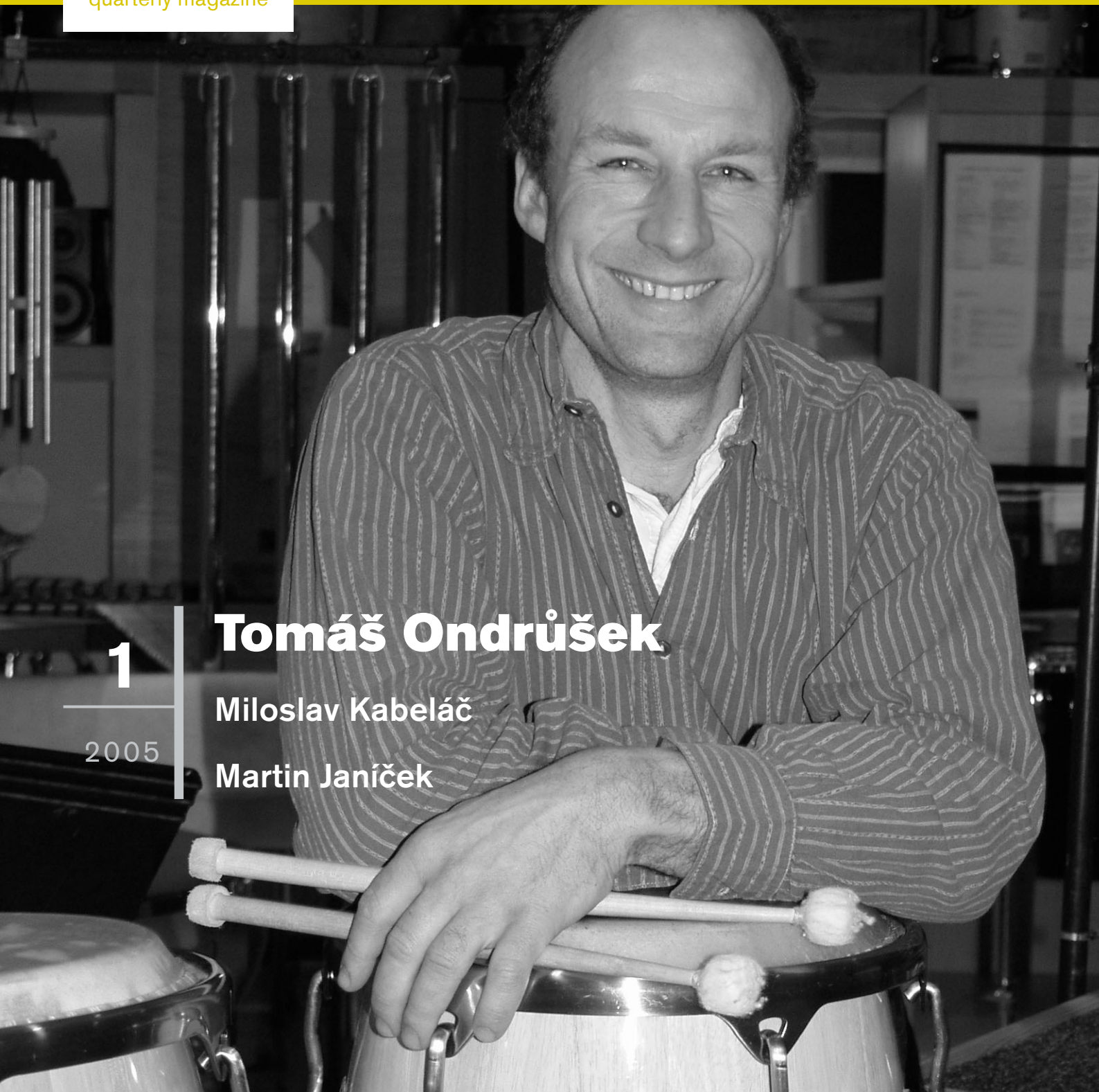
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2005

Tomáš Ondrůšek

Miloslav Kabeláč

Martin Janíček





Music Publishing House

EDITIO BÄRENREITER PRAHA, spol. s r. o.

announces its publications



Bedřich Smetana
FROM THE HOMELAND

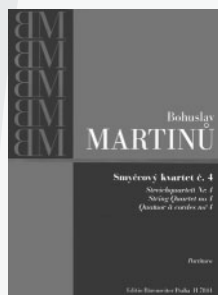
Two Duets for Violin and Piano

These two popular pieces by Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884) from 1880, inspired by the picturesque countryside in Jabkenice, form a chamber counterpart to the symphonic poem From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests. The present, practical edition offers the musical text in its original virtuosic version. The editor, Ivan Štraus, was referring to the first edition by F. A. Urbánek from 1881 and to the Students' Edition of

Smetana's works. The violin part includes suggestions of fingerings and bowings according to the current performance practice.

H 7884 ISMN M-2601-0144-9, 32+8 pages

price 13.50 EUR



Bohuslav Martinů
STRING QUARTET No. 4

String Quartet No. 4 by Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959) originated in 1937 in Paris where it was also premiered in a private performance one year later. Due to the composer's emigration to the U.S.A. and the post-war political development in Czechoslovakia, the piece remained for many years in oblivion in the archive of the Puc family to whom Martinů dedicated it. It was re-discovered as late as in 1956 by Martinů's friend and a keen promoter of his work Miloš Šafránek. Four years

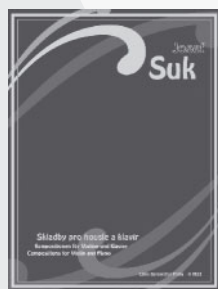
later the quartet was performed in public by the Novák Quartet in a concert in Germany. The main sources for the presented practical edition of this neo-classicistic composition, in which Martinů typically combined French moderateness with Czech melodiousness, were the autograph and the 1963 edition by SHV, thoroughly freed of all the unwanted previous editorial revisions.

H 7844 pocket score, ISMN M-2601-0076-3, 52 pages

price 19.50 EUR

H 7844a parts, ISMN M-2601-0326-9, 16+20+20+16 pages

price 34.50 EUR



Josef Suk
COMPOSITIONS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

The present edition comprises a set of six compositions by Josef Suk (1874–1935) arranged for an easy violin and piano by his grandson, a violin virtuoso Josef A. Suk. All compositions have appeared in print before (individually, most often as part of Supraphon's so-called popular edition), however, in this edition, bowing and fingerings have been newly revised by the arranger. The set includes Melody, Bagatelle, Lullaby, Evening Mood, Village Serenade and

finally, the Song of Love, the only composition of this edition arranged by the violin virtuoso Jaroslav Kocian.

H 7823 ISMN M-2601-0249-1, 32+12 pages

price 15.00 EUR



Petr Eben
WINDOWS

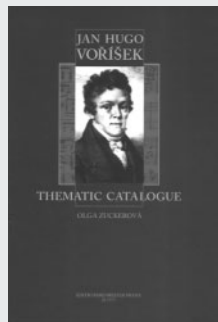
Four movements according to Marc Chagall for trumpet and organ

Fine art has always been a prominent source of inspiration for Petr Eben (*1929). Chagall's stained-glass windows for the synagogue in Jerusalem gave an impulse for the 4 movements for trumpet and organ, commissioned by the city gallery in the western-Bohemian town of Cheb. The author commented on his choice of instruments: "The solemnness of the large panes of

stained glass made me imagine the sound of the organ and the intensity and brilliance of the sheaves of bright colours called for the shrill tone of the trumpet." Eben combines the two instruments in an original manner: both parts retain a great deal of independence, progressing in their own rhythmic patterns, intersecting in places. The modal composition typical of Eben's method is confronted here with atonality, enabling the final unison of the two instruments sound with a monumental effect. Since its origin in 1976 Windows have been one of the most frequently performed pieces by the author. The individual movements of the cycle have the names of colours: The Blue Window, The Green Window, The Red Window, The Golden Window. The organ part has been revised by Milan Šlechta, the trumpet part by Vladislav Kozderka.

H 6390 ISMN M-2601-0254-5, 44+24 pages

price 13.50 EUR



Olga Zuckarová
JAN HUGO VOŘÍŠEK –
THEMATIC CATALOGUE

This thematic catalogue mapping the works of Jan Hugo Voříšek (1791–1825) is the very first and also the most extensive work of its kind devoted to this Viennese composer of Czech origin. In addition to the catalogue, which is divided into two parts (works with and without opus numbers) and which includes musical incipits and basic information about the compositions, the publication includes a foreword with a detailed biography of Voříšek and evaluation of all

dictionary articles about him to date, presenting many previously-unpublished facts gleaned from source materials. The catalogue fills a notable gap in Czech and worldwide musical historiography and significantly enriches knowledge about one of the greatest Czech composers from the period before Smetana. Published with financial support from the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the catalogue is translated into English by Dr. Michaela Freeman and David Freeman.

H 7777 ISBN 80-86385-11-6, 96 pages

price 19.00 EUR

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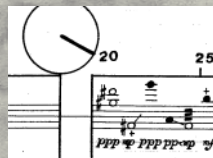
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editorial



Dear Reading

This issue of Czech Music is mainly devoted to percussion instruments. In it you will find an article on the music for percussion by the important Czech composer Miloslav Kabeláč, whose work definitely deserves to be more widely known. Another article introduces Martin Janíček, a sculptor and creator of unusual new musical instruments – “sounding objects”, who works on the borders between music and visual art. Finally, the longest article is an interview with Tomáš Ondrůšek. This multi-percussionist, whose fame and activities go far beyond the borders of the Czech Lands, talks about how he was drawn into the world of percussion instruments and contemporary classical music, how it became his life, how important it is for a player to be able to create his instrument himself, and how he finds the interpretational key to the pieces he plays, managing to give them the stamp of his own individuality while still faithfully following the composer's score. In short, very interesting reading.

One new feature that from now on will be a standard part of every issue is a review column produced in co-operation with Harmonie, a Czech monthly devoted to classical music and jazz. In this column we shall be printing both reviews of recordings of works by Czech composers both at home and abroad, and reviews of recordings of world repertoire by Czech performers. We believe this will draw your attention to interesting recordings that one way or another relate to Czech musical life, and provide everyone who is interested in Czech music with a better information service.

See you in the spring

PETR BAKLA
EDITOR

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musico-farmer

Why do you so insist on using the word “percussionist” when it’s a foreign word in Czech?

I think “percussionist” is already actually quite a common term in Czech parlance. Maybe it’s not so old as “bubeník” [“drummer”] but it’s often used. A “bubeník-drummer” is just a drummer, or as people sometimes say a “bicista” [literally, a “hitter”] when they are talking about someone specialized in drum set. A percussionist is someone who plays on all imaginable percussion instruments, but the word shouldn’t be confused with “perkuse”, a lay Czech term for ethno-percussion.

When you were studying in Stuttgart, which approaches were taught there?

At that time there were only two progressive professors for anyone who was interested in

more than just orchestral percussion, and they were Professor Wulff in Freiburg and Professor Tresselt in Stuttgart. Naturally I went around the other academies or professors, and I know most of them. Earlier, people used to study in Cologne, but that was already passé, or then with G. Sylvestre in Paris. Prof. Tresselt used to allow individuals their own specific programme, although officially it was orchestral play that was taught everywhere. He was very reliable, knew a lot, and had plenty of experience. He had played for a long time in a contemporary music ensemble, and was technically excellent – he had managed to systematise the whole thing. I wanted to learn everything possible from him, but I already knew what I wanted to do myself. And that was solo playing. For the first two or three years I wanted to be a marimba player, and

spent a great deal of time on that, but as time went by I increasingly discovered the charm of multipercussion. During my studies I played chamber music and got to know composers, and multipercussion appealed to me with all the sound and technical possibilities it offered and the space it provided for imagination and creativity.

Sooner or later during studies, people often start to emancipate themselves from their teacher, or even to define themselves in opposition to their teacher. Did that happen to you? Did you have some alternative experience, something that you were doing apart from school?

Only in a fairly marginal way. I liked my teacher and he didn’t try to limit me, and so I had no

reason to go against him. And he encouraged me to go on other courses and gather experience elsewhere. For example he sent me to Helmut Lachenmann, who taught composition at the same school. In the 1960s Lachenmann wrote a major work for percussion, called *Interieur I*. It's probably one of the two most important pieces for percussion from this early period. It's a great piece, which every percussionist knows, and everyone who wants to be a soloist has to have played it some time, just as pianists have to play a Rachmaninoff Concerto. Professor Tresselt let me study it directly with the composer and didn't in any way interfere. Lachenmann surprised me by the amount of time he devoted to me, and the way he even adjusted to my rhythm, even though he was already famous, and second by how well and how fast he remembered the detailed problems of a piece that was already 20 years old. And it wasn't as

ble, focused on improvisation, experimentation and the avant-garde, was led by young composers and the old Erhard Karkoschka. Another, known as the Studio Ensemble, was already professional; it did standard New Music and the people who played in it included such big names as Mike Svoboda, Yukiko Sugawara or Hans-Peter Jahn. I attended courses given by the outstanding marimba player Keiko Abe, courses in African music (back then in the 1980s this wasn't so usual as today), seminars for snare drum, vibraphone or improvisation. We even organised a workshop of African music with the Guinea Ballet soloist Famouda Konate at my farm. Naturally I went to Darmstadt, Donaueschingen, Witten and everywhere you can think of. I heard pretty well all the great solo percussionists play from the "founding fathers" to my contemporaries – even those I didn't think were so great. All this experience naturally

influenced the way I saw percussion instruments later on. I had the chance to buy new instruments, for example a more space-saving marimba, and I thought about it, but in the end I couldn't bear to part from my old instruments.

When did you start to study with Johannes Beer?

At German secondary schools they had a system of preparatory classes for university. In their last two years students chose two main subjects, and I chose music and Latin. But at that point it wasn't possible to study percussion as part of the music course, and it turned out that my only option would be to go to Munich to the university and take an exam in front of a state-nominated committee – playing on the xylophone, drum and kettledrums. I mean it was possible to get an exemption and study an instrument that wasn't on the list, but of course I had to have lessons. At that time I

MARTIN SMOLKA

When I first arrived in Trstěnice and asked a local the way to Tomáš Ondrušek's place, he pointed up the hill – "The German? Can't you hear?" I set off in the direction of the muffled noise, which led me past sheep whose skin will be used for drums and whose meat will be eaten by the drummer, and then there I was, looking into a barn where a dog lay under a marimba and house martins were flying about under the roof. Stone and wood, a scent that I knew from hop-picking expeditions, and sounds from Darmstadt. Now you understand the term "musico-farmer".

if it was something often played; it's only played by people who are interested, who play multipercussion and are willing to invest half a year to a year's work just to have 15 minutes of music, and music not even specially spectacular for the public.

Studies in Stuttgart were based on the principle of independence. Anyone who wanted to get the most from the school and do well knew that he had to work, but nobody would force him too. I registered for only the minimum of subjects, and went to the school only one day a week. The rest of the time I practiced in a rented farm outside the town or devoted myself to other activities. Professor Tresselt knew I was working, and even respected the fact when I had to be absent, sometimes for as much as a month. I was playing in several contemporary music ensembles. One ensemble

influenced the way I saw percussion instruments back then. But mainly I was at home, on the farm, and practicing hard.

Did you already have your own instruments?

Yes, in fact my first teacher Johannes Beer helped me to get them. Before Stuttgart I studied for two years as an external student at the music academy in Nuremberg, in parallel with my civilian service (instead of army service), and I bought my first drum with a whole month's pay: a good Ludwig Snare Drum. Through Johannes I then got hold of a used but almost new marimba, and then kettledrums at a sale. I already had the vibraphone I had graduated from the music secondary school with. I still play on these



was playing on a drum set and I wanted to play jazz. I was going through the transition from traditional jazz through modern to free-jazz, and I used to go to concerts given by Braxton, Taylor, Mangelsdorff...

A teacher had to be found for me. My father, a musician, remembered that a former pupil of his was studying percussion at university. That was how I got to Johannes. And one time when I went to a lesson with Johannes, at the music university in Würzburg, I had a musical experience that was really defining for me. The percussion practice room there was an enormous cellar full of instruments, and everyone there had his own corner, his little district. When we entered there were terribly strange sounds coming from the back – wonderful, mysterious. I saw two deeply absorbed musicians playing piano and percussion. I said to myself, "but that's like composed free-jazz". It spoke to me, because it was what I loved, free-jazz, and at the same time what I was doing with Johannes – playing according to the notes and fulfilling tasks. The players were Jeff Beer, my teacher's brother, and Jürgen Schmitt. Soon I went to a concert Jeff gave, where he played Stockhausen's *Zyklus*, some smaller pieces for marimba and small set, and one of his own pieces for a large multipercussion set. It all amazed me and appealed to me hugely.

When I asked about an alternative, I was thinking of your work with Siegfried Wekenmann, collecting metal objects and putting new instruments together. How and when and why did that start?

That was a little later, about two years after I finished my studies, I met Siegfried by chance in Stuttgart, at our old university. He also studied there, piano, and composition in Freiburg before that. He invited me over to his place, first he played me things of his on the video, and then he took me to the attic. There he had a huge arsenal of objects and all kinds of projects scattered about the place. Various bowls, huge and small objects, parts of aeroplane turbines... They could all be somehow chimed and played, and there were wooden frames everywhere holding them up. I was enthusiastic. I thought "this is what I've always been looking for", I mean someone interested in something similar, in peculiar sounds and in exploring sound in general, which is what always fascinated me and attracted me about percussion.

Today you have a similar collection in the barn in Trstěnice. How did you acquire it? I mean the things that you can't buy anywhere, the objects and home-made instruments. At your place I saw sets of metal discs, all kinds of pieces of metals, metal rods and tubes hung like gongs, or tubular bells, and glass and acoustic objects of all sorts. And also a huge collection of old drums and percussion instruments, evidently long ago thrown out by someone, as well as you have adapted or made from scratch.

I started even before I studied, while I was still at secondary high school. On "Spermiel" [scrap], I found a few things. At the time I was planning a concert with an organist friend – a "Stations of the Cross", with improvised music. We were both doing improvisations, playing together, and we had other bands and a jazz trio as well. I had an old kettledrum from school, which had just been lying about there somewhere. I found a frame from a swing, heavy and sturdy, and I hung various bits of metal on it. I had already seen similar things at Jeff and Johannes Beer's place, at the premiere of Stockhausen's *Samstag aus Licht*, where there was a large percussion ensemble and everyone had something like it, or with Limpe Fuchs, who played in a duo with the pianist Friedrich Gulda and whose husband made the instruments. I took inspiration from various different sources. The twelve halts on the *Way of the Cross* – that was twelve little pieces-improvisations. Each had its own character, and we had already planned out beforehand roughly which instruments would be used when, and we knew the atmosphere, and had thought it out in programme fashion – for example the kettledrum created the storm and after they crucified Jesus I struck it with a hammer. But it wasn't theatre. We enjoyed it terrifically, because creating something like that is more important for young musicians than just playing technical etudes all the time. We complemented each other; we both had ideas, and I drew on his organist's experience and he on mine. That was a good thing, because when percussionists talk to each other they often just keep it on the level of "do you know how to do this or that?" or "What kind of snare drum do you have?" They focus on technical performance and the instrument, not on the music.

But you don't just collect objects, you also make your own instruments, or adapt them...

To explain, I'll have to go back to the past again. I came to the study of music from a different side than the usual. I didn't play the piano, I didn't know the classics – I learnt all that later. I came to music through a love of sound in all its variety, through delight in experimenting, through curiosity about the fantastic sound possibilities of free-jazz and "European free-jazz" – the composed kind, *Neue Musik*. I got hooked. I listened to it anywhere I could. I went to listen to Stockhausen and Boulez rehearsals with ensembles, and I learned a great deal there. It was amazing how they worked in such detail, how they were put together, these ensembles, how everything sounded and fitted well together. I went to lectures, read books, and took out a subscription to *MusikTexte*. That was all food for our souls, me and a few of my friends who were also hooked.

It was through all this that I got to making instruments. I started to collect old instruments, which was also a matter of necessity since I couldn't afford to buy new ones all the time, and I recreated damaged instruments. For example I would put wood on a drum

instead of skin. When I liked the result, I tried to create a set of wooden tom-toms from material they cut for me somewhere in a Baumarkt. I didn't have any crafts training, but I taught myself. Then I started to make sticks, and in the end did it as a business too, since at that time there was nowhere to buy good sticks. I made my own metal stands – I thought them up, drew a scheme, bought material and took it to the smith, who would cut it and weld it. At first I would watch him, but as soon as he knew how, he would finish the work himself. For me sticks are intimately related to technique. A stick isn't just a tool or an aid, it's an extension of the arm, a representative of my fingers or hand. The stick is joined to me, not to the instrument. And that's why a player has to make his own sticks depending on what kind of sound he wants. I knew from my teacher how sticks are made, the basic principle. But when I started to think about it really seriously, a huge world of possibilities opened up to me. When you consider how many kinds of head there are, how many ways of treating them, all the possible weights, degrees of hardness, size, lengths, thicknesses of the different parts... I became completely engrossed in it. At the beginning I made them just for myself, but then I sold a few and saw it was a success, even with well-known soloists like Keiko Abe, Robyn Schulkowsky and so on. They would call me and describe exactly what they wanted. I understand what they were getting it, and I would transform it and send them a sample, saying that they could of course return it and I would redo it as they needed. I never had a single one returned. When I saw some interesting material somewhere, for example a metal ball with a suitable hole, I would immediately buy it and try something with it. When I got to the point of having a whole range, I would catalogue it and start selling.

