czech music quarterly

Tomáš Hanzlík

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Ostrava Days Ondřej Adámek The Prague Manifesto

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Czech music information centre

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Dear Readers,

It is being said that the diversitiy and plurality in the world of contemporary music is its positive feature. The spring issue of the Czech Music Quarterly appears to agree with this proposition though is true we are still staying quite safely within the bounds of classical music. In terms of aesthetic conceptions, composition technique, basis of inspiration and environment they come from, the composers Tomáš Hanzlík and Ondřej Adámek (both of whose penultimate number in the birth year is seven) represent two really different worlds. It is actually even possible they will find out about each other through the magazine you are reading at this very moment. If, however, we would not think they are both good at what they do, we would obviously not write about them. I shall leave up to you to find other meeting points of their distant worlds. When it comes to musical plurality, I would like to mention an extremely enlightening article by J. Havlík about the Prague Manifesto. I believe it should not escape your attention. Not even today, sixty years after the Manifesto came into existence, there is no shortage of calls for vigorous solution of so called contemporary music crisis. I wish you a beautiful summer and in case you decide to visit the Czech Republic during your holiday, certainly do not forget to pack our music-loving tourist's guide. By the way, our editorial office is based in Prague, immediately after the bridge by the National Theatre. We will be greatly pleased should you come and visit. PB

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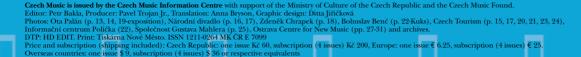
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IT HAS TO ENTERTAIN ME AND THE OTHERS

Tomáš Hanzlík is someone who has been known and talked about for roughly a decade now. As a scholar, a composer, a conductor, a singer and a teachers – in other words as an artist of many parts, and not just music. His talents as a visual artist and writer permeate the musical activities that are his central interest. Tomáš Hanzlík (1972) is the author of chamber and orchestral music, cantatas, melodramas and a number of operas. He has also written a ballet. His interests as a scholar, i.e. the archival legacy of Czech Baroque composers, are unashamedly the starting point for his own music, but at the same time, however, his compositions are supremely contemporary, and draw stylistically on minimal music. Tomáš is the artistic director of the Damian Ensemble, which he founded, and he organises a Baroque festival ever year in Olomouc.



What first interested you about Baroque music, and what continues to attract you?

As a child I had a few records of Vivaldi and Bach, but at that time I enjoyed Mozart more. I come from a non-musical family (although that doesn't mean unmusical!), so I had to beat my own path from the beginning. I still have a very precise memory of my first "stumble" in the direction of classical music. It was at my elementary school in Chocna and it was hearing Mozart's A Little Night Music on a hissing gramophone. Mono. Mozart kept me going for many years. Then, in my very first year at university I listened to all the gramophone records that they had in the library there, and my interest shifted to the 20th century. My biggest favourite was Stravinsky. Later on I heard a few of Pavel Klikar's radio programmes, where he presented Baroque music played on period instruments. Suddenly early music struck me as just as interesting as modern music, and even as more expressive thanks to the highly individual performers. This motivated me to develop a greater interest in the period, and I soon found out what a huge and unmapped area of research it is - and not only in this country. Through the sound quality of authentic instruments I noticed that even the musical structure of Baroque represents a musical system that is still immensely relevant today, and in certain modified forms informed the work of Mozart and Stravinsky.



Endymio

What led you to choose music as your profession?

As a child I wanted to play the piano, but it was too expensive. The violin was chosen, because my parents could borrow one. As soon as they brought it home to me, I shut myself up in the bathroom and scraped away on it for several hours without stopping. Unfortunately for years I had teachers who didn't know how to play the violin themselves, and I didn't find it much fun just playing scales and exercises all year long, polishing up one piece and then playing it in a state of stress at a music school concert after one rehearsal with the accompanist. I didn't practice. I found it more fun improvising my own melodies, or trying to play music I heard on records from memory. The reason that I didn't ultimately give up was that I got another teacher and started chamber music - we played duos and trios. That completely enthralled me. Immediately in my first year at high school in Vysoké Mýto I founded an ensemble of all the instruments played by people in the same year, and I arranged all kinds of pieces for it with my friend Tomáš Klíma. We both composed a little ourselves – my biggest project was an opera I wrote on a libretto by my classmate Hana Macková – Pin, Tan, Bel. The story was a sort of mixture of the Magic Flute and Three Veterans [A popular modern Czech fairytale], but it was biting off more than we can chew so we never got as far as a premiere. What was interesting about this music was that it was written without any knowledge of music theory on harmony and counterpoint, and just using the violin and my feeble imagination. The result was something between Mozart and Machaut, but basically it didn't resemble anything. My friends convinced me that I had pretty negligible prospects in music, and I was supposed to have much more talent for art. In the end I even applied to the Academy of Fine Art but naturally I didn't get in. That left music, and maybe the only career possibility for an amateur violinist – becoming a music teacher.

Where did you learn the craft of composition?

I'm self taught. I used the old Baroque method – copying. The majority of the pieces I copied were by members of the Piarist Order. So I could say I served my apprenticeship with the Piarists. In musicology I analysed a great many different kinds of compositions in great detail. Actually it suited me not to have to write anything just to get a degree and a certificate to say I was a contemporary composer of seri-



The Bloody Black Porch

Yta innocens

ous music. I am very sorry, but I'm afraid I don't enjoy most contemporary music as it is written today. It is often full of egocentricity, attitude-striking and spite, and is short on humour, natural musicality and ultimately even individuality. Maybe minimalism is primitive, but today that balancing on the borders of taste seems to me much more avant-garde than the churning out of more and more stuff based on academicised composition techniques of the 1950s and 60s.

Why minimalism in particular?

It is the only art music style that has reacted positively to the achievements of popmusic. I personally hate pop and mass culture. Not for its form, but for militant expansionism, the way it spreads bad taste through the media and pushes all minority types of culture to the periphery. In our case what is known as "serious music" (classical music). For me minimalism – actually it is already post-minimalism – is a good space where there is still the potential for thinking up something new. When I work in a minimalistic way with historicising styles, unusual connections often emerge. Recently I was listening to Antonín Rejcha's *36 Fugues* played by Jaroslav Tůma on the hammerclavier. Rejcha was experimenting with Baroqisms at the beginning of Romanticism and essentially arrived at the same style I had been using in my opera *Lacrimae Alexandri Magni* in 2006.

You are already considered an expert on the performance of minimal music – at the Hradec Králové Hudební fórum festival in 2006 you presented Reich's opera Three Tales with the Damiam Ensemble and the percussion group DAMA DAMA. I guess there is minimal and minimal...?

I am enormously glad to have had the chance to get to know this opera so intimately. It is a beautiful piece of music, but enormously draining for performers. The permanently changeable metre, the very fast tempos, the micropolyphony – and all of this plus a pre-recorded audio tape and video. I know it may not bother the audience, but here the live musician is a touch degraded to the status of a sound sampler controlled by a metronome. On the other hand it's an experience I would wish on all musicians who tell a composer that his requirements are at the limits of playability. In this opera that kind of debate is irrelevant – you have to play precisely in accordance with the film, which carries on without you having any way of affecting it.

What is your view of historically authentic performance?

It's the only performance there is any sense in trying for. Performers shouldn't be looking for their own views on a piece, but for the form in which the piece will sound most natural. Baroque music played without a knowledge of articulation sounds wooden and lifeless. All my experiences as a listener keep on confirming me in this opinion. Admittedly one can play authentically on modern instruments as well, but with some limitations. And why limit yourself when today we already have specialised performers? In early music authenticity is a very speculative matter, which is why there exist so many different conceptions of how to play it, but Stravinsky, for example, sounds most logical on the recordings he himself made towards the end of his life.

You and the Damian Ensemble honour the principles of authentic performance but you don't confine yourselves to playing early music only on old instruments – what kind of philosophy is this?