The first instrument I made was a djembe, carved out of spruce. I went to the saw-mill, had a block cut for me and a cross cut into it with a motor saw. Then I chiselled it out, with one semi-circular chisel and one smooth, drilled it through and cut it through, and did the same from the bottom. It took me about a week. Then I stretched the hide... that's part of the process; just as an oboist makes his double reed, so a drummer who wants to play Africa has to know how to make his drum – drying the skin, binding and everything. Some things people had to show me, or advise me about, but I found out other things for myself. There was a barrel in the cellar of the house in Stuttgart where I lived. So I checked that nobody wanted it, went to the butcher for skin and made it into a bass drum. I found others in the area, because it was a wine-growing region and people sometimes throw out older barrels. The huge, three-metre one also comes from there. I made it there, and later did some more work on it in Trstěnice. In most cases the barrels had to be mended – new hoops put on, or metalled. When the ends were rotten I cut them off and replaced them with wood or other material.



Didn't such repairs spoil the sound?

Of course not. In the first place you can't spoil the sound because you don't even know what kind of sound it ought to have. Something always comes out of it. And it is always something pretty – like with people. Someone isn't spoiled just because he has a crooked nose, since he might have pretty eyes, for example. My drums are excellent, as you know – original. They are good because I install them in a place where they are good. Someone might say that they're hopeless, but in the pieces I use them for, and as I use them, they are unique and I couldn't imagine any better. They have their own character. And if there's a hole in the wood, for example, it can always be filled up. Even with disgusting plastic, or foam rubber. It's not just about the whole barrel resonating and giving out woody sounds. Plastic can also sound great – it gives its own "plastic" sounds that are completely different. Sheet metal as well. I even have a drum made of paper. Or octobans made of waste pipes, with rims used on bongos. I bought these for a few crowns in a sale when Amati [Czech musical instruments manufacturer] closed down.

When and how did you get from Stuttgart to Bohemia?

Profesor Tresselt called me and said that the school was choosing candidates for the "Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes" scholarship and I had to play. I didn't quite know what it was, except that it was very prestigious and that the only drummers who had yet won it were Johannes Beer and Christian Dierstein (today a member of the well-known Ensemble Recherche). They chose me, and only then did I discover that it was a matter of very careful choice of one or two people from the whole school to go forward to a national German competition. For the competition I went to Berlin to the Hochschule der Künste, and I played Lachenmann, the King of Denmark by Morton Feldman, a new piece by Matthias Schneider-Hollek *Býčí bicí* [Bull Percussion] and something Japanese for marimba. There was one other percussionist there, from Würzburg, but he was from a completely different ballpark, an orchestral player, and he played very well rehearsed, but boring pieces. And there were many other musicians. They awarded five scholarships for music, and five for the natural sciences and so on... You get a terrific amount for the prize, which is called the "Hochbegabtenförderung" – support for the highly gifted. It is financial support, a large stipend every month, plus the chance to study abroad in any country you choose – you get

all travel and living expenses and a high personal grant.

I played in front of a committee that included various musicians – the percussionist there was Professor Vogler, the solo timpanist of the Berlin Philharmonic, an old gentleman. He asked the first question, which was why I hadn't played any Bach. That really wound me up, not in the sense that I became aggressive, but I launched into a debate in which I defended my position, my creative approach, my view that all these transcriptions were hangovers from times when there wasn't yet a proper repertoire – it all ended in quite a sharp exchange of opinions. Although nobody said so, I'm convinced that the dispute, the fact that I showed independence, helped me more than my playing, which the members of the committee (a trumpet player, trombonist and so on) couldn't have understood.

So I was given the scholarship and I chose Bohemia. I used the time and money not just to study, but to repair a house I had immediately bought in the spring of 1990 in Trstěnice near Litomyšl. I was registered at the Prague Conservatory as a pupil of Amy Lynn Barber. I knew Vladimír Vlasák, who initially advised me to go to Brno to the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, but then said that "Prague was Prague", after all, and there was more cultural



life there, especially for someone coming from Stuttgart. They had terrific respect for Stuttgart. At that time the Prague Conservatory was at a truly high level as far as drum set-players were concerned – that was what Prof. Veselý taught, but nobody there did my discipline – multipercussion. Even though I went back to Stuttgart to finish my studies, mainly to prepare and play my graduation concert (in the spring of 1991), I was already living here half of the time.

What did you have in your repertoire when you finished your studies?

Lachenmann, Feldman and part of Xenakis's *Rebonds*, about ten smaller pieces for set, six or seven major marimba pieces, chamber pieces, such as Xenakis's *Persephassa*, *Palimpsest* by Hespos for voice and percussion, Stockhausen, Luigi Nono, and young composers. Other things like Xenakis's *Psapha*, Stockhausen's *Zyklus*, and Fukushima's *Ground*, I worked up when I was already here.



And Lang, Volans and others, I didn't take up until 1994 and later, after my pause.

After my studies, you see, I essentially dropped playing for two years and didn't even practice. I was building my house. Everything I've done has always been something I've terrifically enjoyed. Not even dragging instruments around and assembling them has ever bothered me. When making sticks grabbed me I was completely grabbed, and when the house grabbed me I went all out for building. It was all hugely magical for me; earlier I hadn't had anything and suddenly I had a house, in fact a large house, a farm. I had to start buying things, learn how to do all reconstruction, because at that time there still weren't any firms to do it for you. The craftsmen had time on Saturdays, outside their regular work, but I had to do most of it myself, or at least help.

Getting back to percussion after the two years was fantastic. It was a rest from building work, which was already getting on my nerves, and emotionally it was something completely new. I was afraid I had forgotten everything, but it all came back surprisingly fast. Things swum up out of passive and physical memory, and pieces that I thought would need two weeks practice came back in two days. My hands quickly remembered plenty of things, and it was enough just to practice. It helped me a lot that over the two years I had become physically stronger – I didn't have to strain, and unlike before the playing felt light and easy.

Weren't you afraid to drop it all completely, and risk the loss of contacts and the possibility that people would entirely forget about you?

No. The important thing is freedom of spirit. You have to put something aside completely. And when you get back to it, the freedom gives you so much energy and new inspiration and creative power! That makes up for plenty of things, joy will help you much more, even with performance technique, than joylessly practicing. It is the basis of every kind of creativity. As soon as you lack the internal constitution for something, it's not longer creativity but practicing, and you can practice and practice but it still won't bear fruit.

I was brought back to percussion by an invitation that I couldn't resist, even though it messed up my plans. It was to give a solo half-concert in the Gasteig in Munich, which is a huge, prestigious hall, and a workshop in the music academy there. Prof. Adel Shalaby had heard me at some festival and invited me because he had very much liked the fact that I play Lachenmann's *Interieur I* and – "I'm not kidding", that I play it with love and believe in this music. The concert went off very well, despite the fact that I had got stuck in a traffic jam on the motorway which used up more than my whole time reserve, so I was only just finishing putting the instruments up as the first listeners were arriving. I played from memory, and I immediately won over the students at the workshop and I am still in contact with some of them today. The workshop was about the interpretation of Lachenmann. I have very happy memories of it. Soon I

received more offers and gave similar performances and seminars at the school in Bonn, then at conservatories in St. Petersburg (with Siegfried Weckenmann) and Moscow and other places in Germany. I started to build up more repertoire and in 1996 to play with the Prague new-music ensemble Agon.

Didn't you initially want to play your own music?

Yes, my own music, my improvised music, but also music by other composers, only in my own way, with my own instruments, whether the normal sort or my handmade creations. Today I play far more pieces by other people, but I always look for ways of expressing something original, something of my own in them, and of finding my own approach both in practical terms, as far as instruments are concerned, and musically. To find the key to a piece, a key that no one has yet used. When I've heard a piece played three times in the same way, I definitely wouldn't play it in the same way. I would either do it in my own way, or not play it at all.

For me what is always primary is how a score "speaks" to me. The score creates a picture, an inner image (an idea, a vision of the acoustic result) and it is from this that my interpretation and preliminary choice of instruments develops.

Could you give an example, and show us how this works in a specific piece?

The most recent piece I've worked on is by Michael Jarrell, the French Swiss composer. I liked it because it works with complex combinations of sounds. I realised that some pieces I had done just before were focused on rhythm, and I wanted to get back to something sound-orientated. The piece is called *Assonance VI*, and works with concurrent sounding and with combinations of sounds on different instruments. There are a great many different layers. For example, through damping a few notes crystallise out of the reverberation following a fast run on the vibraphone; then the cymbal plays, then something else, and then something is damped off and the remainder is audible, which again joins with the vibraphone. It is a refined piece, a kind of distillation of different sounds. But somehow I soon saw through it and suddenly it was boring, and lacked the charm I had thought was there. After a first play through I could hear that it never went beyond the limits of the initial idea, and was continually sweet and ingratiating, continually surrounded by aliquots... So, because of the title anyway, I decided to choose instruments that I hadn't used for a long time. Instead of the tam-tam I found an instrument I had once made of metal plate which had a very specific sound, but was still a kind of tam-tam. It was the same with the other instruments I chose – they were all what you might call non-reverberating, non-(as)sonant instruments. They give the piece something completely different from just the same elegant long-drawn out resonance all the time, but when combined with the technique of the piece, with the way it was written,

they have the potential to produce a fine (assonant) result. My concern was that the resulting sound should not be typical. When I read the score, I had always known it: now here the tam-tam comes back with this typical sound, then the cymbal, and everything will somehow reverberate for a long time. That was why I looked for other instruments, in order to avoid the commonplace and the predictable, and I looked in the collection of my home-made instruments. These instruments then dictate a lot of technical things. For example it's difficult to play on them – they have a shorter reverberation than is prescribed, or when struck together one of the two is always stronger. This presented me with a series of extra tasks, but in the end produced a fine result.

Percussion instruments are always unpredictable. You choose something that leads you into a certain atmosphere and a certain area of technical problems, and these then lead you somewhere else that you would otherwise never have reached. It resembles choreography. You put something up, for example, and it works wonderfully, but suddenly you reach a place in the piece where you have to move rapidly to another instrument that is standing a long way away. You want to move the other instrument, but then it wouldn't work for other places in the piece. In one Xenakis piece I solved the problem by having the same instrument in two places. There are all kinds of difficult problems with percussion, but it's great, it's an adventure.

With this piece the choice of instruments was the key. Through the choice I wanted to arrive at a sound idiom that would be less straightforward than the one I had read from the score. A sound idiom that would be my interpretation of the piece.

And what about the key to Stockhausen?

Stockhausen's *Zyklus* is a piece that in itself makes the performer its co-creator. The special notation of the piece offers a series of elements that force the performer to choose: which elements, where to put them, what order to put them in and so forth. At the beginning I looked for the shortest path through the jungle of possibilities that Stockhausen proposes. And the most logical path. I searched in this relatively confusing range of possibilities and the principle on which I selected musical formations was that they should seem to me to have some logic, but also that they should speak to me and appeal to me. For example, in one section what most spoke to me were glissandos, and so I increased their attack and put the section together in a glissando way, with the glissandos giving it unity.

Analysis of a piece, whether my own or the composer's analysis, is an important aid when looking for the key. In the Lachenmann there are seven parts, each with its own character, and one for example is called "secco" – the expression says a huge amount about the form of play, but also the choice of instruments and sticks, even though all this is not

written out. In his analysis Stockhausen speaks of "strike cycles" of individual instruments, each of which has its "maximum", which means the point where it sounds frequently and dominates. I foregrounded this principle still more, by deliberately choosing the sounds of the instrument that was supposed to dominate out of the free elements that were up to the performer, and so accentuating that instrument to the maximum.

What about David Lang's *Anvil Chorus*?

Once again the first step was the choice of instruments. The score only specifies woodblock and large drum, and then only materials – resonant metals, non-resonant metals and three resonant metals played with pedal. I already knew the piece from a Steven Schick concert, but when I started playing it for myself, I could no longer remember the details of his interpretation, I knew that he had used some kind of pipes and so I didn't consider of pipes and decided on brake discs. They had an excellent sound, high and strong. Penetrating enough to get on the nerves, but that suited me. I built a special stand for them. For the non-resonant metals I used gongs, laid flat so as to be half damped. But during rehearsals it became clear that this didn't work. At the end both sounds are supposed to connect and mix, but this didn't happen because the discs sounded terribly high and didn't merge with the sound of the gongs at all. I had to rethink it altogether, but the problem helped me to find the right approach and I realised what I needed. To get the two sorts of sound to unite at the end what was needed was a sort of gamelan in which two rhythms would mix, one circling in a shorter period and the other in a longer. Thus through the search for more suitable instruments I stumbled on a musical idea. In the end for the damped sound I used pots (little pans, stuffed with felt plasters), on two gongs laid sideways. The sounds are closer to each other, and differ mainly in the way they are struck and the choice of sticks. And at the end, thanks to the fast tempo, even the damped strokes connect into as it were uninterrupted sound. This was precisely what the brake discs couldn't do, since at a fast tempo all that could be made out from their sound were high dry attacks, like on a xylophone.

I also thoroughly analysed the piece. In the middle section I found a structure that made it much easier for me to get to grips with the piece. When you realise what the result is supposed to be, you don't have to learn the piece note by note, but instead you can play patterns by ear. You know where the motif is drawn out longer – Lang works with the principle of addition, adding a note to a repeated pattern, or with augmentation inside a motif, or by shifting half of a pattern forwards. Immediately you realise this, it acquires logic, and you also find the shifts that later repeat in the piece. It was only after a year of playing that I discovered that in the final section, where the polyrhythms are already very complex and you are playing with both hands and feet, a large drum appears at regular intervals under the

throng of irregularities. The drum is composed into the alternating metre (3/16, 4/16, 5/16 a 6/16) in such a way that it turns up, I think, every five crotchets: in the notes it doesn't look at all regular, and it was only my ears that gave it away to me.

The Munich percussionist Stefan Blum, who also plays this Lang piece, discretely suggested to me that from his point of view your interpretation is too free.

I don't think it is. I keep very precisely to the text. Always, and not only in this case. As far as the score is concerned this piece is terribly traditional, and so you can't do anything else. I just fully exploited the fact that the performer is left free in choice of instruments. On the contrary, I think that using cymbals as the resonant metals wouldn't be right. Lang knows what he is doing, and would have written them in if he had wanted them. And he knows my recording, and sent me other pieces in exchange. I keep to the text, because I like doing it that way and I wouldn't like playing it "my way" in the sense that graphic scores are sometimes played or, – as I hear from my friends on the improvisation scene – people play everything there "their own way". That isn't interpretation, but playing "à la".

I enjoy tackling complicated tasks, which is the greatest thing in all these pieces. You reach a place where you can't get any further – plenty of pieces involve that – it's true. You play something and a problem always turns up, something insoluble, sometimes unplayable, physically impossible – that's the case in Lachenmann's *Interieur I*, and Xenakis's *Psappha* and *Rebonds*. Let's say you have to play a roll with two hands on six instruments at once. Obviously you can't do it with four sticks. Or one hand is supposed to roll and the other to tap out eight notes in a tempo that one hand can't do alone. But I can see what the composer wanted, which is that something has to sound continuously here and at the same time the rhythm has to be brought out. And so I try different ways to achieve the same effect, as in the theatre when actors look for an approach to a role. And when I find the solution, then it can change or completely revolutionise the approach to the whole piece; it can be the key. For example in *Rebonds* by Xenakis. There you find sudden rolls written in the middle of pregnant rhythmic play, but I didn't want to upset the rhythmic play and let in an element of rhythmic accident with the roll. My key consists in making even the rolls precisely subject to rhythm, subordinated to the rhythm of the surrounding beat. Having found this solution, I carried over the principle into the other similar places in the composition.

Apart from the Jarrel, what have you been rehearsing recently? Could you speak of an interpretational key there too?

Kevin Volans' *Asanga*. Everything is given

there and so the question of a key doesn't arise. It's simply a piece in Kevin Volans' style, like *She who sleeps with a small blanket*, which I haven't played. There the only issue for me is that it shouldn't sound too drum-like, drum-set-like, banal. And so I chose instruments that I haven't used for a long time and that sound like "gong-drums". Volans prescribes the usual instruments like tom-toms and bass drum, but it is clear that he was just adjusting to the equipment most percussionists have. But I always choose instruments not just on the basis of the prescription on the score, but above all on the basis of the music that I read from the score. And here I realised that what he wanted here was simply a series of drums from the deep to the high. So I exploited the fact that I have a richer range of instruments and more possibilities than the ordinary percussionist, for whom he had adapted his instructions. I used a huge barrel drum, one-metre twenty high, and adjusted the choice of other drums to it: a Chinese tom-tom, and two tom-toms that I made out of metal barrels, and it all fits perfectly together in this context. The bass drum has to sound distinctive, and that again is clear from the way the piece is composed, and the others must be similar in type.

Before that I worked on Aperghis's *Graffiti*, which I had done once before but differently and with different instruments. This is a piece in which you have to talk and the instruments and speech complement each other or go in synchrony. Here speech has a musical function, and the sound of the percussion mimics it. The sound of the speech and the drum do glissandos, and the notation is in curves. The composer prescribes two gongs, but I chose two metal barrels that have a sound like Javanese gongs. They sound the same as a gong lying on its side, but better, because they have a great many aliquots and in this piece they were absolutely outstanding.

I keep talking about putting instruments together, but this is perhaps one of the most important elements in the whole performance. Before you get to the notated text, you need to "make yourself" an instrument. And this instrument then influences the music, and perception of the music. First of all I am someone who receive and takes in. I read the score and receive an abstract text, which creates in me an image of piece – mood, atmosphere, character, a purely subjective idea. And that is the basis on which I start to choose instruments and try it out. That "testing out" is my credo, as people say today. Using this method of experimenting I choose different variants and test it all out, so it's not a question of thinking and immediately outlining a solution. At the beginning I don't know the solution; all I have is my image. I take one road that may be lucky, but could be a blind alley. In that case I change the provisional set-up, put something somewhere else, or re-assemble the whole thing, or change something, add something, sometimes double something up. That means everything – the sticks as well, what kind I use

or how many, and the technique of play... I try another road, a third, and in the end choose the best of the variants.

This is the way I worked with the Aperghis piece too: I chose soft tom-toms, which have just one membrane and thanks to that a fast attack and an even tone. You couldn't use them with Xenakis, for example, because they would sound somehow blurred, and they are instruments that I don't like in other contexts. But these "sick" instruments were precisely what was right for the Aperghis.

And then there was a glissando there that I played on the drum by pressing with my free hand on the centre of the membrane, but it didn't come out right, and was hard work and didn't produce enough sound. Some non-percussionist, I forget who, asked me why I didn't use a talking drum. I didn't think much of the idea, but then I tried it and it was excellent. And so then again I had to rebuild the whole piece and subordinate it to that drum, which suddenly wasn't standing in front of me, but hanging on me, under my arm.

And can you speak of an interpretational key here?

Probably not, except for the sound side of things. The score is clear and precise. Here the beautiful and complicated work was more a question of deciphering what the composer had put into it. The ordering of the small motifs, the choice of small motifs... It took a lot of analytical work to read everything and calculate it – it is all hemidemisemiquavers (sixty-fourths) and even semihemidemisemiquavers (one-hundred-and-twenty-eighths). I classified and marked the little motifs in the score (a, a', a'', b and so on), so as to play musical formations, not just notes.

Where have you travelled to play in recent years, and what have you played there?

Probably what I liked best was my solo concert at the Warsaw Autumn Festival in 2002. In the same year I also played in Samara, in Russia, with an orchestra – the Milhaud concerto and a double concerto for percussion and marimba by the Czech composer Ivo Medek (with the marimba player Mutsuko Aizawa). Otherwise I travel regularly, twice or three times a year to St. Petersburg, where I created stage music for one theatre project and play it live on stage. It is based on Joyce's *Ulysses* and I play on objects and adapted instruments, like the "percussion violin". I also had a solo concert there, mainly on the marimba. This year I have played at a festival of contemporary music in Alma Ata, in Kazakhstan. On such long-distance journeys I'm limited as far as repertoire is concerned because things like Stockhausen or Lachenmann can't be played on borrowed instruments which always fail to work either technically or in terms of sound. When I took these pieces to St. Petersburg in 1993, I went by car, and two years later I tried the train and huge cases – I cut the stands in pieces so that they would fit into



cases and took around 70 kilos. They had to pick me up at the station and I had a kettle-drum and eight tom-toms for Xenakis loaned from the Philharmonic. Apart from my own repertoire I also played Bartók's Sonata (for two pianos and percussion) and in a theatre project that I toured with to Germany and then to Sochi.

In 2001 I went to teach and play at the music university in Winterthur in Switzerland and in Zurich, and not long ago I had a whole evening solo concert in Regensburg. This year in the summer I was in Poland on a competition jury and I gave a solo recital at the "Crossdrumming" Festival in Warsaw. Then I was in Münster for a great music theatre even called "hörensagen", and not long afterwards I went to Rome to play with Francoise Rivalland as part of a project by the composer Daniel Otte. The day before yesterday I got back from St. Petersburg. The Joyce was so successful that a kind of sequel has been produced, directed by Yuri Vasiliev again, and I play the marimba in it. But partly in a way that means it doesn't sound like a marimba...

There's no point in listing all of it, though, because playing isn't the main reason for more travels, and nor is teaching. I travel to learn something myself, to encounter other people and a different approach, a different perception of the world, and in places like Kazakhstan to meet traditional music in original form. I'm also interested in future co-operation, in the chance to invite people here and establish a friendship.

What do you do apart from playing?

I do courses with the Russian director Yuri Vassiliev. On the outside they are drama courses, but in reality they are about far more, about presentation on stage and the development of personality. About creativity and individuality in art. About the truth that each one of us has. I have taken over part of the training and developed training for musicians. I think it's something that is terribly neglected among musicians. They are alienated from their bodies, and don't know how to work with the body, and they are even sitting while playing. We teach them to engage themselves both physically and mentally like an actor in his role. Earlier I was there as an interpreter,



but Yuri kept on at me to become involved actively, and so today I teach as well. It is one of my important projects that takes up four months of my year. We do it partly at my farmhouse, partly in Switzerland, Germany and Austria, and sometimes in Poland.

My farm serves as a cultural farm. Together with the Janáček Academy in Brno and the Academy in Prague I organise courses for young percussionists and composers. They work in pairs and learn not just from the teachers but from each other, the percussionist from the composer and vice versa. Over one week the percussionist-composer pairs each create a piece that the percussionist presents at a concert on the final evening. And then there are lectures, concerts and discussions. Every summer I hold an international theatre-musical festival. Mainly theatre companies – fringe, avant-garde, improvised, and especially the kind that can be understood even without words; and music of the kind that is related to it or is what is known as "alternative". When we started, some time in 1995, we invited a lot of Russians, because at that time they were little known here although their theatre culture is at a very high standard. Actors from world-famous theatres like the Alexandrinski Theatre or Maly dramaticheskii Theatre were here, even if in small-scale productions. Back then I felt the need to present Russian culture

here, because everyone was looking west at the time and it was forgotten. It worked too: the programme is a peculiar mixture of stars and amateurs, and it is usually full and with a brilliant atmosphere. We also invited some theatre people from Russia as a way to help them. They were good but they couldn't travel and we had the chance to get money for their travelling expenses from the Soros Foundation.

Sometimes I also rent out the farm. Now for example a German theatre group is going to rehearse there for a tour in India.

What about teaching?

Even when I was first invited to teach in Munich I felt an affinity, an understanding with many of the students. They were people who ought to have had all the prerequisites for a creative approach, but it was under-developed in them because up until then they had only been taught to play notes. I had a tremendously good feeling in that living dialogue with them. And I hugely enjoyed all the seminars I've experienced since then at academy schools, I have come to realise lots of things through that work. It has been a learning experience for me too.

In 2000 I received a letter from the Music Faculty of the Academy in Prague asking me if I would come up with a plan for establish-

ing a percussion class. The situation there was such that I could offer a proposal for studies based on multipercussion, on solo play. That isn't very often done in the world but here, just by chance, the situation was favourable – AMU as a whole is focused on solo and chamber playing and orchestral play on percussion is already taught at a lower level, in conservatories. The plan was accepted and I was appointed at AMU, and able to found an entire discipline on my concept.

Apart from the main discipline we have a joint seminar where we study the history of percussion, listen to recordings, analyse and compare performances, often in the form of independent papers. I also teach improvisation – no boundless fantasising, but specific tasks, creative work with material, conscious development, and also that stage training I mentioned. Then I teach in what we call “sound studio”, the exploration of instruments and their possibilities, questions like “what is a tam-tam?” – getting away from the academic thinking in which every instrument had its stick and the place where it was struck. Liberation from all that. Another thing I emphasise is the “rhythm studio”. We look at rhythmic phenomena – various as it were mathematical charms and riddles, African rhythms and so on, but also purely at the art of playing together – precision, feeling the pulse, accelerating and slowing down together, engaging the body. Vladimír Vlasák leads the percussion ensemble, and students also play in the school orchestras. I'm now in my fourth year of working there.

Teaching has become my hobby. For my students I try to maintain the joy and energy that I know and feel when I teach as a guest professor abroad. Sometimes after a whole day teaching I am so charged up that I completely bubble over with impressions and can't get them out of my head. But that isn't always the rule. The situation of different countries is different and I often compare them. I feel the importance of having an overview, of giving students the chance to look into the real world, – I mean in an international context – and of getting to know the work of my colleagues (Dierstein, Sylvestre, Skoczyński, Froleyks). Or else of taking them to festivals, going abroad with them and expanding their perceptions. If I compare the situation here in percussion issues with the European East and with the West I find the Czech environment a little passive and uneducated: the students don't have that curiosity and yearning of East European students, who just devour you with questions, and they don't have the knowledge of the Western students, with whom – if it's their field – you can work on a higher level. Unfortunately, our students are still sometimes surprised that tin barrels,

flower vases, brake discs and so on are part of the percussionist's arsenal. They have simply never seen such things before. But unlike our Eastern colleagues, who compensate for ignorance with curiosity, Czechs try to compensate for the deficit with superiority and indifference. Sometimes I feel like some old wild “avant-gardist” who has to goad students into freedom, imagination, creativity, courage and experiments and give them power and energy, instead of them pulling me into their musical and sound world, their images, visions and ideas. Without curiosity there can be no creativity.

I see my main task as that of developing the personalities and outlook of these students. Without personality they won't become musicians, but only “music officials”.

It seems to be, although it may be an illusion.... You are attracted by post-communist countries, you have built your house and instruments with your own hands from discarded and used things; the sounds that you like are the less sonant sounds, not the sounds that are attractive at first sight, but more the strange, unsmart, inelegant sounds; for friends and collaborators you often choose unusual, eccentric, highly indi-

vidual people... doesn't all this have a common denominator? Your alternative attitude to this rational, disciplined, polite, but cold, polished Western civilisation?

Well, I've never actually thought about it like that. In my youth in Germany I felt myself to be alternative, that was my credo, and of course that was my direction.

I love Russia, that mixture of cultures and striking individual. And the love is returned and gives us energy – the public is always highly charged there. And there is a magic in that. There's no comparison with the public in the Czech Republic and absolutely none with the West. When you are alone on the stage in Russia, you feel everything that is coming from the auditorium, the atmosphere of the public and its energy. And in the sort of energy that I encounter there, every sound becomes an event. In Russia the public simply hasn't lost its curiosity. And it is for a few minutes like that on the stage that we live...

As far as instruments are concerned, you keep saying “less sonant”, and I don't agree with that. I like the less refined, the less ingratiating, yes, but I have plenty of sonant, very sonant instruments. And with instruments just as with people, I appreciate individual charac-



ter. In percussion I have always rejected the kind of dandies who play in dinner jackets and play pieces by Siegfried Fink, various arrangements alla academica, Haydn arranged for vibraphone and so forth. For me that was never appealing, more ridiculous actually... On the other hand arsenal as was the Jeff's, that endless jungle of peculiar sound objects charged with undreamed of possibilities... that fascinated me at first sight and fascinates me still.

TOMÁŠ ONDRŮŠEK

is one of the leading Czech percussionists. He was born in 1964 in Ústí nad Labem, but grew up in Germany (1968–90). He studied percussion in Nuremberg and Stuttgart (Prof. Klaus Tresselt), and became a member of the Stuttgart Percussion Ensemble. In 1990 he won a Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes, and used the scholarship to go and study in Prague. Since then he has lived in Bohemia.

In the same year he started to give solo performances in many European cities (Munich, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Prague, Nuremberg, Stuttgart, Frankfurt and elsewhere) and at international festivals (Avantgarda St. Petersburg, Zeitk-länge Berlin, Warszawska jesień, Marathon Praha and others). His repertoire includes the whole range of key works for solo percussion. He teaches on various international performance courses in contemporary music and has himself founded the international courses for percussionists and composers in Trstěnice; he sits on the juries of international performance competitions. He collaborates with the pianist and composer Siegfried Weckenmann (percussion and piano duo) and is a regular percussionist in the Agon Ensemble.

Tomáš Ondrůšek is a many-sided musician, who invents new instruments and has the knack of getting surprising music out of all kinds of other objects. In Prague he has presented the Czech premiere of Lachenmann's solo composition Interieur I and Xenakis's Psappha, and he has been the first Czech to perform Xenakis's Rebonds, Stockhausen's Zyklus and Feldman's King of Denmark. He has also inspired a number of pieces written specially for him.

Since 2001 he has taught at the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and heads the percussion class.

Tomáš Ondrůšek with Martin Smolka

JAROMÍR HAVLÍK

miloslav kabeláč and percussion

Miloslav Kabeláč was featured in the Profiles supplement to Czech Music 2/2004. Much of his legacy consists of pieces for percussion or with prominent and major parts for percussion, and in this category Kabeláč's work is exceptional in the context of classical music internationally, and not just the Czech tradition.

Miloslav Kabeláč (1908–1979) showed a serious interest in percussion from the very beginning of his career as a composer. From the beginning, too, this interest was associated with another of Kabeláč's interests, also relatively undeveloped in the Czech music world – fascination with the music of non-European cultures. While still at Conservatory he had already acquired a "better than average" knowledge of this music through Alois Hába, who was for some time his teacher. Another of Kabeláč's teachers, Erwin Schulhoff, also broadened the young composer's horizons beyond the traditional limited focus of thought on percussion. Kabeláč later remembered an important initial stimulus that increased his interest in percussion instruments: it was the performance by the Indian dance and instrumental ensemble Uday Shankar in Prague in 1935. We can cite the relevant passage in Kabeláč's commentary, published in 1970: "In 1935 (to be exact the 17th and 18th of

March 1935, author's note) the famous Indian dance and instrumental Uday Shankar ensemble came to Prague. The impression the performance made on me was so strong that I didn't just walk about as if dazed for a few days, but consciously and subconsciously tested out and re-evaluated my entire musical development. I found lessons and enrichment in the music of the ensemble. Including the richness of the percussion and the way it was exploited, musically, acoustically and technically exploitation. All at once our way of using percussion instruments seemed to me barbarous. The fact that the only thing we know how to do with percussion is to create an overwhelming crescendo and then crown it with the cymbals.

My interest in percussion instruments grew deeper. I became more and more aware that percussion instruments were not just a rumble, sound or effects. That you could entrust music to them, that they were real musical instruments. The results of this interest and

Eight Inventions, Op. 45, 3. Recitativo

ensemble included it in repertoire and in a series of outstanding performances (not only at concerts, but in various ballet arrangements) won renown for the composer, the work, and of course itself. Kabeláč commented on the writing of "Eight Inventions" in the following terms:

"The actual writing of the piece wasn't too hard or long, but the thinking period before starting the piece was far from easy. It was all about the question of whether to write studies for percussion as a technically instrumental or technically compositional experiment. In the end I decided for a third way – to write music – I repeat MUSIC – for percussion instruments. Today this seems like a simple, even obvious decision, but at the time of its realisation it didn't seem simple and easy at all. And to write a piece with distinctive musical content of its own and immediate musical impact – that raised other questions. What kind of music to write? How to adapt it to percussion instruments and how to get the percussion instruments to adapt to it? First I had to sort out the instrumental resources of the group, and assess them. And then in that traditional sorting out to find instruments and groupings that would correspond to my own temperament, my ideas of sound and my compositional aims. That meant thinking out what these instruments could offer me or my music and what I or my music could ask of them. Trying to make sense of these two contradictory standpoints I looked for and finally found a single approach – my solution. At the beginning the index of useful ideas that came out of trying to put together the two elements (composer-ensemble) was limited. But gradually it grew larger and longer until in the end I was sorry when I had to stop new ideas coming and coming in order for the piece to be completed with a reasonable duration and form.

The music for Eight Inventions – as a composition for percussion instruments – could be classified into three groups depending on specific creative approach: 1) Music that was typical – based exclusively on the characteristic properties of percussion instruments and corresponding to them (Scherzo, in part the Giubiloso and Danza), 2) Music that has been modified – adaptation of the primary musical design to percussion instruments and vice versa (Corale, Giubiloso, Lamentoso, Danza, Aria, Diabolico), and 3) Transposed (transformed) music – transposing (transforming) a different musical way of thinking (e.g. vocal) into the technical and acoustic range of possibilities of percussion (Recitativo, partially Corale and Lamentoso). The musical content of Eight Inventions is clear from the names of the individual inventions which – even though they were formulated only after the composition was complete – sufficiently characterise it."

Eight Inventions was not an experiment, but the next logical link in the chain of Kabeláč's creative development. Each invention has its own precisely thought out form, expression and sound character – and also its characterising subtitle: *Corale, Giubiloso, Recitativo, Scherzo, Lamentoso, Danza, Aria, Diabolico*. The titles themselves testify to a relationship with tradition. The author tries to exploit the possibilities of play on percussion instruments to the full. The piece presupposed six players and the instruments used are taken from the arsenal that Les Percussions de Strasbourg had at the start of its activities:

2 xylophones, 2 vibraphones, marimba, bells, glockenspiel, 4 kettledrums (2 with a pedal), 7 hanging cymbals (various diameters from 26 cm to 72 cm), 2 normal cymbals, 5 tam-tams (different sizes), crotali, 3 groups with 3 tom-toms, 2 groups each with 2 bongos and 1 bongo, 2 small drums (with strings and

without strings), 1 snare drum, 2 large drums, 5 temple-blocks of 12 Thai gongs. A large selection of sticks went with this instrumental profile.

The duration of the piece is ca 19 minutes – the shortest is *Diabolico* (1'45"), the longest *Corale* (2'45").

The piece is written down in Kabeláč's individual notation system and in a second grid (see illustration). The abundant instrumental resources of the Strasbourg ensemble offered the composer considerable possibilities in terms of combination. The range of tuneable (or relatively tuneable) instruments, and of melodically or quasi-melodically useable instruments (gongs, hung cymbals) was expanded. Of course there were problems with tuning – especially the Thai gongs that were tuned to tone systems other than European diatonic. The composer offered the following basic musical characterisations of the individual parts of "Eight Inventions":

CORALE – inspired by Gregorian chant. "Modified" or "transformed" type of music (in the sense of the composer's typology, see above)

GIUBILOSO – a sound and colour study. Typical and modified type of music.

RECITATIVO – and attempt to transfer vocal melodic to percussion instruments. Transformed type of music.

SCHERZO and DANZA – rhythmic and metric themes. "Typical" music, also partly "modified".

LEMENTOSO – inspired by the music of the Pacific Ocean. "Modified" music, in part also "transformed".

ARIA – special use of serial techniques. "Modified" music.

DIABOLICO – the final part – is an almost literal citation of the introductory **CORALE**. It precisely follows its internal arrangement, and is based on the same musical material – the final passage is created by a doubled

tempo and the addition of a long coda, in which the sound is reduced purely to rhythm. "Modified" type of music.

The overall structure of the work is linear, which means that the position of harmony is rather strange: sequences of vertical chord structures do not appear here, since the frequent use of non-tuneable percussion prevents the construction of chord forms. In most cases Kabeláč uses specially constructed modal structures.

In *Corale* long melodic phrases like the lines of Gregorian chants are build out of the initial ten-tone mode on three melodic instruments with precise tuning (two vibraphones and a marimba). The arrangement of the melodic lines is thoroughly non-periodic (on the model of Gregorian chant). For most of the time the marimba takes the solo part, while the vibraphones provide "counterpoint". The piece has a two-section A A' form (the second part is a variation on the first part and the principle of return is maintained).

Giubiloso has a relatively strict, rationally conceived structure: it is based on two four-note series. The first of these is employed in vertical, horizontal and combined form, and the second serves simply to model the "melodic" horizontals and at the same time to create a kind of ostinato base.

Recitativo is primarily about the parameter of rhythm with timbre (although here too an artificial mode is the basic material). Two tones of this mode are presented in successive intervals and create a kind of sound background to a monologue by a solo rhythmic part created by three tom-toms, two bongos and later a snare drum as well. The whole movement takes the form of a monolithic crescendo wave and only at the culminating point does the original rhythmic solo line branch out into a wider plane through the entrance of other instruments, while at the same time the "melodic" line of modal formations becomes more "pregnant", beginning to create a counterpoint instead of the previous "background".

Scherzo is based on four six-tone modes, the material of the first three running through in each case only once to be immediately transposed into various intervals with a clear expansive tendency. The material of the fourth mode is used in the central section in a similar way as in *Giubiloso* – i.e. it is initially presented in components (1 note, 2 notes, 3 notes and so on), and then these are used to build vertical structures – harmonies that "rotate" in inversions.

The basis of *Lamentoso* is a six-tone mode, which is used melodically in one part. Around this repeating melodic-"tonal" skeleton (transposed to different octaves), other tones of the mode accumulate with the function of rhythmic and timbre drones. The whole piece creates the impression of an "oriental stereo-type" in which "time stands still".

Danza: as in the *Scherzo* it is rhythm and metre that dominate here. The mode is the

same as that of *Recitativo*. The movement has a "traditional" three-part form with reprise (ABA).

Aria is founded on an eight-tone mode, while the negative elements of the mode (the remaining 4 toned fulfilling the twelve-tone chromatic) are fixed as a drone. In framework this is a twelve-tone piece. The second part of the melodic phrases and at the same time the second part of the form is built on the inversion of the eight-tone sequence and its transposition by tritone.

Diabolico is a reprise of the introductory *Corale* with only small changes and at double tempo. The solo part is doubled by an octave, and the counterpoints drop out.

The rhythm-metric element is complicated and not autonomous in all the movements; especially in places where traditional melodic structures predominate, the rhythm and metre is adjusted to the needs of the melodic phrases. Rhythm and metre are relatively the most independent in *Scherzo*, where passages of odd and even metrical arrangement alternate – the number of even patterns varies, but there is always only one (three-beat) odd pattern. In *Scherzo* the complexity and richness of the rhythm-metric element is the result of the aggregation of several relatively independent layers, so the rhythm and metre also have a clear role in creating expression here. In the other pieces the composer treats the organisation of the rhythm-metrical element quite freely. Only in *Giubiloso* does he use a kind of organising principle – augmentation and diminution: the two sequences used here alternate in complete, half, quarter and eighth values.

Special attention is devoted to rhythm in *Recitativo*, where a pre-established algorithm governs the sequences of rhythmic groups of the solo voice.

The form was not chosen beforehand, as the composer said himself. Nonetheless, undoubtedly under the influence of a natural and strong anchorage in the European tradition, Kabeláč did not avoid the application of a number of archetypal principles of form:

A) a variational two-part structure (or perhaps more the variation type aa' – typical for "bar", *lais*, *lejch* etc.) This type appears in *Corale*, *Aria* and *Diabolico*

B) a variation chain of type a a' a" a'" a"" and so forth – in parts of *Giubiloso*, and *Recitativo*. This formal type also appears in oriental music.

C) a three-part closed type of structure a b a: *Lamentoso*, *Scherzo*, *Danza*.

The common feature of the first and third groups is symmetry. Where the composer does not use symmetry, he at least employs related principles, for example the mutual correspondence of the sections at beginning and end (mainly an introduction and coda), which are in some cases the same (*Corale*, *Lamentoso*, *Aria*, *Recitativo*). Elsewhere the coda balances out certain disproportions in the overall structure of the form.

The premiere of *Eight Variations* took place on the 22nd of April 1965 in the Théâtre Municipal in Strasbourg together with Milhaud's "Fiesta" and Stravinsky's "Soldier's Tale". Kabeláč's work was performed in the arrangement for ballet, to which the composer gave his assent after a certain amount of hesitation. In Czechoslovakia it was first premiered on the 21st of May 1967 in Prague at the Prague Spring Festival, by Les Percussions de Strasbourg and in its concert form.

Eight Ricercars

The success of *Eight Inventions* inspired the composer to create more pieces for the French ensemble. In 1966–67 he wrote a kind of sequel to the *Eight Inventions* in the form of an analogically structured eight-part cycle *Osm ricercarů pro bicí nástroje [Eight Ricercars for Percussion Instruments] op. 51*. In the spring of 1971 Kabeláč made some small changes to the composition. The name was not a direct reference to the traditional meaning of the form of *ricercare* as an imitatively treated several part musical movement, but to the original etymological meaning of the Italian verb "ricercare" = to seek, test, and by extension to improvise on a musical instrument. This was the character of the first documented *ricercars* (and in the same way the *toccatas*, *fantasias* and *preludes*) from the beginning of the 16th century.

The basic conception of the *Eight Ricercars* is similar (but by no means identical) to the conception of *Eight Inventions*. The subtitle of the work, "for one to six players" in itself brings an element that is not represented in the *Inventions*, i.e. variability of the number of players in the different sections (movements) of the composition. Compared to *Eight Inventions*, *Eight Ricercars* has an even stronger accent on the aspect of the technical elements of play on various percussion instruments, both on the standard ones and on those that might be called "ethnic" (the legendarily diverse instrument resources of the ensemble had been growing in the meantime, as Kabeláč knew). Another important element of the compositional design in *Eight Ricercars* was the multiple application of the principle of dialogue, as we shall see below. While the work is conceived as a whole, in this case the composer conceded the possibility of independent performance of the individual pieces or various choices made from the cycle. The order of the individual movements is looser this time and determined more "mechanically" by the number of players (from one to six), with the proviso that when the entire cycle was played (which the composer definitely preferred), the recommended order was 8-1-3-6-4-2-7-5.