A melody played continuously with a vibrato tone has immediate associations with Romanticism and its concept of emotional charge. So if we want to develop a sense of the poetics of the 19th century, it is this vibrato that we use. For early music, neoclassicism, twelve-tone music, serialism, sonic styles and minimalism, the basis is the even tone, with vibrato just as one of its modifications, and since there are many ways of altering the properties of the tone, why confine yourself to one. To play vibrato all the time strikes me as just as absurd as to play staccato continuously. Music must be refined (differentiated) and at the same time lucid (clear); correct articulation and phrasing are the most important things. I regard intonation as something to be taken for granted.

The Damian Ensemble is a vocal and instrumental chamber ensemble that is quite unique when it comes to the commitment and elan of its members and the scintillating energy of its productions. What is the recipe for such a vitalising ensemble?

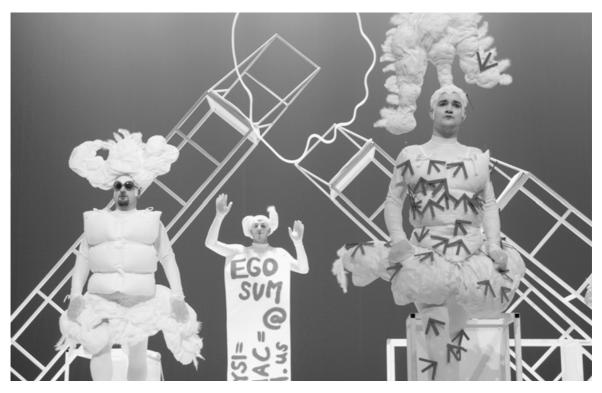
You need to find the right people and you need to know how to spark their confidence and enthusiasm. The most important thing is to keep on motivating them and communicate a quantum of your own energy to them. The core of our ensemble is more or less stable, but the precise combination changes depending on the demands of the score and also on life – who is available and who isn't. The largest combination we ever used was choir and chamber orchestra. The energy potential in a musician is much more important to me than his or her technical standard. Judged by classical criteria all our singers are actually amateurs.

What repertoire do you play?

We've reached the stage where we only play 18th-century music and minimalism. In the case of Baroque and Classicism these are mainly modern premieres of works by unknown Bohemian composers: T.N.Koutník, K.Vogel, A.Mašát, V.Kalous, and J.A.N.Brosmann. As far as contemporary composers, apart from my work we play music by Vít Zouhar, Steve Reich, and Michal Nyman. Recently we've been devoting ourselves almost entirely to the stage performance of operas.

Is this connected with your concept of Baroque poetics or with your penchant for visual arts?

Music in itself is a very gestural art. It is very closely connected with movement. The more precise these movements are, the more perfect the play, coordination and energy becomes. And in performing music there is also a great deal of the ritual,



Lacrimae Alexandri Magni

the ceremonial, the festive. What I'm trying to suggest is that music is theatre even without costumes and a director. This said, even at Damian's very first concert, the theatre element was consciously brought out by the "blocking" of the singers and directed gestures. At that point I had no theoretical knowledge of Baroque theatre, but I intuitively felt that the presence of the theatrical in Baroque music. My later knowledge and experience only confirmed that attention to the visual side of our concerts could only be of benefit to all sides (the audience, the music itself, the performers).

Still, as time has gone by, has the stage form of your productions developed its own distinctive features? What are the principles involved here?

At the beginning the directed visual aspect was limited to spacing and movement. Then I met Vendula Johnová, and together we started to create special costumes, props, and stage design. We also experimented with video-projections, but ultimately we found we both had more of an affinity for natural or recycled materials and simple candle lighting. Our art concept can be summoned up by the slogan: loads of effect for little money. The first three operas cost us practically nothing for materials – everything was made out of stuff destined for the rubbish tip. Our design was always based on immediate direct inspiration by the story – as a way of making sure that the audience wouldn't be confused about anything. But now we are trying to make some subtle shifts and add irony to this kind of predictability and conventionality.

What has been the public response like, and where specifically?

I've found it almost mystifying that with all out limits we have still managed to interest quite a wide spectrum of the public. From serious festivals to street performances to snob evening parties. Once we even played in a mental home. Most of our concerts are here in the Czech Republic, but we have also travelled to Slovakia, Austria, Germany, Latvia and Estonia.

What was the vision behind your founding of the Baroko festival in Olomouc in 1998? I started to organise the festival as a student, with the idea of publicising the previously unknown beauty of the Bohemian baroque in authentic form. Then we gradually started introducing new things on the programme that were just related to Baroque rather than Baroque themselves. I must say here with regret that early music and even its most famous performers simply don't interest the wider public, and I am in a situation where I have think hard about where I invest my time and energy. Our neo-operas have always attracted by far the most public interest, but these are getting further and further away from Baroque. That was one of the reasons why two years ago we started to hold the Opera Schrattenbach festival in Olomouc, since this has the potential to become a space for new repertory ideas.

Your neo-Baroque minimalist operas – Endymio, Yta innocens, Torso [Fragment], Kirké, Krvavá pavlač [The Bloody Back Porch], and Lacrimae Alexandri Magni – are something that have no parallel either in this country or – as far as I know – abroad. Where does it all come from?

Looking back, I think I can say that despite some temporary detours I was heading in this direction from the beginning. I wrote my first opera at sixteen. From my school days I was always the boy who entertained the company, the showman. At university my fellow students would take me to the pub so that I could keep the girls at the table in a good mood. I would tell stories, recite, parody various singers, philosophise... Then my friends would each take one of the girls back home, drunk. It was just me who ended up spending the night alone. The operas are actually a continuation of this concept – I want to tell strange stories to entertain people and at the same time make them notice my existence.

Pierre Boulez said that opera houses should be blown up. In a survey of middle-school children on the popularity of the various forms of serious music, respondents chose the possible answer "Can't stand it" only with one genre – opera. What in your view does it take for opera to be "alive" or functional?

I can't stand the classical tradition of romantic opera, either, as it is probably cultivated in most of the conventional opera houses. I teach at a gymnasium (high school) and sometimes I play these Baroque authentic or super-modern operas to my pupils; it is clear they have never heard anything like it and at least some of them are intrigued by it. But the problem is not just about opera, it's about modern serious music in general. Today no one believes you can listen to contemporary music without getting depressed. The problem is that this type of culture has been pushed by previous developments right outside the angle of vision of most of the population. Often people who come to our productions say, "I would never go to opera in my life, but what you're doing is good fun." When I wrote offering out operas to two regional opera houses in Moravia, I received very queer answers, like "your productions are too small for our theatre", "this is not for our public", go and do that sort of thing in the National Theatre in Prague" and so on. And this, absurdly, is why we have now already presented five of our operas on National Theatre stages and a sixth has been produced by the National Theatre opera company itself.

You do a lot of work with texts – whether reconstructing early music for performance or as a composer (cantatas, operas, melodramas). What does the text mean for you?

In music the text means the human voice – mostly singing. It is the most mysterious instrument of all. It is true that relatively little singing really sweeps me off my feet, but it makes singing all the more precious. After all, it's generally true that fateful passions in life are few.

You have written a number of works – including operas – on Latin texts. What are the specifics of working with Latin?

I find Latin beautiful for many reasons. It is just as far or near for all the nations of the world. It is one of the fundamental ancient media of culture and civilisation. When an utterance is in Latin it therefore becomes somehow more solemn, but at the same time it as it were passes us by. There is a peculiar distance there. As if something was speaking outside of us. Two texts by the piarist P. David Kopecký (Endymio 1727, Yta innocens 1728) possessed an exceptionally musical quality, because he actually wrote them to be set to music. The music has not survived, but when you read the text aloud, even if you don't understand Latin it sounds like music. According to period testimony even then it was something rare to write operas in Latin.

You wrote the libretto for Kirké yourself – what was behind that and what were you trying to do?

It was a matter of necessity. I had already chosen the theme and it was obvious that nobody was going to write a libretto that I wouldn't have to wrestle with myself in reasonable time. I took an entirely technical approach. First I wrote a severe plain text in an archaic style expressing everything necessary for understanding the story, and then I cast it in metrical or versified form to make it easy to set to music.