Ricercare no. 1 is written for just one player and only one group of instruments, i.e. three bongos of different sizes (the alternative of three Chinese tom-toms is allowable), played with the hands, without sticks. The composer employs all kinds of alternative modes of

Schéma de la forme

mouvements: 1 - 5
intermédiaires: a - d

Durée

1. (mouvement)	2	4' 45"	2" - 3"
a (intermédiaire)		33"	3" - 5"
2.	2	4' 10"	5" - 10"
b		33"	2" - 3"
3.	2	5' 15"	2" - 3"
c		33"	5" - 10"
4.	2	4' 40"	3" - 5"
d		33"	2" - 3"
5.	2	4' 10"	

musique 2 25' 20"

pauses 25" - 40"

Notation
1 sec. (+ 20 M.M.)
2 cm valable pour tous les mouvements et intermédiaires

8th Symphony "Antiphonies", Op. 54 (composer's manuscript - excerpt)

striking, and so achieves a remarkably differentiated range of timbres in the music. Naturally there is a vibrant variability of rhythms and metrical patterns including vividly changeable dynamics. In the structure of the movement there are strong elements of symmetry, inverse vertical and horizontal relations, and a discernible element of modified reprise in the overall outline of the form.

Ricercare no. 2 also reckons with only player (exceptionally the piece may be performed by two), this time playing two different and internally further divided groups of metalophones: the first group consists of two triangles, three hung cymbals and three tam-tams (in all cases of different sizes), and the second group of five gongs of different sizes. The two groups are strongly contrasting in terms of timbre, and the second group is homogenous. A wide range of sticks – metal, wooden, felt and rubber – are also prescribed. A diverse and changeable timbre is the basis of the compositional operations, which in macrostructure take a rondo outline as starting-point (here a prominent motif played on the gong group, reminiscent in melodic outline of the opening motif of the *Dies irae*, has the function of a returning "refrain"). The first more diverse group provides the variable sections.

Ricercare no. 3 is for four (or possibly three) players, with the instruments again divided into two basic groups. The first group is made up of tuned (melodic) instruments – a vibraphone and a marimba, and the second of bells and a small drum. The presence of the tuned instruments allowed the composer to operate in detail with pitch – and so with

characteristic artificial modes. These are treated with detailed application of all kinds of symmetries and other proportional relations on all levels of the structure. The piece has a three-part form (the second and third parts are de facto variations of the opening parts, with a modified return).

Ricercare no. 4 is also for four players, who together play two large groups of instruments: the first group consists of a marimba and three temple-blocks, and the second group of four bongos and four cymbals (all of different sizes). The "pitch algorithm" of the second group is unchanging throughout the piece – hits to the bongo and cymbals are in the stable sequence 4-1-3-2 (according to size of instrument, 4 = biggest – 1 = smallest) and only the rhythmic and metric models change. The marimba expounds a consistently three-note melodic motif, which is concurrently "imitated" in all kinds of ways by the trio of temple-blocks. Thus in both groups a single stable model is development and the result of the mutual interpenetration and different kinds of interference between the groups is highly effective.

Ricercare no. 5 is for five (or six) players and offers yet another formulation of the principle of dialogue between two groups of instruments, one of which represents the melancholic elements (vibraphone – at the end accompanied ad libitum unison by marimba as well) and the second the rhythmic and timbre element (three hung cymbals and three tom-toms, replaceable by bongo played with sticks and hands). In the melodic line a ten-tone modal phrase, to which the rhythmic algorithm of the second group is applied, is

moulded in all kinds of different ways. The arched form of this *ricercare* has a concentrated and exciting crescendo that represents the expressive culmination of the whole work (this was certainly one of the reasons why the composer proposed that when the whole cycle was played the fifth *ricercare* should be placed at the end as an effective finale).

The final three *ricercars* (nos 6, 7, 8) are composed for the full contingent of six players.

Ricercare no. 6 is defined by an acoustically homogenous set of six gongs of different sizes (or alternatively six tam-tams or six cymbals), joined at the dynamic climax by a *lastra* (the well-known stage "thunder" – a thin tin sheet struck by a stick or just vibrated) and a large drum. The piece is constructed as a convex gradation arch with a quiet beginning and a quiet fading at the end. Here the key role aside from rhythm is played by timbre (especially the interference of a soft tremolo on the gongs).

Ricercare no. 7 foregrounds only the melodic percussion instruments – a marimba, vibraphone and xylophone, supported by the "bass drone" of kettledrums and the ostinato of a pair of bells and glockenspiel. At some points in the melodic formations there is a suggestion of the sequence of the *Stabat Mater*. The form of the movement is once again symmetrical on the principle of closed three-part structure.

Ricercare no. 8 is technically extremely difficult, especially in terms of the rhythmic co-ordination of the players, who together play the following range of instruments: bells, temple-block, three differently sized large

tam-tams, two large drums of different sizes, a small drum and a snare drum. The following instructions written into the score by the composer form the best description:

"Each part has its own particular tempo, independent of the tempi of the other parts. In the bells part the dynamic rise and fall is combined with long, successive accelerations and decelerations. In the other parts the rise and fall is only dynamic. The notation of the parts in mutual order is approximate, and only meant as a guideline for the players. The diachronic course of the bells part is written in seconds (and for that reason there is no numbering of bars). This facilitates the accelerandi and ritenuti already mentioned and orientation in ensemble play. The important thing is that the climax of the piece should be achieved roughly in the 71st–72nd second."

This *ricercare* is conceived with the use of the principle of aleatorics despite the precise graphic fixation of the separate parts. The bells have the key role, and are also the only bearer of the melodic element. Their melodic phrases (like the melodic phrases in the 5th and 6th *ricercars*) derived from the opening clarinet theme in Kabeláč's 6th *Symphony*. This motif then creates a kind of modernistically formulated "idée fixe" for the whole work.

Eight Ricercars were premiered on the 24th of July 1976 in the French town of Albi, performed by Les Percussions de Strasbourg. The whole performance lasted roughly 20 minutes. The programme also included Kabeláč's op. 45 – *Eight Inventions*. It is worth noting that the composer did not attend the premiere, because the totalitarian regime did not allow him to leave Czechoslovakia and travel to France.

8th Symphony "Antiphonies"

At the time of the premiere of *Eight Ricercars*, Kabeláč's 8th *Symphony* "Antiphonies", op. 54 (1969–70) – the third work inspired by Les Percussions de Strasbourg, was already complete and being premiered. The 8th *Symphony* was very unconventional in instrumentation: a coloratura soprano, mixed choir (divided into two groups), percussion instruments and organ. The percussion group presupposed once again six players and the following instruments: marimba, xylophone, vibraphone, group of tubular bells, set of campanelle, 1 temple-block, 1 small drum, 4 bongos, 4 tom-toms, 1 large drum, 3 kettledrums, 2 triangles (of different sizes), 4 hung cymbals (diameters 26, 35, 46, 58 cm), 3 gongs, 5 tam-tams.

The symphony was also unconventional in form, being divided into nine parts – five movements and four intermedia, structured in accordance with a solid logical order, proportionality and symmetry. The axis of the work (in terms of structure and meaning) is the third – the longest movement. The inter-

media, linking up the different movements, correspond to each other exactly in duration and musically, and differ only in having opposite dynamic course.

The scheme of the macrostructure of the 8th *Symphony* is shown on previous page.

The basic structuring principle is derived from the numbers 2, 3, 4 (= 2+2) and 7 (= 3+4). It is present in the texts used and consistently applied to the musical material of the work.

In terms of meaning the 8th *Symphony* is intended as a warning against the acute danger of the decline of all positive values, including the key values of humanity. This was immediately connected with the political situation in Czechoslovakia at the time when the work was composed (the occupation by the armies of the Warsaw Pact in August 1968, the degrading treaty with the Soviet Union recognising the occupation of our state by the Soviet forces, social apathy in a hopeless situation, the threatened loss of the spiritual integrity of the nation).

The composer chose the texts for the piece from the Bible – they are formulae of a ritual character, with great symbolic resonance. *Mene tekell ufarsin, Amen, Hosanna, Alelujah*. The musical treatment corresponds to the texts, deliberately emphasising their magical ritual quality. In the context of the Czech tradition, the use of this primeval function of music in a symphonic work is unique and extraordinary. The musical expression draws on the idioms of shouts, chanting, exalted intoning and monotonous recitation supported by the interjections of the instrumental element. Evocative images of suffering and destruction alternate with states of apathy and only later does a flash of hope rise up from the depths of the storm, so that the work ends as an embrace of that hope. It is a conclusion essentially positive, even if strongly marked by the suffering from which it comes. In the culminating part of the 3rd movement we even find the suggestion of a quote from the Gregorian sequence *Dies irae*.

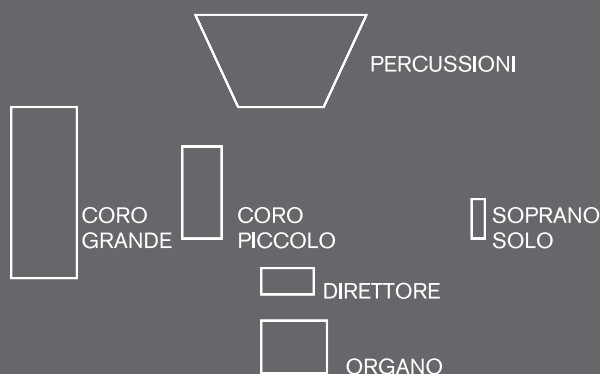
Miloslav Kabeláč always respected the symphony in its traditional constitutive parameters: apart from the natural *instrumental – ensemble* character of the musical expression, these parameters are:

- 1) at the formal level *cyclical form*,
- 2) at the level of meaning-content a high degree of *universality of the intellectual content*, including an essential tendency to the dramatic treatment of the subject,
- 3) a *monumental tendency at all levels of the work* – formal, acoustic-spatial, in expression and in content.

Despite all kinds of innovative interventions, these parameters remain fundamentally untouched in all Kabeláč's symphonies. Other parameters, petrified by tradition, succumb to innovative transformations of various degrees of intensity and vitality.

The 8th *Symphony* was also conceived with an eye to the specific space of St. Paul's Cathedral in Strasbourg, where the premiere was to be presented. On the composer's instructions the performers were located in four different places in the cathedral – the organ at the back, Les Percussions de Strasbourg to the front by the altar, to the left a large and small mixed choir and to the right (in the pulpit) the solo soprano. Hence the subtitle of the work "Antiphonies". The conductor stood in the centre, facing the percussion ensemble and the choir.

Location of Performers:



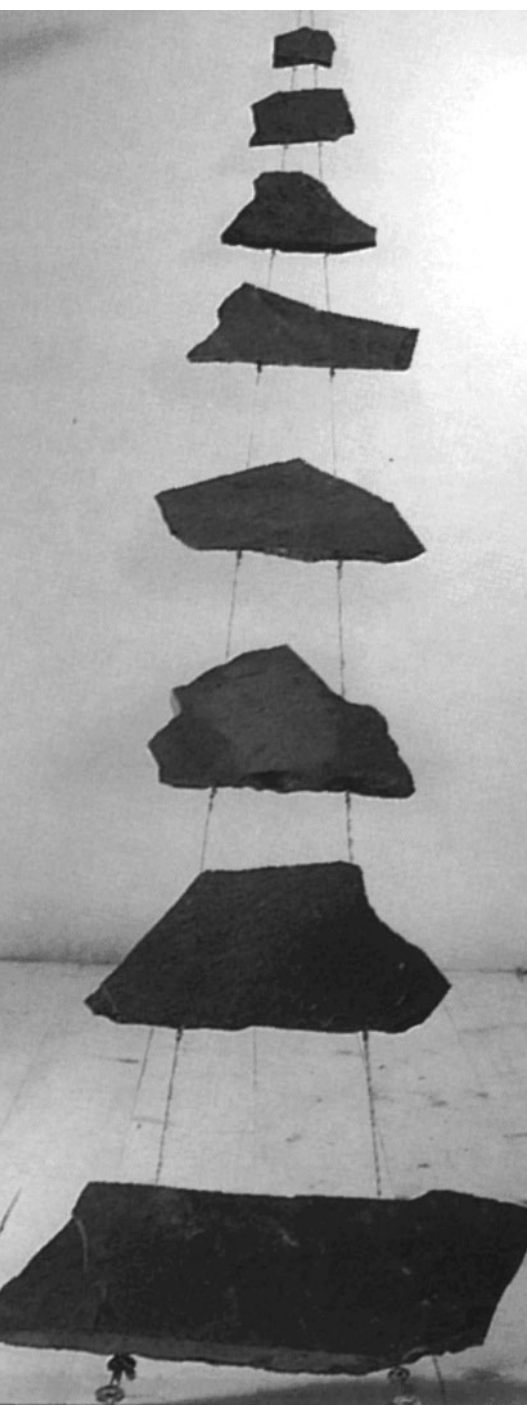
The work was premiered in Strasbourg at an evening devoted to Kabeláč's music ("Hommage à Miloslav Kabeláč" – together with *Eight Inventions*, two organ *Fantasias*, op. 32 and four *Preludes for organ*, op. 48) on the 15th of June 1971. As was also to be the case five years later with the premiere of *Eight Ricercars*, Kabeláč was unable to attend the premiere of his 8th *Symphony* because the communist authorities refused to provide him with the necessary travel documents. The Czechoslovak premiere of the

8th *Symphony* took place almost 13 years later, on the 12th of January 1984 in Prague, when the composer was no longer among the living.

With his 8th *Symphony* the composer reached the furthest point of his lifelong innovative exploration of the possibilities of the symphony. The fact that on this journey he also arrived at a culminating point in the use of emancipated groups of percussion instruments in a primarily symphonic work is just one of the logical results of Kabeláč's musical temperament and his lifelong creative direction.

martin janiček's strange new layers

PETR FERENC



A precise definition of sound art is obviously impossible, since it is used by different kinds of public to mean different expressions of acoustic creation. But maybe we can find a few fixed points. Sound is one element in many areas of visual art, for example objects, installations or videos. The birth of a new (or otherwise unusual) sound source, often with a conceptualist background (which is why we can speak of the beginnings of sound art as going back to the Futurists) is more important than composing for the emergent object-instrument. Many works are site-specific installations giving out sound in response to the events in a given place (whether visitors or natural elements). If recordings are actually made at all (in cases where the works have the character of musical instruments) in most cases these are improvised rather than composed.

As examples of sound art we might mention a number of realisations by Christian Marclay (video *Guitar Drag* (2000) – the “lynching” of an electric guitar tied to a moving truck), Terje Isungseto’s experiments on ice instruments or the work of that tireless creator of new instruments and installations driven by the author’s set of numerous special effects, CO Caspara.

Sound art is when sound is a fundamental part of an object or installation, but it ought to be something more than just sound – although I realise that some projects are just sound, but for example distributed through space. What are important are spaces, objects, but above all new sound experiences, says one of the few representatives of sound art in the Czech Republic, Martin Janíček (1961). During his studies the former drummer became aware of a way to put together his two loves, music and fine art, and began to create sound installations, sculptures or new musical instruments.

I listened to lots of industrial projects and experimental music. I came to AVU (the Academy of Visual Arts) late – not until 1990. In Milan Knížák’s studio the opportunities were open on every side, I began to make bells from



various materials, and that finally got me on the road to work with sound. At the same time the music-art festivals were starting up in the monastery in Plasy and I did installations there from the beginning and met lots of people.

At the beginning of the nineties the Benedictine monastery in Plasy became the venue of international symposia on music, visual art and their combinations, in a meditative atmosphere enhanced by the monastery buildings, the brilliant and curious work of the architect Jan Blažej Santini. Among the numerous participants let us mention Tim Hodgkinson, Jim Meneses, Tibor Semző, ROVA Saxophone Quartet, Rajesh Mehta, and Keiji Haine, and among Czechs, the drummer Pavel Fajt, the guitar experimenter Pavel Richter, Orloj snivců [The Horologe of Dreamers] (an improvisation group around Jaroslav and Michal Kořán and their remarkable instrument-installation made of dozens of metal rods; Janíček was at that time a member of the group) or the contemporary classical music orchestra Agon. The Hermit foundation – publisher of four “documentary” compact disks – was behind the very diverse programme, which won more recognition abroad than in the Czech Republic. The key personality was Miloš Vojtěchovský, former harmonium player with the group Mozart K. – a collective around the highly individual “meditating” songwriter Oldřich Janota.

I knew Miloš Vojtěchovský from before in this country. When he returned in 1990 and launched this activity, it was a confirmation for me that I wasn’t a complete outsider. At schools I had been won of the few people to be interested in anything like that. And suddenly Jo Truman turned up here and lots of people from all over the world and I realised it was a normal discipline in the arts – that was a terrific encouragement for me.

EAST OF THE NEST

The greater part of Janíček’s activities take place abroad. He has participated in many group festivals and exhibitions in Europe



In this country we have had the opportunity to encounter Janíček's installations for example at the very popular collective exhibition Hnízda her [Nests of Games]. It was organised for the Rudolfinum Gallery four years with numerous colleagues by Petr Nikl, a member of the most important art group of the eighties, Tvrdohlaví [The Stubborn] (important, among other things, because it was the first officially declared group of artists after almost twenty years of political prohibition of such associations). Nests of Games was a real flood of interactive toys, environments, sound "excretors" and other works designed to draw attention to the "less serious" aspects of art and bring some excitement into the sometimes rigidly dignified halls of the most prestigious of Czech galleries. It was a "hundred-percent" success and is much remembered to this day.

der between new age and minimalism.

Four of the samples (one solo) are devoted to Singing Plywood, a sound source that has a deep, muffled buzz.

Singing Plywood is an ordinary, three-millimetre panel of plywood, which has not been heat- or water-treated in any way. I strung two strings across it, which it stretches, functioning like a resonator. You can play with a bow on the main or the transverse string, and you can drum on the plywood with hands or sticks. The recordings are from the exhibition Tvary tónů [Forms of Tones] in the Mánes Gallery (curator Radek Horáček), where we shut ourselves in overnight. In some places you can hear the sluiceways gurgling under the gallery floor.

Twice you can year the tin Bows – five two-metre "weapons" stretching the string. When plucked they have a sound a little like a rumbling (but really thunderous, and with a longer resonance), but when played with a metal bow they vibrate almost unpleasantly high.

The Barrel Dulcimer made of the drum of a cement mixer with strings stretched across it (on display at Nests of Games) can be played either by striking the strings, which produces

(often in Scandinavia and the Baltic Republics) and in the USA, where in 2002 he was artist in residence at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. Here he participated with Michael Delia and M. Northam in the Experimental Intermedia Festival, contributing to the final installation with multi-channel sound and video projection. His sound installation for a botanical garden in Tallin in Estonia was more intimate – six bells made of different materials that were hung on an arched bridge over a stream. Hanging from their clappers were wooden floats, which rang the bells as they were buffeted by the strong current. It is one of many installations created for a specific location and non-transferable (another is a string stretched across a corridor of the Plasy monastery and using the apse as a kind of bridge).

Site-specific is fun and exciting, because it is completely different from work for already "dead" gallery space. Each time you find yourself in new conditions, which are always on a bit of a knife edge. You have to tackle all kinds of problems – you are starting from scratch, but that is far more inspiring. I like to get interested in the history of a place and I think that ideally the work should respond to all of that.

On the basis of Nests of Games Petr Nikl has been invited to do the main exhibition for the Czech Republic at Expo 2005 in Aichi in Japan. He produced a few sketches and sent them into the competition. When he found there was real interest, he invited a group of people to join him – the people who had been closest to him in the Rudolfinum – Ondřej Smeykal, Petr Lorenc, Milan Cais, Jaroslav Kořán and me. The overall conception lays the emphasis on interaction without the use of technology and includes acoustic and optic objects – for example big kaleidoscopes. You could say that the theme is the wisdom of nature.

CATALOGUE

Let us now take a look at the "most musical" part of Janíček's work. What is so far his only CD Katalog [Catalogue] (at own expense, 1996) comes with a booklet of photographs of individual installations and contains twelve sound samples of seven realisations and their sound possibilities in improvisations in which the author is assisted by kindred spirits Jaroslav and Michal Kořán, the Norwegian sound artist and singer Siri Austen, and in one sample Vojtěch and Irena Havel – a pair of composers who play stringed instruments and are concerned mainly with music on the bor-



a sound somewhere between oriental thrumming instruments and detuned piano (next to which the dulcimer was placed in on improvisation), or by striking the drum itself – which gives a pronounced, slightly husky metal sound with a long resonance.

One interesting sample is the sound recording from the production Bez data [Undated] created in the course of a dance workshop at the Archa Theatre in 1995 by the choreographer Frank van de Ven and stage designer Miloš Šejn. Here Janíček played on a thirty-metre string stretched across the auditorium of the theatre. The first track on Katalog is a solo piece of the slate "xylophone" – the Lithophone.

FRIEND OF THE STRING

Obviously Martin Janíček has a weakness for stringed and hanging instruments but regards them as objects designed for improvisation (often in interaction with the public) and not for exact compositional work.

But I could imagine something like visual scores – they strike me as an exciting combination of composing, improvisation and visual art. For me that's an inspiring combination. The way in which you can read a drawing or sketch is interesting. The piece Odras 808 [Rebound 808], which I did for Michal Rataj and his Premedici Radiocusticy [Premed Radio-acoustics] (Composer Michal Rataj is the author of a radio programme called Radiocustica, which each month presents the premiere of what is usually an electro-acoustic composition – author's note), had a score – a coloured sketch. The piece is made up of two

recordings, and the way they are linked up is captured graphically. One of the recordings was made in a water reservoir in Porto – the echoed sounds of a round space – and it was mixed with a recording of strings I made with Max MSP in the USA.

We don't often encounter Janíček's work at concerts, because he doesn't like repeating himself much. The number of concerts he gives depends on whether he happens to have discovered a new instrument.

I try to limit concerts to fewer instruments and try to get the most out of them. Some instruments – for example the plywood – have lots of expressive possibilities, but others have less. Last year I played in the National gallery at the Vítání jara [Welcome to Spring] event. I had eight wooden, 2–3 metre-long planks placed in a fan and sensors-mikes fixed on them and Jan Dufek, the creator of the EO laptop project, processed their sound on computer. For the Expo project I have started to modify these planks some more (thinning them and so on) and this time they will be hung. I really enjoy a little sculptural work with material. The craft angle of things appeals to me. When you think up something and have other people make it, you lack the direct contact. .

Despite his fondness for a craft-sculptural approach to making sound, Janíček is not an opponent of modern technology. In addition to video projections and multi-channel sound or the use of photocells (a circle of pictures equipped with sensors linked up to a sound source stimulated by the movement of visitors), he has an interest – as yet still passive – in the Internet.

It's a very good partner. It speeds everything up. People get to know who's doing what. But it also has real-time possibilities. Someone doing DIY records it... Not long ago I saw a web site on which Chris Cutler called on people from all round the world to send him something at a given moment. And for example I heard someone working in a carpenter's workshop – that was a real sound art piece! That tinkering about – the sounds of an activity that you can't see and identify, develops a terrifically strange dimension. It is like when you separate sound from film, and then you can find strange new layers in it.

And so now we're back with craftsmanship, contact with material, getting the form to emerge through manual work. This is an activity that runs through Janíček's life and work like an existential necessity and permanent source of inspiration.

You can't just make objects all the time. And maybe when working at home or in the garden a strange link-up happens. A marvellous experience – you rake leaves, you make various piles and suddenly you have the sense that it's a matter of different sound nodes – or on the contrary sources of sound. You are in space and in some places it is thick and in others empty. It would be good to realise something similar using multi-channel sound projection. Linked up with the material of the leaves it appealed to me tremendously.

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music in the domains of český krumlov, or the secret of the chateau depository

GABRIELA NĚMCOVÁ

Český Krumlov is a noble South Bohemian town, one of the most visited in the Czech Republic. A Czech national cultural monument, in 1992 it was included in the UNESCO List of World Natural and Cultural Heritage, and the walls of its chateau hide many secrets of musical history, not least the history of representation of music in the fine and applied arts.

For architectural splendour, cultural tradition and sheer scale, the state castle and chateau in Český Krumlov must count as one of the most important of Central European monuments. Its glories illustrate its historical development from the 14th to the 19th century. It is one of the largest chateau complexes in Central Europe, and the second largest in the Czech Republic after Prague Castle.

The Lords of Krumlov

The original Gothic castle, which bore the name of Krumlov (a name probably derived from the Latin *castrum Crumnau* or Old German *Crumbenowe*, which means place on a crooked meadow or plain), was evidently founded in the mid-13th century. At that time the South Bohemian town of Krumlov (the adjective “Český”, or “Czech”, which is today part of the name, started to be used only from the 15th century), was the seat of Vítěk of Krumlov, founder of the line of the Lords of Krumlov whose sobriquet was the same as

that of their seat. According to legend, Vítěk II was one of the heirs of Vítěk of Prčice (who died in 1194), a member of one of the most important oldest Czech noble clans, the Vítkovci, who divided his huge family lands between his five sons. The sons then founded lines named after their seats – the Lords of Hradec, the Lords of Krumlov, the Lords of Rožmberk, the Lords of Landštejn and Třeboň and the Lords of Sezimovo Ústí.

The Rožmberks

The last Lord of Krumlov was Vok, who died in 1302 childless, and so the Castle of Krumlov and lands around it fell to the Rožmberk line of the Vítkovci – the Lords of Rožmberk, who ruled here for a whole 300 years. Especially under Vilém of Rožmberk (1535–1592), Krumlov experienced a massive phase of building and cultural development that culminated in the later 16th century, when the originally medieval castle was turned into a vast and grand Renaissance residence appropriate to the status of the rulers of the Rožmberk dominions, who were leaders among the Bohemian nobility, educated humanists, important patrons of the arts and above all capable politicians occupying the highest offices in the Kingdom of Bohemia.

The musical life of the town was concentrated mainly around the noble court at the Chateau of Český Krumlov, but also around the Church of St. Vitus and the Minorite Convent. A particular kind of musical ensemble and a distinctive kind of music was associated with each of these centres. Musicians in the service of the Rožmberks are historically recorded from the mid-15th century at the latest. Many members of the family tried to create permanent structures of musical life at the chateau, but it was Vilém of Rožmberk, who in 1552 founded what is known as the Rožmberk Music – the most important musical ensemble in the services of the Bohemian nobility in the Pre-Baroque period, and indeed more distinguished than the ensembles at the Habsburg court.

Václav Březana, the librarian and chronicler

of the Rožmberks, recorded this important event in his memoirs: “...My lord himself made the arrangements for this musical ensemble. Before the Feast of St. Matthew (24th of February 1552) the young lord, arriving in Krumlov and wishing to celebrate Shrovetide with joy and merriment, sent the German scribe Mikoláš Wittich to Linz with a wagon and four horses to get the town trombonists or musicians to come to serve His Grace. But rather than doing as His Grace bade them and sending him such musicians, the burgomeister, magistrate and councillor of the town of Linz excused themselves, saying that they were expecting King Maximilian in the coming days, and so it was not a fitting time for the Lord to make the request. ...Nonetheless the lord succeeded in finding musicians for himself in Bohemia... sparing no cost and unwilling to ask of others. In České Budějovice he had Joachym the organist make a new regal ...And His Grace also succeeded in acquiring other musical instruments and musicians and trombonists...”

The ensemble in question was a small group of Czech and German musicians, who apart from serving in the chateau helped in the church choir and with the permission of the estate performed outside the chateau as a town ensemble. At the time of its founding the group had six members, but around 1600 its numbers had risen to twelve musicians, usually hired for a two-year period. The sources even contain several specific names, mainly of trumpet players, but also of timpanists such as M. Linhart Gruebar, Šebestian Taller, Josef Feinlechner or Gregor Šamper, whom Vilém of Rožmberk so valued that he had a bust of the musicians made on one of the town houses.

According to surviving instructions written down by the estate authorities, the musicians were obliged to rehearse new repertoire three times a week, to help in the church choir on Sundays and all feast days, and to sound trumpets from the tower to call people to the table, and many other duties. Musical life at the chateau, especially under the last Rožm-





Valve Horn, V. F. Červený, Hradec Králové, 2nd half of the 19th century.
Detail: maker's label



Flap trumpet,
Franz Stöhr, turn of the 18th/19th century

berk, seems to have been very rich and diverse. All progress stopped, however, in 1602, when the last of the line, Petr Vok of Rožmberk, was forced by his huge debts to sell the whole domain of Krumlov to Emperor Rudolf II Habsburg, who never actually visited his newly acquired chateau.

The Eggenberks

After twenty-two years of complete stagnation, the domain of Český Krumlov entered on a new era with the arrival of new owners, the Lords of Eggenberk, who ruled it until 1719, when this originally Styrian family died out. The Eggenberks, specifically Jan Oldřich of Eggenberk (1568–1634), obtained extensive lands in South Bohemia for service and financial aid to the Emperor Ferdinand II Habsburg. The family did not actually take up residence in Český Krumlov, however, until the time of Jan Kristián I of Eggenberk (1641–1710), under whose lordship the chateau and town expanded and flourished as never before, architecturally, economically and culturally. Jan Kristián made the chateau into an exquisite Baroque residence, and was supported in his cultural interests, above all theatre and music, but also fine arts and literature, by his wife Marie Arnoštka, of the house of Schwarzenberk (1649–1719). Music was probably played at the chateau earlier, when members of the Eggenberk family had occasionally visited, but it was Jan Kristián I. who set up the Eggenberk capella in 1664, the same year that he inherited the domain of Český Krumlov. The composition of the ensemble differed little from that of the Rožmberks, since its basis was once again trumpeters and later a timpanist. The capella was evidently augmented depending on need by other musicians on wind and stringed instruments. The first identifiable trumpeter in the service of the Eggenberks was Siegfried Gunstig together with his brother Vít Albrecht, and later Martin Teinský or Arnošt Michael Gladiak and many others. Clearly the most prominent musician to work for the princely court was the Italian capelmeister Domenico Bartoli, under whose direction the ensemble achieved its highest standard of performance and even played several times at the imperial court in Vienna.

In appointments to the service of the prince, precedence was always given to candidates who could not only play the trumpet, which was at the time the “cornerstone” of almost all ensembles at noble courts, but other musical instruments as well. The position of trumpeters at courts was in all ways highly privileged, and the prince at Český Krumlov like his fellow nobles took a personal interest in the further training of his musicians, ensuring that they were taught by masters of the imperial court who were then among the most highly reputed teachers. Taking on the self-taught or mere “semi-professionals” was usually out of the question. The quality of the Eggenberk capella was even known in the imperial city of Vienna, where the musicians performed many times since they accompanied their master on his visits to the court as a matter of course. In Bohemia they would play almost every day in the chateau chapel, for the arrival or departure of the prince, and at social entertainments in the chateau theatre, at balls, masques and at hunts. The cultural life at the chateau in every detail copied the customs introduced at the court in Vienna or in other important noble seats in the country.

As a great feudal lord, Jan Kristián enhanced his prestige by building a separate theatre building in the fifth chateau courtyard and equipping it with the latest Baroque machinery and stage decoration. The prince also showed great interest in Italian opera; he visited it regularly on his trips to Venice at carnival time, and would bring the libretti and scores back to Bohemia. On the other hand while the court of Český Krumlov had all the resources for putting on Baroque dance and music theatre, operas were only very rarely presented there. It was as if history repeated itself. The rich and varied social life at the chateau suddenly came to an end in 1710, with the death of the prince. In only a few months the theatre and music ensembles at the castle were dissolved and most of the musicians-trumpeters had left.

The Schwarzenberks

With the death of Prince Jan Kristián, the Eggenberks died out in the male line, and the widowed princess Marie Arnoštka (who died in 1719) left her property to her nephew,

Prince Adam František of Schwarzenberk (1680–1732), who, when this legacy was added to the rest of his family property, became the largest landowner in South Bohemia. His heir Josef Adam (1722–1782) continued in his footsteps, pursuing a political career and above all advancing his position at the imperial court in Vienna, a process that motivated him to make extensive architectural modifications to his own princely residence in Český Krumlov. Almost all the important reception rooms and spaces in the chateau underwent greater or lesser renovation. The separate theatre building of the old Eggenberk theatre was reconstructed in style and lavishly equipped by Josef Afam, and later much of the chateau's social and cultural life took place there.

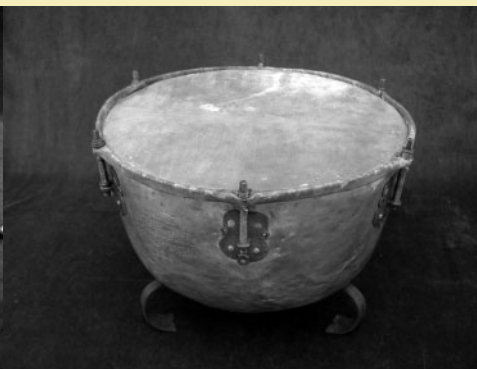
The division of the family property between Josef (1769–1833) and Karl I. Filip (1771–1820) into two branches (the Krumlov-Hluboká branch and Orlice branch) took place in 1802. The older Josef became the founder of the first family line (primogeniture), which owned the castle in Český Krumlov up to 1939, when the last representative of the line, Adolf of Schwarzenberk went into exile abroad.

Towards the end of the 18th century, renovation and expansion of the chateau slowed down and throughout the 19th century there were no major changes to the extensive complex. In the first half of the 19th century a certain cultural and above all economic stagnation set in. It was the beginning of the decline of the Český Krumlov chateau itself, which “culminated” after the mid-century, when the noble family moved to the chateau in Hluboká nad Vltavou and Český Krumlov finally lost the role of main residence of the Schwarzenberks for good, since they never went back to live there even in the 20th century. In 1940 the property of the family was confiscated by the Gestapo and in May 1945 it was placed under Czech national administration. In 1947 the Schwarzenberk property, including the chateau of Český Krumlov passed into Czech national ownership and is managed by state bodies to this day as the property of the Czech Republic.

In their period as lords of the domain, the Schwarzenberks did not lag behind their pre-



Fanfare trumpet,
Franz Leichamschneider, Vienna 1752



Kettledrum, 1655 (restored)



Clarinet,
Gedlitzka, Prague, 1st half of the 19th century

decessors in the support of social and cultural development. Music was an integral part not only of the grand presentation of their prestige, but also of entertainments and productions in the chateau theatre. Like other rich nobles at their courts or indeed the Habsburg rulers in their Vienna residence, the family established and for many years supported several important musical ensembles. In 1771–1802 they had a wind harmonia, an eight-member musical ensemble that always consisted of two oboes, two cor anglais, two bassoons and two French horns. These musicians, specifically Jan Went, Ignác Teimer, Jiří Triebensee, Ludvík Partl, Jan Vodička, Václav Kautzner, Josef Fikar and Petr Bradáč as the first generation of an ensemble famous throughout the entire Habsburg monarchy, would accompany their master on visits to Český Krumlov and play there.

Hunts, to which many important guests would come from all corners of the land, were a favourite entertainment for the nobility of the time and major social events. Music played at the beginning of the hunt, during the hunt or at entertainments thereafter, was an important part of the whole event. Originally only trumpeters giving simple signals were involved, but as time went by the requirements of social prestige increased, and the nobility began to maintain music ensembles of high quality to provide an even more complex musical accompaniment to such prestigious occasions. For this purpose Prince Josef of Schwarzenberg even had had several people specially trained. He entrusted their training to Ondřej Anton and later his son Eduard, who not only travelled throughout the South Bohemian Schwarzenberg estates to find and train people, but even composed fanfares or minor occasional pieces for the hunting capella.

From the mid-19th century, however, increasing efforts were made to look after the woods properly, new forestry methods were introduced, and this meant the gradual abandonment of the once popular hunts and so the end of the hunting ensembles as well. With fewer hunts organised, there was no longer a need to train staff to a high musical standard. Musicians from the ranks of the grenadier guard of Český Krumlov chateau had assist-

ed with hunting music from the start, and took it over completely some time around 1875. The chateau guard had been established for prestige rather than military reasons by Prince Adam František at the beginning of the 18th century at the chateau in Hluboká nad Vltavou, and had been moved to Český Krumlov in 1742. From the beginning the grenadier guard had had its own band, which played at entertainments, balls and later at end-of-hunt parties. The number of players in the band varied over time but at its peak there were as many as 24 members. The band's activities at the chateau gradually declined, and following the nationalisation of the Schwarzenberg property in March 1948 the grenadier guard was finally dissolved.

Behind the Doors of the Chateau Depository

For long centuries, from the beginning of the 16th to the mid-20th century, the chateau of Český Krumlov was a major cultural centre, which in its greatest days was of much more than purely regional significance. Under the Rožmberks it was Vilém and Petr Vok who did the most to advance musical life there, and under the Eggenbergs it was above all the last of the line, Prince Jan Kristián I. The Schwarzenberks then founded as many as three musical ensembles – a wind harmonia, a hunting capella and the grenadier guard band.

The Rožmberks were not only the first owners of the Český Krumlov domains, but also supported all the major branches of the arts to a degree unprecedented in the Bohemia of the time, and above all music, which was an active and not merely passive interest for many members of the family. These great magnates invested lavishly in the education of their musicians and the purchase of good musical instruments – a record preserved in the inventory book lists almost 200 examples.

Musical instruments were often purchased from local instrument makers, and unfortunately here the record states only a Christian name, and not a surname, which might make it easier to identify the individuals concerned. The situation is similar in the case of the

Prague and České Budějovice burghers, from whom the Rožmberks occasionally ordered the musical instruments they needed. Sometimes instruments would also be purchased from the musicians who served at the Rožmberk court. Most examples, however, were imported and sold by merchants who would buy exclusive and exotic goods, including musical instruments, at the leading foreign markets in Nuremberg, Augsburg, Linz or exceptionally in Prague as well.

With the arrival of the new owners, the Lords of Eggenberg, all attention shifted to the imperial residential city, Vienna, from which most musical instruments were now imported. Unfortunately no detailed records of specific purchases or suppliers of instruments have survived, but there are good grounds for the assumption that the Eggenberks gave precedence to purchase from professional instrument makers, whose workshops were located in the residential towns of the monarchs or their relatives.

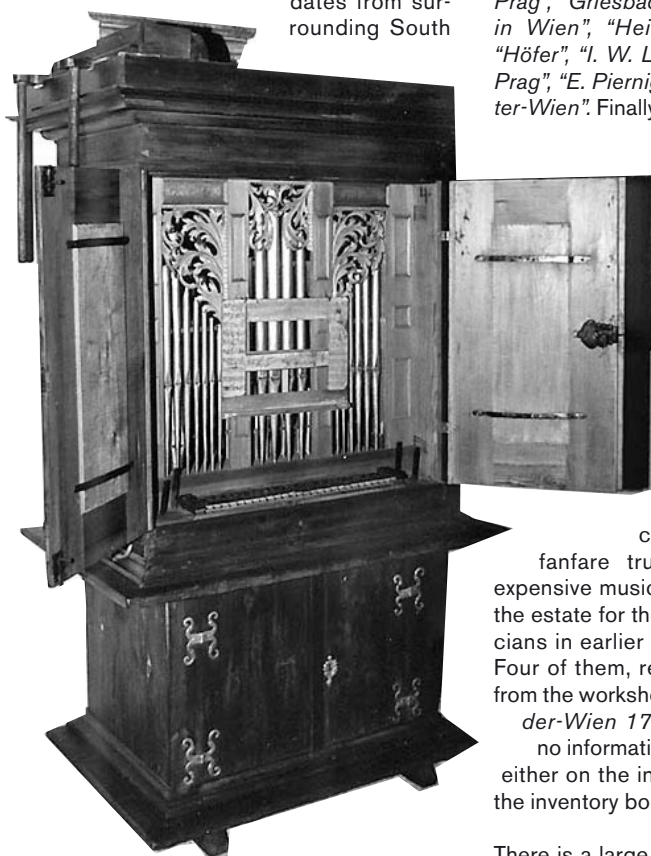
The records of the last rulers of Český Krumlov, the Lords of Schwarzenberg, contain the most information on the import and purchase of musical instruments. They too procured instruments mainly in Vienna, with which they maintained close contact largely by frequent visits to the imperial court but also over longer periods of residence in their Viennese palaces. The Schwarzenberks purchased instruments even for occasional auxiliary players; sometimes instruments would be hired from instrument-makers when more players were temporarily needed in the ensemble, for example in the ball or hunting season, but sometimes these would be purchased in bulk as well. At that time it was also common practice for musicians leaving the service of the lord to sell their instruments to him, so that they could be used by their successors.

What all three noble families had in common was a strong desire to represent their social and political position in the language of cultural prestige and aspirations to imitate the imperial court and its advanced culture, the model for noblemen in the lands of the Habsburg Monarchy. It appears that from the Mid-

dle Ages it was obligatory for a major nobleman to have a trumpeter, a highly privileged musician whose services were affordable only by the most wealthy, and of course the lords of the South Bohemian domain came into this category. A trumpeter's presence at a noble residence was usually justified in terms of the high birth or leading military, official or political function of the noble concerned at the ruler's court. The sums invested in the trumpeter's musical instruments – a fanfare (buzine) trumpets or clarion trumpets usually made by celebrated Nuremberg instrument makers, were among the biggest outlays made by nobles on music. With an eye to their favourite entertainment – hunting – the Schwarzenberks then introduced other brass instruments such as horns, both hunting horns, natural French horns and invention horns and the valve horns developed later in the earlier part of the 19th century. One special group was made up of musical instruments made by one of the important Czech instrument-makers of the 19th century, Václav František Červený, whose works and discoveries had an impact on the development of instruments in Europe as a whole.

The set of musical instruments kept in the chateau depository in Český Krumlov consists of 161 examples, making it one of the largest collections in the Czech Republic. The instruments date from the later 17th century to the beginning of the 20th century, i.e. from the Schwarzenberk period. Many of the instruments were brought to the Český

Krumlov chateau at unknown dates from surrounding South



Organ positive,
Caspar Neumann, early 18th century

Bohemian church choirs, for example from Chvalšína, Kájov, Kamenný Újezd, Netolice, Prachatice, but also Střížov or Římov.

The very valuable musical instruments of the Rožmberk capella, which were evidently still kept in the chateau in Český Krumlov in the early 20th century, are today the property of the National Museum in Prague. It is a group made up of eleven wooden wind instruments of the 16th century – five pumorts, five air-chamber schalmey (shawms) and a unique deep bass curved horn. Added to this exceptional set is a stringed instrument, a viola da gamba of the later 16th century.