But Roman Ludva had already written you a libretto for the The Bloody Back Porch... The libretto for that opera was produced in a rather similar way. The writer Roman



Lacrimae Alexandrii Magni



Lacrimae Alexandri Magni

Ludva came to me with a filmscript which would have made a five-hour opera if set to music as it stood. Once again I chose from the text just a few key utterances by the main characters and then imposed a rhythm on it simply by repetition. David Hrbek has just been writing very good song texts for me for the opera *Tvarůžkové ódy – Little-Cheese Odes*, about the miraculous power of Olomouc's famous smelly cheese.

For non-Czech readers, what are Olomouc Little Cheeses?

It's a traditional brand of cheese with an amazingly intense smell. The little cheeses are produced in Loštice and are very popular all over the republic. The European Union wanted to ban them for reasons of hygiene.

Little-Cheese Odes have a broad-side ballads dimension. There is a similar moment in The Bloody Back Porch, where you provide the instrumental element yourself on a barrel organ. Do you have urge to go to the fair?

I myself wouldn't have gone looking for street theatre, but I got to know the mime Sergej Sanža, who is a genius in the field. He directed and took part in my balletmelodrama *Arion* and in the opera *Bloody Back Porch*, and we worked together on *The Mausolem of General Loudon* with Mozart music for mechanical organ. He also played in the Baroque Haná region opera *Landebork*, which was an unusual success with the public. He does theatre with deaf and dumb people as well, so he had the idea of simultaneously translating the Haná dialect into sign language. People were laughing non-stop for an hour and a half. I had never experienced that before in opera and I probably never will again. I do at least one new project with Sergej every year. The idea about the Olomouc cheeses is his.

What has each of your operas brought you in the way of new understanding and experience?

If you want to have a good time, you have to do it yourself. From the beginning to the end. I verified my ability to guess some of the reactions of the public and its different categories of taste, but basically my approach is to come up with something that I like, to please myself. The fact that I write most of these pieces in a very accessible way, even playing to the gallery, is because I personally happen to like this "filmic" style. I also have more ambiguous pieces, but experience has convinced me that unfortunately you can't offer them to the broader public these days. That is why they are mainly things for chamber setup, addressed to a smaller circle of the initiated. Among my operas so far, that is most true of *Kirké*.

Which of your operas are you most satisfied with?

So far with none – I have to write more. But *Kirké* is the one I like best, because it will need the most help if anyone is to want it. The others sell themselves.

Would you do something differently in any of them today, with hindsight?

I would never do anything differently. I work so hard and spend so much time on my pieces that I always end up with the only possible form I am capable of. When I'm forced to make a later alteration (new instrumentation, increasing the length) I always feel that it's falling apart and I have to start writing it all over again.

Your most recent opera Lacrimae Alexandri Magni is "neo-baroque minimalist" in style, like the others. How did you feel when the director Rocc staged it with modern design?

I liked the fact that it was new and different to the way I had it done it before, but I have to say that it means that an opera with narrative historicising progressions in the text rather loses its support in the visual element. To put it the other way round – if I had known that the production would look like that, I would have written the opera differently.

You wrote Lacrimae Alexandri Magni as a commission from the National Theatre in Prague. What is the different between working without an institutional base and working with one – for an opera house?

It was hugely instructive. Although I just looked on for the whole time and acted simply as a sort of consultant, I learned a great deal there... in the sense of how to do it in future, and what it would be pointless to try. I was very much confirmed in what I said earlier about authentic interpretation. It made me tougher on myself and others. I got to know a lot of new, intelligent talented people. And last but not least I got a commission from a prestigious festival.

You still carry on with your research in the quiet of the archives – what have you been discovering?

Recently I brought the old parts for nine major masses by Václav Kalous (1715 – 1786) back from Litomyšl. I probably won't have time to put it all together myself in the foreseeable future, but I have a few clever students. What I really admire about these old masters is that they wrote honest and brilliant music so humbly and without any demand for reward. I too am becoming all too aware that it means almost nothing in our culture today.