The largest group in the Český Krumlov collection is the group of 125 wind instruments. The set of 35 aerophones includes five recorders, three of them with maker's marks on the corpus that allow identification of the maker and in two cases the place of origin: "Höfer", "Harrach-Wien" and "Fischer in Eger". There are two oboes here, but we know only that one was made in the second half of the 19th century at the firm "Hammig Junior" in Vienna.

Clarinets form the biggest group among the aerophones, with 25 examples in the depository. In nineteen cases the maker's marks are still legible enough for us to determine not only the maker's name, but often the locality as well. The following list of makers is arranged alphabetically (as with the other instrument groups): "J. Bauer-Prag", "K. Bauer-Prag", "Gedlitzka (Gedliczka)-Prag", "Griesbacher K. K. Hof Instr. Macher in Wien", "Heidecker", "W. Horak-Prag", "Höfer", "I. W. Lausmann-Linz", "F. Ludwig-Prag", "E. Piernig-Graz" and "August Schuster-Wien". Finally there are three bassoons in

the aerophone set, but unfortunately it has not been possible to discover the details of their provenance.

The passion for hunting that characterised the last noble owners of Český Krumlov, the Schwarzenberks, is documented by a large group of brass aerophones, of which there are 88 examples in the chateau. The

chateau depository hides nine fanfare trumpets, among the most expensive musical instruments procured by the estate for those most privileged of musicians in earlier times, the field trumpeters. Four of them, relatively rare examples, are from the workshop of "Franz Leichamschneider-Wien 1752". Unfortunately we have no information about the other trumpets, either on the instruments themselves or in the inventory books.

There is a large group of 22 trumpet instruments, including 16 natural trumpets without valves, one flap trumpet and five examples of

valve trumpets. With one exception they all carry identification of the maker: "Ed. Joh. Bauer in Prag", "Joh. Bauer in Prag", "Johann Adam Bauer in Prag", "Z C: K: Priv. Fabriky Vac: Fran: Cervenyo v Hradci Kralove", "... ion Hofman", "Franz Ludwig Prag", "Joseph Minch in Prag", "Aug. Hein. Rott in Prag", "K. K. L. B. Musik Instrumenten Fabrik Gebruder Rott in Prag", "Musik Instrumenten Fabrik August Heinrich Rott in Prag", "Franz Stöhr in Prag" and "August Wolf in Prag".

Here, however, we shall also find two examples of signal post or military horns, one of which is natural without valves, and the other more advanced, markedly improved and already equipped with valves. In neither case, alas, do we have and detailed information on origin or manufacturers.

It has proved possible to identify five of the seven hunting horns, and in three cases they came from the workshop "L. Uhlmann K. K. Hof Instrumentem Fabrik in Wien". A further two were made in Vienna in 1818, but only fragments of the names of their makers can be made out on the outer side of the strengthening wreath: "An ... Kerr", which unfortunately is not enough to enable precise identification of these relatively rare examples from the beginning of the 19th century. There are 40 instruments in the French horn set, including natural, invention but also modern examples with valves. In 33 cases we know the name of the maker, including the place of manufacture and sometimes even a date. The maker's shields tell us that the horns were made in the firm of (in some cases perhaps even personally by): "Joh. Bauer in Prag", "Johann Adam Bauer in Prag", "Z C: K: Priv. Fabriky Vac: Fran: Cervenyo v Kralove Hradci", "Z C: K: Priv. Fabriky Vac: Fran: Cervenyo v Hradci Kralove a New Yorku", "Erste Wiener Productiv Genossenschaft der Musik Instrumentenmacher Wien VII. Kaiserstrasse 55", "W. Horak & Sohn in Prag", "Macht Michael Leichamschneider in Wien 1731", "Michael Roedig in Graslitz", "August Heinrich Rott in Prag", "K. K. L. B. Musik Instrumenten Fabrik Gebruder Rott in Prag", "J. Stoll in Budweis", "Franz Stöhr in Prag", "Leopold Uhlmann, K. K. Priv. Instrumenten Fabrik in Wien" and "A. Wolf-Neuhaus". According to the maker's shields fixed on the corpus, the maker of all five examples of valve cornet is "J. Stoll in Budweis". The final representatives of brass aerophones are three bass instruments – tubas. One of them was made by "August Heinrich Rott in Prag", and the other two come once again from the workshop of "J. Stoll in Budweis".

Classified with the wind, or air instruments are what are known as the polyphonic aerophones, which are represented at the chateau of Český Krumlov by one example of a mobile organ positive from the beginning of the 18th century, made in the workshop of the Mirovice organ builder Caspar Neumann. On the upper doors of the case we can even still see partially legible pencil-written inscrip-

tions about repairs to the instrument and apparently the last organist to play the instrument in Protivín, from which the instrument was taken to Český Krumlov in the earlier 20th century.

Also belonging to this group is the still functional organ in the chateau Chapel of St. George, where concerts are held during music festivals. Equipped with five manual and one pedal register, the organ is also rather atypically equipped with what is known as a "broken octave" in the bass. It is a feature we encounter very rarely indeed. This instrument comes from the workshop of the Moravian-born organ-builder *Bedřich Semrád* of Sedlec, who was active in Český Krumlov around 1750, and is reported to have built not only this organ here, but also an organ positive, which has seemingly been lost. The Český Krumlov organ is indeed the only example of Semrád's work to have survived.

Stringed chordophones are represented here only by two examples of cellos. In one case we have no knowledge of the name of the maker or place of manufacture. In the other case a shield glued inside onto the back panel tells us that the instrument was made by "*Johannes Udalricus Eberll / fecit Pragae 1740*". This makes it not just one of the oldest but one of the rarest of all the musical instruments in the depositary of the chateau of Český Krumlov.

Also classified as a chordophone is an instrument that is quite unusual in Bohemia – a hackbrett, the name for a small form of dulcimer, and better known in German-speaking countries. Today this instrument is unfortunately in a very poor state, and we have no information about the maker, country of origin, or more precise date of manufacture.

There are two pianos in the chateau. One was made in the earlier 19th century by "*Brodmann in Wien, Joseph Stahl No. 43*", while the other comes from the workshop of "*Conrad Graf in Wien*", whose instruments were played by such renowned pianists and composers as Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Liszt, Johannes Brahms or Clara Schumann. The depositary also contains several rare instruments in the membranophone category. The set of 15 percussion instruments includes only one tambourine with small metal strips hung on fine wires in a narrow rim inscribed with the quite legible inscription "*Iohan Christian Reich*", probably the name of the maker of the whole instrument. There are also four snare drums with blue and white stripes on the corpus symbolising the property of the Schwarzenberks, whose family colours were blue and white or silver. Another four drums have no similar identification marks, but it can be assumed that all these instruments, including the tambourine, were procured at the Schwarzenberks's expense and used by members of the guard.

This does not apply, however, to the last six membranophones in the collection, tympani (kettle drums) that have been preserved in

the castle not as separate pieces, but in pairs, with one pair still on its original base in the form of a high tripod. Belonging to the drums are several surviving sticks with flattened heads, but only as individual pieces and unfortunately not usually in pairs. Two of the drums still have their original shields threaded onto the corpus; the two inscriptions are virtually the same and testify to the considerable age of the instruments: "*Timpana . contus / B. V. Mariae . Milosae / Budovicenis . Ord: / Fra : Praedicatorum / R. P. Fra : Conradus / Procuravit 1 6 5 5*".

The last instrumental group, idiophones, are represented by 16 examples of which there are just four individual plates or cymbals, all without a strap. It is the same with the four triangles, which all have slightly scrolled free ends. As with the cymbals, the usual elements like a hanging eye, and more particularly a striking hammer or rod have not survived.

In this group we can also classify the four small bells for calling servants that are fixed on the ceilings of the chateau rooms. The instruments are more or less the same in structure, with their corpus in all cases rung by means of a rope or metal pull hung within reach of the lord's hand. In the same category we find three small table bells, all from about the mid-19th century. Two of the examples were sounded by being lifted off the base and swung on a handle. The corpus of one is cast in brass including the handle and decorated just with a few concentric circles. The second example has a beautifully moulded corpus and handle made of milk glass. The third bell, consisting of a semi-circular dome and solid base with minor decoration, is sounded by a button at the top, which when pressed raises a lever with a clapper on one end that strikes the corpus.

The final example in this group is folk instrument called a "klapotka" or "clapper" which is still known and used in several areas of Moravian as a traditional Christmas instrument. It is a wooden board sounded by rapid side-to-side rattling of a hammer set in the middle. Unfortunately we have no information about the producers, place or date of manufacture of any of the surviving idiophones.

The extensive set of musical instruments mainly kept in the depositaries of the chateau of Český Krumlov, contains several truly unique items that are rather unjustifiably inaccessible to a public that in any case had very little information about the collection as such. Most of the instruments have survived in a relatively good state, some have been repaired or restored, and others are still waiting for expert treatment. Unfortunately a small percentage of the instruments (the brass aerophones), are so damaged, that their reconstruction would be extremely costly if possible at all. Some of the musical instruments in the Český Krumlov collection are currently on loan to other South Bohemian monuments. Some others, which originally belonged to the musi-



cians of the grenadier guard, are temporarily on display in an exhibition held to mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Schwarzenberk chateau guard which visitors can see in the 2nd Courtyard.

The whole collection, a total of 161 musical instruments including examples of aerophones, chordophones, membranophones and idiophones, unfortunately cannot be opened to the public. Let us hope that this study will be at least a small contribution to the presentation of the musical development of the South Bohemian domain of the Rožmberks, Eggenberks and Schwarzenberks from the later 16th century to the earlier 20th century, and above all the direct evidence of this development in the form of the chateau's major collection of musical instruments.

In conclusion I should emphasise that while a collection of musical instruments of the kind I have described would in itself be enough to make another Czech chateau or town exceptional, in Český Krumlov it is just one among many glories. The collections here contain tens of thousands of art objects, and so far almost 200 representations of instruments have been identified in its pictures, sculptures, furniture and textiles.

One group, which for lack of funds is still waiting for cataloguing and complete assessment, consists of "iconographic representation of music-making". These appear on frescoes and parts of the decor not just of the chateau interiors and reception spaces, but also in the decoration that covers entire walls of the chateau courtyards. Český Krumlov can offer visitors a painting of 1588, which probably represents one generation of members of the legendary Rožmberk Ensemble, the Mirror Hall, where painters have depicted 90 musical instruments, the internationally unique separate chateau theatre building of 1680, modified in 1765 or the exquisite garden building – the Bellarie chateau harbour. Such important monument certainly cannot remain hidden from the public. Of course, if you are actually planning to come to South Bohemia this summer, just stop at Český Krumlov. It is well worth the visit.



Ludwig van Beethoven

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra no. 4 in G major, op. 58

César Franck

Symphonic Variations for Piano and Orchestra

Maurice Ravel

Concerto in G major for Piano and Orchestra

Ivan Moravec – piano, Prague Chamber Philharmonic, Jiří Bělohlávek. Production: Petr Vít. Text: Eng., Ger., French, Czech. Recorded: 1, 9/2003, Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum, Prague. Published: 2004. TT: 70:14. DDD. 1 CD Supraphon SU 3714-2 031.

in cooperation with the magazine

HARMONIE

The first CD released in the year of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Prague Chamber Philharmonic offers an absolutely unique experience. We can begin with its imaginative and fresh choice of music. The three works for piano and orchestra by three composers from three different eras turn out to have a surprising amount in common. While in all of them the piano is the solo instrument, at the same time the piano part – with all its technical difficulty – is always firmly integrated into a unified flow of music. All three pieces are among the masterpieces of their composers, and all are distinguished for a strikingly non-conformist conception. *The 4th Piano Concerto* is the most lyrical of all Beethoven's piano concertos and as interpreted by **Ivan Moravec** and the **Prague Chamber Philharmonic** it becomes a true musical poem. The soft, almost dreamy tones of the opening chords of the solo piano are taken up by the orchestra in just the same soft and airy spirit, as if soloist and orchestra were one and the same person. The whole first movement flows by lightly, with the slightest breath of melancholy, like a pleasant memory enlivened by fresh, tenderly effervescent piano passages. Even the dramatic dialogue of the slow movement finally flows softly into the airy finale. The same poetic charge, enriched by more exciting and heroic passages, characterises Franck's *Symphonic Variations*. The high point of the CD is the final piece, Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G major*. Smiling at us out of the delicate impressionist-Spanish palette is a jazz so radiant that we can scarcely believe there is so much of it in Ravel's score. Everything here that is even slightly redolent of jazz is surprisingly lit up, bringing careless youth into a tranquil, nostalgic and mildly impressionistically cloudy summer afternoon. Jiří Bělohlávek mixes the paints with an imagination that is breathtaking, the orchestral solos have a fascinating lightness of touch and this CD captures Ivan Moravec in one of the most evocative performances of his life.

VĚROSLAV NĚMEC



Antonín Dvořák

Piano Concerto in G minor, op. 33, Zlatý kolovrat [The Golden Spinning Wheel] op. 109*

Pierre-Laurent Aimard – piano*, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Nikolaus Harnoncourt. Production: Friedemann Engelbrecht. Text: Eng. Ger. French. Recorded: 10/2001 Het Concertgebouw, Amsterdam. Published: 2003. TT: 67:52. DDD. 1 CD Teldec Classics 8573 87630-2 (Warner Music).

From the time it was first written Dvořák's *Piano Concerto* has been criticised for not providing pianists with enough opportunity to "show what they can do". A series of pianists – headed by Vilém Kurz – have tried to remedy this "shortcoming", but of course Dvořák himself never had a weakness for empty virtuosity and **Pierre-Laurent Aimard** together with **Nikolaus Harnoncourt** never leave listeners in any doubt, not even for a moment, that the work is nonetheless one of the most beautiful piano concertos of the nineteenth century. First and foremost, the performers have purified and aired the piece, freeing it of any deposits of heavy-handed Romantic paths. The concerto flows in marvellously billowing dynamic waves, and when we look at the score to see where those waves have come from, we find that Harnoncourt has done nothing more than keep to the prescribed dynamic marks. The way in which he manages to breathe life into them is fascinating. Also very interesting is his treatment of orchestral colours. Harnoncourt strongly supports the wind, often even at the price of a certain suppression of the strings. Here too perhaps we find one of the reasons why the **Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra** sounds so airy. Pierre-Laurent Aimard is an outstanding pianist, who has no need for exhibitionism and can allow himself to keep to Dvořák's original version of the piano part. Its chamber mood gives him an opportunity to employ innumerable superb nuances of touch, dynamics and agogics. The slow movement, with its main theme that the composer surprisingly tonally "blurs" right at the second bar, is particularly beautiful on this recording. Taken at a slower tempo than is usual, its dynamics quietened like breath, and in dreamily soft colours, this movement turns into an impression in which it is as if Dvořák were reaching out and touching Debussy or Ravel. *The Golden Spinning Wheel* is often performed with large-scale cuts, because the music is considered too descriptive. Listening to the uncut version we realised that in this "most fairytale" of Dvořák's symphonic poems it doesn't essentially matter – as in every fairytale – if we add or leave out a less important paragraph here and there. A good storyteller can compress it into several lines or draw it out to several pages. If we can just sit back and stop hurrying, then we can appreciate that Nikolaus Harnoncourt is a storyteller of genius.

VĚROSLAV NĚMEC

Antonín Dvořák

Rusalka

Renée Fleming, Larissa Diadkova, Sergej Larin, Franz Hawlata, Eva Urbanová, Orchestra and Choirs of the Opéra National de Paris, James Conlon, director Robert Carsen, stage design Michael Levine. Production: not stated. Text: Eng., Ger. Subtitles: Eng., Ger., French, Span., Ital. Recorded: live, 6/2002, Opéra National de Paris – Bastille, Paris. TT: 100 + 55 minutes. 2 DVD TDK DV OP-RUS

Every production of a Czech opera abroad is something that should be approached in a positive spirit. In addition to a pleasurable and justified feeling of nation pride, it is very instructive to see how a work considered a national treasure is perceived and interpreted in different cultural contexts. The production of *Rusalka* at the Bastille Opera in Paris in 2002 definitely made one think twice about the Czech staging tradition that regards *Rusalka* as a family afternoon fairytale.

The Paris version brings sex and blood into our fairytale and clearly addresses an adult public. In this sense it continues with the line of interpretation of Dvořák's *Rusalka*, initiated twenty years ago by David Pountney at the English National Opera. We can wonder about the plausibility of this interpretation, but it is definitely one of the possible interpretations. In any case, there is no Czech copyright on *rusalkas*, water nymphs and willow the wisps are a primeval part of human mythology.

The National Paris Opera production fairly brutally demolishes the Czech national tradition of staging the piece. Indeed, for a Czech brought up on "school performances" of *Rusalka* and *The Bartered Bride* the Paris production causes a certain culture shock and you need a certain breathing space to get over it before starting to judge. Even so, it is impossible for a Czech to look at it with unprejudiced eyes, because he or she has an entirely different starting point than the public abroad.

First of all you have to admire the brilliance of **James Colon's** musical interpretation, which flows along apparently effortlessly with a deep warmth, sensitive phrasing and superb dynamic curves in what is a nice balance between the sound of orchestra, soloists and choir. This is seconded by admiration for the vocal and dramatic achievements of all the performers, who have been cast with complete precision in terms of type and range and who show themselves capable of fulfilling the conception of the production down to the last detail – **Renée Fleming** as *Rusalka*, **Sergej Larin** as the Prince, **Larissa Diadkova** in the role of Ježibaba, **Eva Urbanová** as the Stranger Princess and **Franz Hawlata** in the role of the Water Goblin. Overwhelmed by the imposing stage design you are then attacked by envy, the realisation that this production has been funded at a level many times higher than any of our Czech operas could afford for one premiere (and in Paris this was far from one of the most expensive productions). The thought produces the same kind of sigh as comparison of our salaries and standard of living with those of Western Europe, but then of course raises the question of whether it might not be better to put on one perfect production at home in place of three others...

Another question that the production raises in the Czech mind is about the singing of the opera in the original, today more or less taken for granted. The top opera professionals naturally did an admirable job and their Czech was better than the Italian or French often heard in our opera houses. On the other hand, a native speaker still has to pose the heretical question of whether from a purely musical point of view the trend for singing in the original language is right in all cases. The phrasing, the melody of the lines, the accent, the length of vowels, the pronunciation – these things are automatically accessible to the native speaker but are in practice untransferable. The attempt to cope with them is praiseworthy, but the result can be slightly comical and even distracting in its awkward charm.

No less fundamental, of course, is the way that the director **Robert Carsen** and stage designer **Michael Levine** have approached *Rusalka*. As the basis they have chosen the oversized interior of a luxurious bedroom in light cream colours. Its walls and ceiling are defined only by the large dimensions of the stage and the props consist simply of newlyweds bed with night tables and lamps on each side, chairs and side doors – when the latter open a soft light and “backstage” music penetrates onto the stage. Levine has doubled up these props and placed them in the extensive space in such a way that the dividing line between the beds, floor and doors winds in different directions. All these elements then work in perfect harmony with the lighting. In the first act most of the floor is taken up by a shallow pool full of water up to ankle height serving as the home territory of a being from the world “beyond the looking glass”, a world of innocent childhood, however much the border between childhood and adulthood, the world of fairytale beings and people, is porous. (We should remember that this was a production of 2002, when the Tolkien pandemic was still in its incubation stage). The other border, separating the world of men from the world of women, is more imaginary, but all the less porous for that.

It is in this space that Carsen presents a harsh tale of the impossibility of crossing the borders without punishment, of the clash between desire and reality, of attempts to get beyond the defining limits of the space. The bloody dagger runs through the production like an “instrument of initiation”, the key to the world of people, but also a clasp knife with which the gamekeeper slices himself a piece of salami. The red rose can be understood as the emblem of sexual hunger. Carsen offers a disturbing analysis of the break between childhood and adulthood and at the same time the mutual isolation of the worlds of men and women, which when they interact do so in a more or less mechanical way, with a kind of depersonalised automatism triggered by the mere presence of the opposite sex; partners are interchangeable and feelings of love only the attendant manifestation of mating. All the men – the Water Goblin, the Prince and their dance doubles – having the same perfectly cut dark suits, coats, hats and gloves, while the humanised *Rusalka*, Ježibaba, and Stranger Princess and their dance doubles wear black slips, stockings and boots and light satin over-robos. The contemporary costumes correspond to the aesthetic refinement of the stage; at the same time they provide a socially acceptable mask for the dark sides of the beings of both worlds. The old saying that “clothes make the man” is interpreted here in a provocative new context.

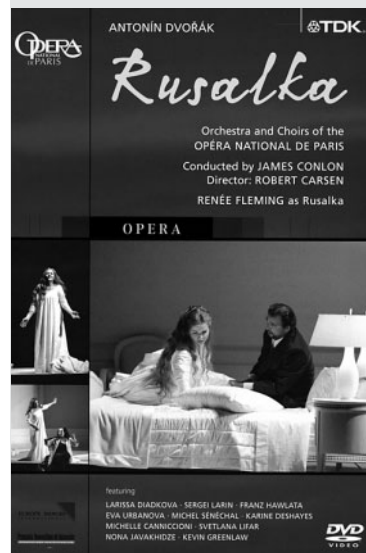
This kind of interpretation of Dvořák's *Rusalka* is definitely not capricious and arbitrary, but it is entirely shorn of the “fairytale” kindness and warmth that we are used to, and ruthlessly strips the fairytale plot down to the bloody marrow of basic instincts that are usually coded in such a way as to be less disturbing. This accent on the “dark side” of *Rusalka* may seem somewhat depressing, but one cannot deny its authenticity – desire is not the same as love and to look in the mirror or penetrate into another territory is something paid for in blood.