Apart from the Little-Cheese Odes, what can we look forward to from you in the near future?

At the Baroko 2007 festival we shall be presenting the modern premiere of the opera, *The Peasant Rebellion* of Jan Antoš which was considered lost until recently. Together with Sergej Sanža I am working on a pantomime called *The Adventures of Harlequin*. I shall be composing an oratorio called *Ruina Luciferi* on a Baroque Latin text and I hope I shall find another story for an opera. At the moment I'm looking hard for one.

THE MUSIC-LOVING TOURIST'S GUIDE TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

According to a Czech proverb, it is better to see something once than to hear about it twice. In that spirit, and with the holiday season in the offing, we are providing you with this small "tourist" guide to the "musical monuments" of the Czech Republic. We have tried to choose the most interesting and the most famous, but of course ours is inevitably a very limited sample. On the other hand, regardless of their importance for the past or present of music, all the places chosen have the extra advantage of being simply beautiful, and in many of them you will find live music – often as part of various summer festivals.





The Bedřich Smetana Museum

The Bedřich Smetana Museum has been housed since 1936 in the Neo-Renaissance building of the former Old Town Waterworks built in the 1890s on the embankment of the River Vltava close to Charles Bridge. The current permanent exhibition, opened in 1998, provides a comprehensive picture of the life and work of the composer Bedřich Smetana. Here vou can learn about his childhood and his first steps towards a career in music, his studies, first successes as a pianist and composer, his teaching activities (thanks to which he met his future first wife Kateřina Kolářová), his five years in Göteborg in Sweden, his work in music societies, his role as a conductor of revived philharmonic concerts and at the then new Provisional Theatre, and of course the period of his full maturity and ripening as a composer, when he created the founding works of modern Czech music and continued to write masterpieces even when afflicted with complete deafness from 1874. If you are prepared to go further afield, you can still see the place where he wrote the works - in many respects innovative - of his last creative period (including the four symphonic poems of the My Country cycle, the operas The Dove, The Secret and the Devil's Wall, both string quartets and From the Homeland for violin and piano). This is the Smetana's son-in-law Josef Schwarz's gamekeeper's lodge in Jabkenice (between the cities Nymburk and Mladá Boleslav), now the Bedřich Smetana Monument, where the composer lived from 1875 (www.nm.cz/jabkenice).

The Bedřich Smetana Museum

Part of the National Museum, The Czech Museum of Music (see CM 2/06) Novotného lávka 1 110 00 Prague 1 tel.+ fax: +420 222 220 082, e-mail: b_smetana_muzeum@nm.cz Internet: www.nm.cz/english/info.php#mbs Open daily except Tuesdays, 10.00 – 12:00 a.m. and 12.30 – 5.00 p.m.







The Antonín Dvořák Museum

The Antonín Dvořák Museum

Part of the National Museum, Czech Museum of Music Ke Karlovu 20, 120 00 Praha 2 tel.+ fax: +420 224 923 363, e-mail: a_dvorak_muzeum@nm.cz Internet: www.nm.cz/english/info.php#mad Open: Jan.- March, Oct. - Dec.: Tues. - Sun. 9.30 a.m. - 1.30 p.m., 2.00 - 5.00 p.m., April - Sept.: Tues. - Sun. 10.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. 2.00 - 5.30 p.m. The Antonín Dvořák Museum has been housed since its founding in 1932 in a Baroque summer house known as Amerika which was built at the beginning of the 18th century to a design by the most distinguished architect of the day, Kilián Ignác Dientzenhofer. In the garden there are the remains of Baroque statues by Matyáš Braun. Antonín Dvořák lived here with his family following his return from New York in 1895, and it is the place where he composed the works of his last creative period: the String Quartets in A flat major and D major, the symphonic poems based on the Erben's ballads the Watergoblin, the Noon Witch, the Golden Spinning Wheel and the Wild Dove, the symphonic poem A Hero's Song, The Festival Song, and the operas The Devil and Kate, Rusalka and Armida. The museum was founded by the Society for the Erection of a Monument to Maestro Antonín Dvořák in Prague. The aim expressed in the society's title was in fact only achieved in the year 2000, when a rather problematic statue of the composer was unveiled in front of the Rudolfinum concert hall. The museum honours and cultivates Dvořák's legacy by keeping most of his literary estate, including the manuscripts of his pieces, by carrying out and encouraging archival and research work and by holding concerts not only of the works of Antonín Dvořák, but also of music by the youngest generation of composers. The house where Dvořák was born, in Nelahozeves, has been converted into a memorial to him, and a festival matinée called "Dvořák's Nelahozeves" is held there every year just before his birthday (the beginning of September). The museum also looks after the Josef Suk Memorial (Suk was Dvořák's son-in-law) in the house where Suk was born in Křečovice near Sedlčany, and a spring festival is organised there in his honour.