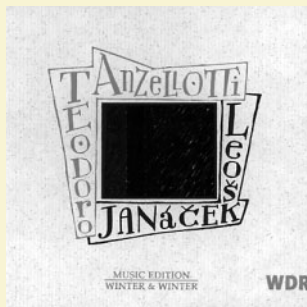
While Carsen generally respects the plot of the opera (apart from most of the traditional cuts, the scene of frolicking wood nymphs in the 3rd act is considerably shortened), the end differs strikingly from the prescribed story: the *Rusalka* does not drag the Prince down into the depth of the lake, but – no longer a shy lovesick girl but a woman trained by Ježibaba and the Stranger Princess – pulls him into the bed in her embrace. Carsen leaves it up to the audience to decide if this embrace is a lethal bloody redemption.

The charm of Dvořák's Czech fairytale is difficult to convey to a different cultural context, like the melody of his native language. The Paris production definitely has its own legitimacy and the lessons that it teaches us are in many respects full of inspiration and disturbing.

The deeper pattern of instincts can of course be extracted from a fairytale – but that means that children have to find a different fairytale.

HELENA HAVLÍKOVÁ





Leoš Janáček

Po zarostlém chodníčku – I. a II. řada
[On an Overgrown Path – 1st and 2nd Series,
Paralipomena, Na památku [In Memory],
Tri moravské tance [Three Moravian Dances],
Vzpomínka [Memento]

Teodoro Anzellotti – accordion.

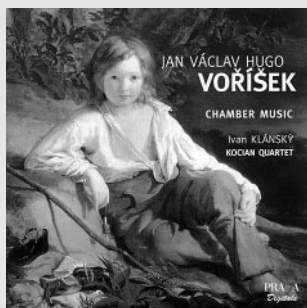
Production: Winter & Winter, Recorded: 2001, Briosco,
 Italy. TT: 59:10. DDD. 1CD Winter & Winter 910 089-2.

Teodoro Anzellotti (born 1959 in Italy) is one of the most important accordionists today. This performer and professor at a university in Berne has a very wide repertoire, dominated by music by still living composers (such as Globokar, Gubajdulina, Kagel, Kurtág) and as well as modern classics like Berio, Cage, Maderna, Satie, Křenek and many others). In most cases Anzellotti plays original pieces for accordion, but occasionally he performs transcribed music, as he does with Janáček's piano pieces on this CD.

Janáček – *On an Overgrown Path* and accordion? I can well imagine plenty of outrage and ridicule at the combination. Personally, I am not in favour of transcription at any price, and so I was curious whether Anzellotti would convince me in this case. I have to say that particularly with the first sequence of the *Overgrown Path* cycle, he has convinced me. Here the wonderful register colours of the accordion sound as natural as if we had already known them from the original piano version. In this context we should remember that the cycle was written gradually – three number of the first sequence came out in 1901 and another two in 1902, in a collection of pieces for harmonium (an instrument close to the accordion in terms of sound quality) under the title *Slovanské melodie [Slavonic Melodies]*. The entire first sequence of the cycle did not come out until 1911, when it was given the subtitle *Small Pieces for Piano*. Anzellotti's transcription consists mainly in the choice of registers, and the choice also strikes me as successful in the case of *Three Moravian Dances*, and the pieces *Memento* and *In Memory*. Perhaps only in the fifth number of the 2nd Sequence of *On an Overgrown Path* would I have chosen a more delicate register.

The generally excellent impression given by the recording is spoiled only by the poor booklet. It is a great pity that in the otherwise graphically interesting brochure we find no information about either the performer or Leoš Janáček and the music. The quality of the booklet seems to me particularly important for a CD project as unusual as Janáček and accordion, and the lapse gives an initially rather amateur air to the CD. But Teodoro Anzellotti is still a great professional and musician, as his performance on this compact disk confirms.

KATEŘINA RIETHOFOVÁ



Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek

Chamber Music

Ivan Klánský – piano, the Kocian Quartet: Pavel Hůla,
Miloš Černý, Zbyněk Paďourek, Václav Bernášek.

Production: Jaroslav Rybář. Text: Eng., French, Ger.
 Recorded : 12/2003, Studio Domovina, Prague.
 Published: 2004. TT: 60:21. DSD. 1 CD Praga Digitals
 PRD/DSD 250 204 (distribution Classic).

J. V. H. Voříšek (1791 – 1825) was one of the most successful of Vienna Czechs and one of the few composers to be compared with Beethoven. This CD of four of his chamber pieces demonstrates just how exceptional his work is. Although the works differ in character and instrumentation, they are all characterised by an abundance of musical ideas and above all a Beethovenesque free and sovereign approach to musical form, which Voříšek moulds with unusual creative imagination. The pieces that deserve the greatest attention is the ambitious *Sonata for Violin and Piano op. 5* and the impressive *Variations for Cello and Piano op. 9*. In both pieces the piano part is very prominent, and makes technical demands that are often at the level of a piano concerto. Listening to **Ivan Klánský** play is a real delight. His excellent technique allows him to concentrate on the music itself, and convey to listeners everything that he considers interesting in Voříšek's pieces. I mention at least one fascinating detail to stand for many: in the small thirty-two note little bass figures in the slow movement of the violin sonata, which could almost be considered meaningless "secondings" Ivan Klánský employs such a quantity of performance nuances that he makes them into a full-value, meaningful counterpoint. The performances of the violinist **Pavel Hůla** and cellist **Václav Bernášek**, members of the **Kocian Quartet**, are no less remarkable in these pieces. Both performers have an extraordinary feeling for chamber play and their instruments also have a particularly pleasant tone. The remaining two pieces, *Rondo for Violin and Piano op. 8* and *Rondo for String Quartet op. 1*, in which Voříšek places the violin part strongly in the foreground, are also interesting in composition and brilliantly performed. This CD can be warmly recommended to admirers of Voříšek's work.

VĚROSLAV NĚMEC



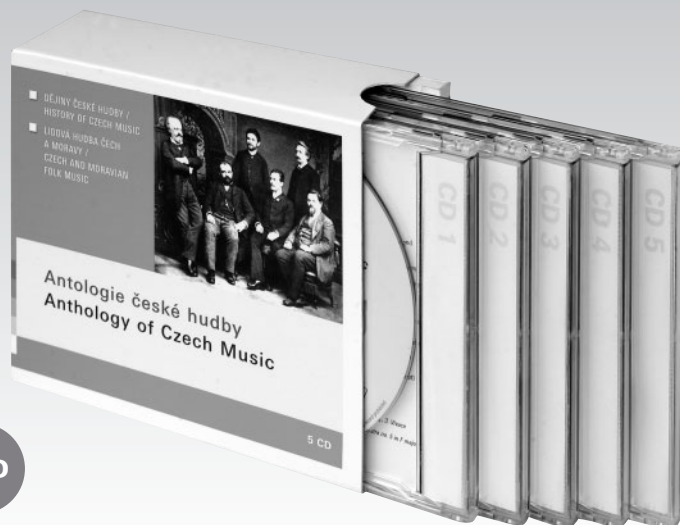
Jan Dismas Zelenka

Missa Dei Filii, Litaniae Lauretanae

Nancy Argenta – soprano, Michael Chance – alto,
Christoph Prégardien – tenor, Gordon Jones – bass,
Kammerchor Stuttgart, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra,
Frieder Bernius. Production: Wolf Erichson. Text: Ger.,
 Eng., French, Ital. Recorded: 6/1989, Ev. Kirche,
 Gönningen/Reutlingen. Published: 1990, re-edition 2004.
 TT: 70:26. DDD. 1 CD Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 82876
 601592 (BMG).

The BMG series "Splendeurs" consists of re-editions of older recordings that are definitely worth hearing (again). At least this is certainly the case with this recording of two liturgical works by Jan Dismas Zelenka. The *Missa Dei Filii* and *Loreto Litanies* were written in the 1740s, and the mass was supposed to be one of five that Zelenka was planning. In the end only three were written and this one is the second (the first is *Missa Dei Patris*, and the third *Missa omnium sanctorum*). It consists only of a *Kyrie* and *Gloria*, and according to the author of the accompanying text was a preliminary project, although in the 18th century masses consisting only of these two parts of the ordinarius were commonly produced. Both works are made up of longer or shorter numbered sections in which Zelenka in mixed style ("stile misto") combines the "new" technique of the instrumental concerto and opera arias with the "older" technique of motet and fugue, while in litany he also exploits choral quotations. All the musicians interpret the richness of Zelenka's musical ideas in a fresh way: the velvet, sometimes silkily flexible soprano of the Canadian singer **Nancy Argenta** may well enchant the listener for example in the difficult section of the *Gloria Qui tollis peccata mundi*, the alto solos by **Michael Chance** are interesting for their strikingly female colour and effortless technique, and the resolute and precise tenor of **Christoph Prégardien** and **Gordon Jones's** complementary bass in no sense lag behind. Under the direction of **Frieder Bernius**, the quite substantial sound of the roughly thirty-member choir and the **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra**, playing with lightness of touch, perform Zelenka's music in a way that remains impressive even after fourteen years. Anyone who missed the first edition of the recording should definitely not miss it this time around.

DINA ŠNEJDAROVÁ



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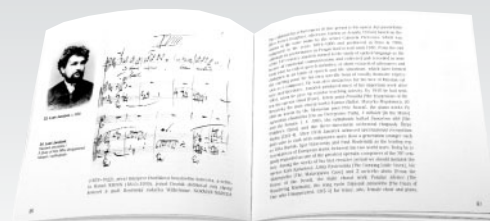
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Jan Křtitel Vaňhal

is known on Czech concert podia for his symphonies and above all four concertos – for double bass, flute, violin and organ. In fact he wrote a huge number of concertante and symphonic pieces, a series of string quartets, dozens of piano sonatas, organ fugues and various liturgical pieces. History presents him as an influential Vienna teacher and as a ready and versatile composer of tasteful, successful, more or less fashionable and uncomplicated music for everyday needs. Vaňhal, who was born before the mid-18th century, prefigured the age of Romanticism in being one of the first artists not to depend upon patronage.

From serfdom to the best Vienna circles

In view of his origin we give the composer's full name in its Czech form of Jan Křtitel Vaňhal, and in view of his long-term career in Vienna also in its German form of Johann Baptist (sometimes Jan Ignatius) Wanhal or Vanhal. Although there is indirect evidence that his surname Van Hall came from Holland, his family on both sides had lived for generations in Bohemia. Vaňhal came from the family of a serf of Count Schaffgotsch settled in Nechanice between Hradec Králové and Nový Bydžov. We know very little of the composer's childhood and youth. In his native community Vaňhal learned to sing and play on strings and wind instruments, and devoted himself to the organ under his favourite teacher Anton Erban. At the age of eighteen he became organist in Opočno, and later worked as choir director in nearby Hněvčevce near Jičín, where a certain Martin Novák taught him to play the violin and write concertos. Vaňhal's skill on the viola d'amore so enchanted the Countess Schaffgotsch that she sent him to Vienna to obtain further education here. He moved to the capital of the monarchy at the very beginning of the 1760s and thereafter visited Bohemia only once – when one of his parents died. In the city on the Danube he soon found an entree to high social circles as a music teacher (for example as the teacher of Ignaz Pleyel, one generation his junior, who later became a cappelmeister and music publisher). He also earned himself a good enough income to purchase his own freedom. In 1762 or 1763 he was helped in some way by Carl Ditters, a violinist in the imperial theatre orchestra, a contemporary of Vaňhal's (he had also been born in 1739). Ditters later wrote of Vaňhal in his autobiography as a pupil, whom he had helped launch on the music scene as a violinist. In 1762, when he was already one of the leading composers in Vienna, Vaňhal met the young Mozart. Later he developed contacts with the Paris publisher Huberty, who published his six symphonies, op. 1 (1769).

Return from his travels to Vienna

At the end of the sixties he was given the opportunity to travel to Italy, thanks to the Baron Riesch. Venice, Bologna, Florence and Rome were among his destinations. In Rome he composed two operas on libretti by Pietro Metastasio, *Il Demofonte* and *Il trionfo di Clelia*, and had them staged. Alas, both have been lost. After his return in 1771 Riesch offered him the position of capelmeister in Dresden, but evidently as a result of psychological illness Vaňhal refused. During further travels in the 1770s, which took him to the Hungarian Lands and Croatia, Vaňhal made several visits to the estates of Count Erdödy, a famous patron of the arts.

Around 1780 he settled down in Vienna again and developed friendly relations with leading figures in musical life. For example, he played the cello in a quartet with Joseph Haydn, Carl Ditters and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. By this time Vienna publishers had already published three hundred or so of his works, which proved very popular and quickly found a wide public. Vaňhal's interest as a composer was at this point more focused on popular forms (variations, programmatic pieces), but gradually he wrote more and more church music as well. His liturgical pieces were not for the most part published, however, and have not become the object of significant research interest.

A Polite and Amicable Man

We know very little about the composer's private life. Charles Burney observed that *a certain small confusion of the intellectual capacities is a promising circumstance in young composers, and Mr. Vaňhal started his musical career with these happy symptoms, almost allowing his imagination too free a rein*. Elsewhere we find Vaňhal described by Burney as *a polite man, who did not know French but knew a little Italian, like many German musicians*. We have another description from Gottfried Dlabacz, who made friends with Vaňhal in 1795 and thereafter remained in almost daily contact with him. On Dlabacz Vaňhal made the impression of a great artist, a zealous Christian, true patriot, and genuine and warm friend and tender father to suffering humanity. We also know that he was never married and had no heirs. He died in his flat near St. Stephen's Cathedral and was buried – like Mozart – in the Viennese Cemetery of St. Marx.

A much admired composer

In his lifetime Vaňhal was already considered an excellent composer, and was mentioned in many writings of the time. In addition to the London composer and organist Charles Burney, who sought him out on one of his journeys on the continent in Vienna in 1772 (*The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands and United Provinces* 1773), there was the librarian at the Strahov Monastery in Prague, Johann Gottfried Dlabacz, although the latter's *Allgemeines historisches Künstler-Lexikon* with a list of

Vaňhal's works did not come out until 1815. We find other mentions of the composer in the autobiography of the composer and violinist Carl Ditters (*Lebenbeschreibung* 1801), and in the writings of the poet and composer Christian F. D. Schubart (1806). Michael Kelly, the Irish tenor, Mozart performer and himself a composer, who worked in Vienna in the 1780s, remembered Vaňhal in his *Reminiscences* (published much later in 1826). We should also mention the obituary published in the *Vaterländische Blätter für österreichischen Kaiserstaat* (1813).

Today we have the advantage of a thematic catalogue of his pieces (without the symphonies) compiled by Alexander Weinmann (1988), a thematic catalogue of his symphonies compiled by Paul Bryan (1997), and several studies of Vaňhal's work. Among Czech researchers Milan Poštolka devoted the most attention to him (writing the entry in the lexicon *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* in the 1966 edition and in the *New Grove Dictionary* of 1980). Apart from studies focused on type, genre or form or on the classicist epoch as a whole or from a particular angle, we have as yet no monograph devoted to Jan Křitel Vaňhal as an example of a composer typical of his time.

Symphonic Music

Some compositions by this young composer, especially his symphonies, so appealed to me that I rank them among the best and most perfect instrumental pieces of which musical art can be truly proud. This was Charles Burney's view on his first visit to Vienna. Vaňhal's symphonic work is certainly a valuable document of the development of Viennese classicism.

Vaňhal's earliest symphonic pieces follow on from Late Baroque models both in the use of polyphonic techniques and the treatment of motifs, and in having slow introductions and dance finales. Gradually the composer expanded the three-movement scheme to an ever more frequent four-movement scheme. After his return from Italy his compositional style settled down, he limited experimentation and applied the sonata form with thoroughness.

The symphonies that Vaňhal wrote up to the mid-1770s are talked about as examples of the *Sturm und Drang*. This designation, originally applied to German literature, either represented the last phase of *Empfindsamkeit* or prefigured Romanticism in its earliest phase. It came to be applied – with certain qualifications – to music in which minor keys predominated, together with sombre expression, and dramatic, sometimes steep, dynamic effects. In the case of Vaňhal, however, his later symphonies with these features actually go beyond this style and tend more in the direction of the musical idiom of Mozart or even Schubert.

One example of a piece that has been classified as *Sturm und Drang* is the *Symphony in g minor* (g1 in Bryan's catalogue). Evidently composed around 1770, if we compare it with symphonies by others in the same key it

is reminiscent of Joseph Haydn's (no. 39), written a few years earlier, and Mozart's (K. 183), written a little later. Vaňhal's symphony catches the attention in the first movement with its striking chromatic main theme and secondary theme created by jumps. The slow movement alternates tenderly cantabile solo episodes from violin and viola. The Minuetto is once again more dramatic, while the Trio is sweet and graceful. The fourth movement opens energetically to the point of aggression (*con fuoco*) with the dotted main theme, beside which the secondary theme never finds fuller application.

The String Quartets

Besides symphonies, it is string quartets that occupy the most space in Vaňhal's concert repertoire. The composer's chamber music output, however, represents the whole range of forms – sonatas, cassations, divertimenti, nocturni, dances like minuets, ecossoises, ländlers – in different combinations from string duos and trios to quintets and sextets. Most were published during the composer's lifetime with opus numbers in cities like Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam and of course in Vienna.

Out of the more than fifty string quartets definitely identified as Vaňhal's let us take the example of his string quartet in Eb, which has a place in the repertoire of many Czech ensembles. It is an example of a "1st violin" score in the sense that Vaňhal places almost all the important musical ideas in the leader's part (and in doing so shows himself an outstanding creator of sweet melodies) and leaves only a simple accompaniment to the other instruments. Despite this simplicity, however, the piece does not give a monotonous impression, but is fresh and vibrant.

Vaňhal and keyboard instruments

A large number of pieces for keyboard instruments have been preserved under Vaňhal's name. Piano music, still in process of emancipation from the harpsichord and its musical form, was at that time considered a special kind of chamber music designed for one instrument. The composers of the Classicist epoch nonetheless saw in it an experimental field, in which they tried to explore all the possibilities of the new instrument. As the piano made headway, virtuosity rapidly developed, led by a desire for spectacular performance effects, but it did not so much exploit sonata and other new forms as favour improvisation and variations, as in earlier periods. Vaňhal's keyboard pieces show greater stylistic variety than his symphonies, and range from the gallant style to early Classicism. In addition to concertos, chamber pieces and ensembles with keyboard instrument and pieces for four hands they include solo sonatas, sonatinas, capriccios, small pieces, variations, dances, remarkable programmatic pieces, organ fugues, preludes, preambula and cadenzas.

Musical Onomatopoeia

Aristotle's doctrine of art as the imitation of



music was fundamental to art and criticism up to the late 18th century. Music was supposed to imitate both living and inorganic nature, the motions of speech and emotion. Composers loved to describe events like battle scenes or natural phenomena in music, and such music was received with great enthusiasm. The descriptive principle could be applied with the help of the text in vocal music, while in the instrumental field it was underlined through dedication or in the form of a battaglio. In the period of Classicism political themes resurfaced. One example from the pen of the youngest of the three Viennese classics, Beethoven, is opus 91 for pianoforte *Wellingtons Sieg oder Die Schlacht bei Vittoria* (composed in 1813) with quotations from songs such as the anthem *God Save the King*.

There are almost twenty such occasional compositions in Vaňhal's output, including for example musical illustrations of *Die Schlacht bei Würzburg* (1796), *Die grosse Seeschlacht bei Abukir* (1800), *Le Combat navale de Trafalgar et la mort de Nelson* (1806) or *Die Feyer der Rückkehr unseres allgeliebten Monarchen Franz I.* (1810). These pieces have survived in period printed materials, found scattered, like the quartets, in various European archives.

The Prague National Library possesses a print of the remarkable Vaňhal composition whose full title reads *Die Bedrohung und Befreyung der k.u.k. Haupt- und Residenzstadt Wien durch französischen Truppen unter den Befehlen des Generals Buonaparte und durch das merkwürdig österreichische Aufgebot den 4ten April 1797*. Vaňhal gratefully dedicated the piece to Count Franz von Saurau, the imperial confidential counsellor whose military campaign was not in fact a success but thanks to whom Vienna was at least liberated from siege by Napoleon's large armies. With the help of spies the nobleman successfully led the defence of the metropolis and forced the French to retreat and agree a cease-fire. Vaňhal's military heroic piece for harpsichord or piano musically described the march of the besieging forces against which Count Saurau led the city's defenders, joined by

nobles, burghers and peasants. The people's love of the emperor and their homeland is expressed as a melodious amoroso, and the spy bringing reports is musically arranged as a passage in the highest part. Napoleon's settlement, the people's joy, the returning imperial couple, a courier and other situations – are all episodes represented by the music. While this program-

matic piece is not so compositionally elaborate as some of the composer's symphonies, piano sonatas or string quartets, it definitely shows his skill and ingenuity.