Bertramka – The Museum of W.A. Mozart and the Dušeks

The Bertramka Villa, which is now the Museum of W. A. Mozart and the Dušeks, is located to the south west of the former Prague City Walls in what is now the Smíchov District, close to the Anděl intersection. In the later Middle Ages there were vineyards there, and





in one of them, on the slopes of Černý Hill, the Baroque villa was built around 1700 on the site of a 16th-century vineyard cottage. It got its name from one former owner, but in the years 1784 - 99 it was the property of the famous soprano Josefina Dušková, wife of the teacher and composer František Xaver Dušek, who was her former teacher and elder by 23 years. At the Bertramka, their summer residence, they would play host to celebrated musicians and young unknowns, and would hold music academies. On a visit to Salzburg they made friends with the Mozarts, and W.A.Mozart was subsequently a guest at the Bertramka, sometimes with his wife too, on all three of his visits to Prague (1787, 1789, 1791; see CM 2/06). Mozart gave several concerts with Josefina, who was close to him in age and temperament, and in leisure moments the two entertained each other with jokes. A story told by Mozart's son and published in the Berliner Musikzeitung Echo in 1856 relates that after the sensational premiere of the opera Don Giovanni, commissioned for Prague and completed at the Bertramka in the Autumn of 1787, Josefina locked Mozart in the garden pavilion, telling him that she wouldn't let him out until he had written an aria he had promised her. Mozart made it a condition that she should sing sightreading. Believe it or not, that is how the aria Bella mia fiamma is supposed to have been written and first performed. In 1856 the then owner of the Bertramka Adolf Popelka had a bust of Mozart placed in the garden and held commemorative gatherings - one of those attending was Antonín Dvořák (then just fifteen), who always admired Mozart. In 1929 the Mozart Society in the Czechoslovak Republic acquired the Bertramka. The present permanent exhibition has been here since 1956. The large room with a view of the garden, and in good weather the adjacent outdoor amphitheatre, are often used for the Mozart concerts at the Prague Spring Festival, while from spring to autumn it is the venue for concert series and festivals devoted to young musicians and premieres of new pieces - since 1970 young performers have been vying with each other at the annual Dušek Youth Music Competition. The museum has just introduced a scheme allowing people to order private concerts here for a price lower than 1.000 EUR.

Bertramka – The Museum of W. A. Mozart and the Dušeks

Mozartova 169, 150 00 Praha 5 tel.: +420 257 318 461 (ticket office), +420 257 317 465 (office), fax: +420 257 316 753 e-mail: mozart@bertamka.cz internet: www.bertramka.com open daily all year round: April – October: 9.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m., November – March: 9.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.





The National Theatre in Prague

Ostrovní 1, 112 30 Praha 1 tel.: +420 224 901 111, fax: +420 224 931 544, +420 224 911 530 e-mail: info@narodni-divadlo.cz internet: www.narodni-divadlo.cz



Curtain of the National Theatre

Above: The National Theatre (left), The Estates Theatre (right) Opposite page: interior of the Estates Theatre