Organ Music

Until the 19th century there was no precise dividing line between music for organ and for the other keyboard instruments. Compositions that today we consider piano works often appeared in collections of organ pieces. Stylistic criteria determining what was or was not suitable for organ scarcely existed, and the only differences were in technique and range of notes. It should be noted that the organ was not at the forefront of virtuoso interest and that in the Catholic liturgy the emphasis continued to be on improvisation rather than performance of the organ literature, which was in any case more conservative and closely derived from the preceding era. More compositions than previously believed have survived from the South German and Austrian lands, and in the Czech Lands there is also more than has met the eye, since most organ music by Czech composers is scattered in various different manuscript collections, and is usually anonymous or without reliable attribution. Organ pieces are most often designated as prelude, or preambulum, i.e. prelude.

The Vienna Preambula

The Preambula, transcribed two years after the composer's death by a certain Krenn and preserved in the library of the Vienna Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst, are examples of such pieces. It is a collection containing the rather unusual number of eight pieces. Seven of them are preambula, two of which can be found with a few differences in other manuscripts and printed collections, and one fugue in d minor which had already been published in Vienna in 1785 and has survived in the library of the Vienna Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek and Stadtbibliothek, in the National Museum in Prague, in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek in Dresden, in the Musikbibliothek in Leipzig, and in the libraries of conservatories in Brussels, Paris

and Naples. It was also published as *A Fugue [...] by celebrated Vanhall* in London, an edition that exists in the library of the National Museum in Prague.

Preambula have a harmonic score and – as is clear from the title – an entirely free form. They contain numerous chromatic sequences and quantities of modulations, thanks to which some pieces seem almost lacking in any tonal anchorage as they develop. The treatment of theme and motif is free, at the most a question of imitation and favourite sequences. Nonetheless, we can distinguish between two types, i.e. those that follow the organ pattern and are more improvisational in character, and those that tend more to the piano model, and are more elaborated, richer in rhythm, and with typically piano-style jumps of more than an octave. In compositional terms the collection of Vaňhal's *Preambula* corresponds to the published output of the time (pieces by his contemporary Johann Georg Albrechtsberger and others) or those surviving in manuscript. They are even comparatively long, and by no means entirely banal compositions – even compared with other pieces by Vaňhal in different collections such as his *Kurze und leichte Praeambula für Orgel und Clavier* (Vienna 1801), which is characterised by frequent repetition of phrases, figures and octaves in the left hand. These *Praeambula* are not intellectually serious, highly distinctive or individual pieces, but compositions with charming ideas can still be found among them. What is certain is that they were practical pieces of music, perhaps designed as aides for Vaňhal's teaching activities. Although titled as organ pieces, the style oscillates between organ and the increasingly popular piano. As such they are a representative sample of organ music in Central Europe at the turn of the 18th/19th century.

The Challenge of Vaňhal

If we look at areas of Vaňhal's output including liturgical music, songs and others, which have not been covered in this text, we find that the composer managed to apply his high standard of composition using all kinds of musical idioms for all kinds of occasions. His range was huge, for example from the extremely elaborate *Symphony in g minor* to the improvisational *Preambula* for organ, i.e. pieces that at first sight it seems hard to imagine could both be written by the sought after teacher and experienced composer. Discussion of Vaňhal's music centres more on individual pieces. Only a few have survived in autographs, and so numerous questions can be raised in connection with dating or even authorship, and this means that we are not even sure of the number of pieces that are his.

To sum up: Jan Křtitel Vaňhal is an extremely remarkable composer of the era of Classicism and the earliest stages of Romanticism, and set in the context of their time his life and work deserve the attention of music historians, but above all performers and the concert-going public.

JANA SLIMÁČKOVÁ

profiles

zbyněk
vostrák(10th june 1920 – 4th august 1985)

Twenty years ago (in 1985), the composer Zbyněk Vostřák died at the age of 65. His death was not reported in the press, and none of his works appeared on concert or theatre programmes at the time. Vostřák had been among those artists who had fallen into disfavour with the ruling regime, which had almost managed to consign his work to gradual oblivion. Nonetheless, the name of Zbyněk Vostřák continued to sound a chord in the mind of the Czech musical public in two different contexts. For older people his name was associated with the operas and ballets he had written in the 1950s, which had brought him considerable success. For those with a knowledge of the Czech musical avant garde of the 1960s, on the other hand, Zbyněk Vostřák was and remains one of the pioneers and most distinctive composers of New Music in this country. His change of direction from traditional music to the avant garde in 1960 was unique and remarkable for its radicalism. At the beginning of the 1970s, the indignation that musicians of this kind provoked in the conservative and pedestrian environment of official culture turned into active repression. Vostřák's exclusion from the Union of Composers and the banning of *Musica Viva Pragensis*, the group that he directed and for which he composed, meant that his music was not performed in the period of "normali-

sation" (the return of a rigid Stalinist regime), and he was unable to pursue a career as conductor or public composer. The private work that he wrote in isolation in the 1970s and 1980s is therefore little known. Many of the pieces of his last period were only performed in the 1990s, long after his death.

Zbyněk Vostřák was born on the 10th of June 1920 into the family of an architect. He attended general middle school and at the same time, as an able pianist, he got to know a broad musical literature through piano arrangements. He studied composition only privately with Rudolf Karel until 1943, when Karel was arrested by the Gestapo. For Vostřák, his teacher was a great musical and moral model, who influenced his entire first period as a composer. After the war Vostřák reconstructed and instrumented Karel's opera *Tři vlasy děda Vševěda* [*The Three Hairs of Grandad Know-All*], which Karel had sketched on pieces of toilet paper in prison in Pankrác and before his death in the concentration camp in Terezín. The opera was staged in the National Theatre at the beginning of 1948, the young composer's first important collaboration with a major opera company. In the same year he capitalised on the experience it brought him in his own opera *Rohovín čtverrohý* [*The Four-Cornered Hat*] based on a farce by the 19th-century Czech playwright Václav Kliment



Klicpera. When it was produced at the Olomouc theatre the young composer found himself working with artists of the stature of opera director Ferdinand Pujman, the composer Iša Krejčí (in the role of conductor) and the painter Jan Zrzavý (stage designer). The success of the *Hat* launched a thirteen-year period in which Vostřák devoted himself almost exclusively to writing operas and ballets. In all he wrote a total of four operas and three ballets, some of which have orchestral suites of the same name. The frequent production of these works on Prague and regional stages testifies to their popularity at the time. (For example, the ballet *Viktorka* was put on 56 times after its first production in the National Theatre in Prague!)

In terms of musical style, Vostřák's stage works of the 1950s reflect the composer's development from Late Romantic approaches to Neoclassicism of the Prokofiev and Stravinsky type. The first foursome of works – the opera *Rohovín čtverrohý*, the ballets

Filosofská historie [Philosophers' Story] and *Viktorka*, and the opera *Kutnohorskí havíři [The Miners of Kutná Hora]* belong to the world of Late Romanticism. The subjects come from the classics of Czech literature: Klicpera, Jirásek, Němcová, and Tyl. The next work was the fairytale ballet *Sněhurka [Snow White]* (1955), which meant a certain shift in the direction of Neo-classicism in the context of Vostřák's music of the 1950s. A year later he chose an opera libretto on what might be called a "dark" theme. *Pražské nokturno [Prague Nocturno]* is the Faustian story of a soul sold to the devil for worldly privileges, and is set in 17th-century Prague; it was by no means a provocative subject, but it still deviated strikingly from kind of themes preferred in Czech operas written in the 1950s. This was evidently why the opera did not achieve a number of performances comparable with the composer's other stage pieces. After a two-year rest from composition, Vostřák then finished the already planned comic opera *Rozbitý džbán [The Broken Pitcher]* based on the play by Heinrich von Kleist. This, the last of his operas, is a turning point work. The composer finished it in 1961, when he was already seriously concerned with issues of New Music, and in the knowledge that he was concluding one creative phase. In style the work is reminiscent of the world of Stravinsky, of Carl Orff. A radio recording of *The Broken Pitcher* won a prize in 1962 in a UNESCO competition in Paris. It was staged not only by Czech companies but by the opera company in Frankfurt on the Oder, and the recording also came out as a Supraphon record. The success of *The Bro-*

ken Pitcher, however, came only when Vostřák was already entirely captivated by new ideas and regarded all his previous work in a very critical light.

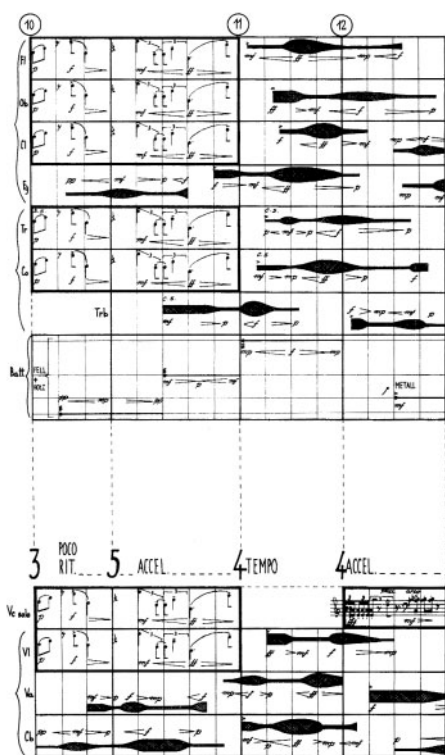
At the beginning of the 1960s, Czechoslovakia gradually became less isolated from news and culture in Western Europe. New contacts with the world avant garde suddenly opened up what had been a forbidden world that in interim had experienced huge change and development. Alongside Jan Klusák, Rudolf Komorous and Vladimír Šrámek, Vostřák was one of the first Czech composers to respond to the new impulses. His interest in the music of Anton Webern and his later followers was a natural outcome of his previous path in music. Unlike most Czech composers Vostřák was not content just to transfer serial technique into traditional musical forms. From the beginning it was clear to him that the new aesthetics related to every level of musical thought. In his forties he began to "relearn" to compose, making deep and systematic efforts to get to know the new composing techniques. He spent a whole year working up quantities of exercises and material studies. It was not until 1961 that he wrote the first compositions of his twelve-tone period, among them the song cycle *Tři sonety ze Shakespeara [Three Sonnets from Shakespeare]* (1963), for which he won a prize at an international composing competition in Rome. In his music of the following years one can see his search for distinctive expressive methods of his own – methods that would retain the technical advances and aesthetics of the New Music but at the same time create the basis for an entirely original personal style. These efforts bore fruit in the later 1960s when Vostřák formulated his theory of the three principles of form, on which he built his own compositional method. In 1967 Vostřák cast it in coherent theoretical form in a text entitled "Chapters from Musical Poetics". In addition to setting out the theory of principles of form, the text contained a sketch of Vostřák's philosophy of composition. The two were interconnected and both were valid in their essential features for the whole of the composer's subsequent output. His three "principles of form", or "conceptual primary models of music", *statics*, *kinetics* and *rhythmics*, are essentially abstractions (like harmony, melody and rhythm) – they do not exist in absolutely pure form, it is possible only to approximate more or less to these pure types, and music is usually a unity of all three. Vostřák defines them roughly as follows: *statics* = long notes, unmoving or slowly changing harmony; *kinetics* = melodic configurations, glissandi; *rhythmics* = strongly rhythmic configurations, repeated notes, isolated short sounds. In addition to the "pure" formal principles, S, K, R, Vostřák distinguishes three combinations, i.e. SK, KR and RS. He thus arrives at six basic possibilities, which can be graphically expressed as a spectrum of colours with three kinds of polarity between each pure type and combinations of the other two.



From this time on Vostřák's music was usually composed in internally homogeneous sections controlled by the different types of principles or their combinations, which thus represent as it were the basic building blocks of musical form. It is one of the rules that S, K and R have to be in equilibrium inside the whole work, for the ideal is a balance of all three elements creating the totality of music. When composing Vostřák drew up detailed graphic plans before he started work on a score. The basis of the plans was always some kind of idea from outside music, which was projected into the structure of the work on various levels and in various parameters. The ideas that Vostřák transformed into music were drawn from the world of religion, mysticism, science and other branches of art. Each idea would find a representation first in the shape of an abstract form (plan), and then analogically in a musical form. This analogy was not necessarily direct, however, but could be mediated indirectly through numerical or geometrical relationships.

One particular line in Zbyněk Vostřák's output consists of pieces that exploit the principle of chance, improvisation, or have an open form. Vostřák had excellent opportunities for experimentation with new forms of performance thanks to the ensemble *Musica viva pragensis*, which he directed and conducted. In his open-form compositions he usually worked with a variable order of sections, or through improvisational realisation of graphic concepts. The most radical example of this line is the *Kniha principů [Book of Principles]*, which is a cycle of verbal scores containing only brief verbal instructions for improvisation. This is preceded, however, by a lengthy introduction which introduces the performers to Vostřák's aesthetics and theory of principles of form before they realise the piece.

Zbyněk Vostřák also made important contributions to the field of electro-acoustic composition. He was one of the first to get a chance to work in a new electro-acoustic music studio set up for Prague radio. The studio was well-equipped for its time and the technicians and composers received valuable information through seminars in Prague in 1966, at which lectures were given by Pierre Schaeffer, Guy Raibel and Francois Bayle. Vostřák was so taken with electronic music that he was to keep returning to it in the seven years that followed. In this period he produced a total of nine electro-acoustic pieces, and three for instruments accompanied by a recorded tape. From the outset Vostřák chose a highly distinctive approach to electro-acoustic composing. He would come to the studio with a worked-out project for which he had created or found concrete material. He would classify the sound objects



4 Timpani

Perc.

4 Piatto

sempre

Viol. I.

sempre molto rubato

Vc 2

c sord.

pp

4 Tom-toms

Piatto

sempre molto rubato

Viol. I.

sempre molto rubato

Vc 2

c sord.

pp

The symbolism of numbers and forms runs through the form of the composition from the proportions of the whole to the interval and rhythmic relationships within note series. Fine art was a major model, interesting Vostřák particularly in all its symbolist forms, from the Middle Ages to the present – from the builders of cathedrals who coded magical numbers into the proportions of the architecture to surrealist paintings with their enigmatic allegories. He tried to transfer into music the principle of hidden meanings that are as it were “extra” in a work of art, under the level of direct aesthetic effect. In some of his pieces he directly refers to specific works of art: *Krásná zahradnice* [Beautiful Gardener – *La Belle Jardinier*] refers to Max Ernst's picture of the same title, depicting a female figure in which Vostřák saw the Mother of God. In *Parabole* [Parable] a painting by Hieronymous Bosch has reminded him of a parable of Christ. In the views of the painter Yves Klein Vostřák found much that was close to his own: the symbolism of the trio of basic colours in Klein's monochromy strikingly corresponds to Vostřák's thoughts on the principles of form and the radicalism of a work like *Trias* has affinities with the aesthetics of contrast between colour surfaces in painting. We also find musical timbre treated as an analogy to the symbolism of colours in *Motýl světla* [Butterfly of Light] and in *Krystaly* [Crystals] (12 precious stones are characterised *inter alia* by their colours, to which

correspond the way that SKR is mixed and the instrumental groups). Apart from colours, in Vostřák's music we might also find examples of the “musical arrangement” of visual forms. The vault of the Gothic church for example finds its representation in the narrowing tonal ambit of the first part of *Katedrála* [Cathedral], in *Motýl světla* [Butterfly of Light] the form is symmetry and so on. From fine art Vostřák also took over the coding of meanings through the symbolism of number. Numbers that have concrete meanings in the Judaeo-Christian tradition become the basis for the formal structuring of pieces. For example the number 9, which is the number of the Mother of God, determined the nine-part form of the composition *Domina*, and the number 12 runs through the compositions *Poslední večeře* [The Last Supper] and *Krystaly* [Crystals]. *Pyramidy hledí do věčnosti* [The Pyramids Gaze into Eternity] are founded on the number 4, which is the number of man. Finally the number 3 is a special case, referring as it does to the mystery of the Holy Trinity itself. In Vostřák's plans the trinity is often represented by the totality of SKR, which at other times symbolise the three aspects of the human soul: emotion, will and reason, and so on. The idea encoded in the score is not actually necessarily designed to be decoded by the listener. Indeed, it is more the composer's private affair, giving his work an inner order and direction, strengthening his resolution,

and consecrating the result. Thus from the great abundance of his inspirations the composer offers the listener only a part – the music and the name of the piece. The listener is invited to liberate his own imagination and to experience the adventure from the other side. Zbyněk Vostřák represents a constructivist type of composer rare in Czech music. The thorough application of a principle of construction allows him to eliminate all that is subjective. For Vostřák, music is an abstract art of pure forms and only the unifying idea, from which the principle grows, gives it a secret connection with the spiritual world. In his last period the composer also ventured even deeper into the domain of artistic hermeticism, freed of all imperatives of success or fashion. Under his hands crystal pure and remarkably balanced musical forms emerged. Vostřák no longer anticipated the responses of a broad public, and did not even hope that his new pieces might soon be performed. His ambitions were now directed only to the music itself and to the conquest of as it were a hidden perfect and definitive form, purity of style and the uniqueness of the work. It is telling that one of his last pieces bears a mysterious subtitle in which, perhaps, that unostentatious triumph of the creative spirit is encoded: “Victorious Pearl”.

MIROSLAV PUHLÁK

Selection of Vostřák's Work

Vocal

Žalmy [Psalms], 1956 for bass and piano
Do usínání [Into slumbers], 1961 for soprano and piano on words by F. Halas,
Two Japanese Madrigals, 1962 for female choir on words by Renáta Pandulová
Three Sonnets from Shakespeare, 1963 for bass and chamber orchestra

Operas

Rohovín čtverrohý [The Four-cornered Hat]-, 1948, comic opera
Kutnohorští havíři [The Miners of Kutná Hora], 1951–53
Pražské nokturno [Prague Nocturno] 1957–58
Rozbitý džbán [The Broken Pitcher], 1960–61, comic opera

Ballets

Filosofská historie [Philosophers' Story], 1949
Viktorka, 1950

Orchestral

Suite from the ballet Philosophers' Story, 1949,
Suite from the dance ballad Viktorka, 1950,
Polka Suite, 1954
Snow White – suite from the ballet, 1956,
Prague Nocturno – music from the opera, 1960
Zrození Měsíce [Birth of the Moon], 1966
Metahudba [Metamusic], 1968
Tajemství elipsy [The Mystery of the Ellipse] 1970
Mozaika [Mosaic], 1970–71
Trias, 1973–74
Pyramidy hledí do věčnosti [The Pyramids Gaze into Eternity], 1975
Parabola [A Parable], 1977–78 for orchestra and tape
Katedrála [Cathedral], 1979–80
Sinfonia, 1981–82 for orchestra and choir (not yet performed)

Choral

Dětské sbory [Children's Choirs], 1951
Kantáta na text Franze Kafky [Cantata to the Text by Franz Kafka], 1964

Chamber

Two Pieces for Clarinet and Piano, 1946
Contrasts, 1961 for string quartet
Krystalizace [Crystallisations], 1962 for 12 wind instruments (fl, ob, c.i., cl, fg, cfg, 2cor, 2tr, 2bn)
Rekolekce [Recollections], 1962 for solo violin
Tři eseje [Three Essays], 1962 for piano
Afekty [Affects], 1963 (fl, cl, fg, vl, vla, vcl, pno)
Elementy [Elements], 1964 for string quartet,
Trigonum, 1965 for violin, oboe and piano
Synchronia, 1965 cl, fg, vl, vcl, pno, arpa
Kosmogonia, 1965 for string quartet
Kyvadlo času [The Pendulum of Time], 1966–67 for cello, 4 instrumental groups and electric organ

Tao, 1967, score in 12 movable sheets for 9 players - fl, ob, cl, fg, vl, vla, vcl, cb, perc.
Sextant, 1969, for wind quintet
Concomitances, 1971, for one player on percussion and tape
Proměna I [Metamorphosis I], 1972 for chamber ensemble and tape
Krásná zahradnice [The Beautiful Gardener], 1972-73 for brass quintet (2tr, 2cor, tbn)
Tajný rybolov [Secret Fishing], 1973 for 4 instrumental groups (profile determined by conductor)
Kniha principů [The Book of Principles], 1973 verbal score for an undefined number of players
Oběť svíce [Sacrifice of the Candle], 1974 for 3 instrumental groups and 3 product modulators
Domina, 1975-76 for violin and percussion
Něžné pásky, které zavazují [The Gentle Ties which Bind], 1976-77
Mahasarasvátí, 1977-78
Polarita [Polarity], 1978 for cello and (retuned) piano
Poslední večeře [The Last Supper] (4th string quartet), 1979
Hieroglyphen, 1979 for dulcimer
Kapesná vesmír, [Pocket Universe] 1980-81 for

flute, dulcimer and strings (French horn and percussion)
Motýl světla [Butterfly of Light], 1983, for bass clarinet and piano
Krystaly [Crystals], 1983, for cor anglais, strings and percussion
Vítězná perla [Victorious Pearl], 1984 concerto for piano and orchestra
Tajemství růže [The Secret of the Rose], 1984-85 concerto for organ, brass quintet and percussion

Music for tape

Váhy světla [Scales of Light], 1967
Dvě ohniska [Two Foci], 1969
Telepatie [Telepathy], 1970
Sedm prahů [Seven Thresholds], 1970
Síto ticha [Net of Silence], 1971
Chemické sňatky [The Chemical Weddings], 1972
Zlatá mříž [Golden Grille], 1972
Jedno ve všem [One in Everything], 1973
Proměna II [Metamorphosis II], 1974

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