The National Theatre in Prague

The Prague National Theatre is an imposing building in the centre of Prague. It stands on the right bank of the Vltava looking across the river at the magnificent view of Petřín Hill and to the right Prague Castle, with the many architectural treasures and historical monuments of the Lesser Town. Czech drama and opera was central to the Czech national revival movement of the 19th century, a multifarious movement involving patriotic numerous clubs and societies, choirs and the Sokol physical culture organisation. Calls for the building of a Czech national theatre and opera house, first raised by patriots at the beginning of the century, became a Czech national rallying call. After a series of makeshift compromise solutions, a Union for the Establishment of a Czech National Theatre was formed in 1850 and set about fund raising. Since the date for the start of building kept being put off, in the meantime a smaller building known just as the Provisional Theatre was erected and opened in 1862. It was there that Bedřich Smetana conducted the opera orchestra and where the premieres of four of his eight operas took place. When the larger and grander building was ready, it opened with the premiere of Smetana's ceremonial opera Libuše on the 11th of June 1981. To the horror of the Czechs, however, it burned down just 12 days later. Czech patriots were galvanised by the tragedy, and this time the million gulden needed for its reconstruction were collected within a month, and the restored, even more beautiful National Theatre, with the Provisional Theatre building integrated into the complex, opened on the 18th of November 1883, again with Smetana's Libuše. This effort fully justified the inscription placed over Vojtěch Hynais's curtain, "Národ sobě" or "The Nation for Itself". The building was designed by the architects Josef Zítek and Josef Schulz, while the lavish interior decoration was provided by the painters Mikoláš Aleš, Julius Mařák and František Ženíšek, the sculptors Josef Václav Myslbek and Bohuslav Schnirch and others. Indeed, regardless of actual participation, this whole artistic generation came to be known as "the National Theatre Generation". The wall and ceiling paintings, depicting scenes from Czech mythology are complemented by a constantly updated sculptural gallery

of the most important figures in Czech theatre including composers, singers and musicians. When the National Theatre underwent the major renovations completed in 1983, the New Stage building and a service building were erected next to the National Theatre. The original main building also acquired frescos by Vincenc Beneš, which depict the historic sites in the Czech Lands from which the foundation stones for the National Theatre had been brought. The National Theatre (which includes theatre and opera companies) uses not only the riverside complex but also the Estates (originally Nostic) Theatre, built in the years 1781-83. It is famous as the theatre where W.A.Mozart's Don Giovanni (1787) and La Clemenza di Tito (1792) received their world premieres. The premiere of F. Škroup's The Tinker (1827) was also a historic occasion here, and Karl Maria Weber was conductor here in the years 1813-16. Today Mozart's Don Giovanni is always in repertory at the Estates Theatre, and the fact that it was an avant-garde work in its time makes it logical that the Theatre is now the venue for the NT "Banging on the Iron Curtain" series of experimental operas by young, up and coming composers.



Žofín – Slovanský Island

In the 16th to the 18th century, the build up of silt created an island in the Vltava close to where the National Theatre now stands. At the beginning of the 19th century the island was known as Barvířka or Barvířský (Dyers') Island, but in 1840 it was renamed Žofín - Sophie's Island - in honour of the Archduchess Sophie, mother of the Austrian Emperor Franz Josef I. The name can be seen to this day on gilded letters on the facade of the Neo-Renaissance building that dominates the island. It was originally built in 1835-37 (enlarged in 1884-86, renovated in 1991-94) and has a large hall that in 1881 was the first in Prague to be equipped with electric lighting. From 1837 the hall was used for dances (one who attended was the young dance fan Bedřich Smetana), but also for concerts of classical and romantic music. In the years 1840-99 the building housed the Žofín Academy, whose purpose was expressed in its original name, "The Union for the Promotion of Singing and Music". Here the society's music school taught solo and choral singing, piano, music theory, and the aesthetics and history of music, held competitions for new pieces, and concerts where advanced members performed. The first director of the academy was Alois Jelen, opera singer, composer of choral music and lieder, choirmaster and conductor, who for example conducted the Czech premiere of Beethoven's 9th Symphony on Žofín in 1842. In January 1846 Hector Berlioz came here to conduct his own work. His concerts enthralled all music-loving Praguers including Bedřich Smetana. In 1862 Smetana was to conduct his three symphonic poems composed in Sweden here, and on the 5th of November 1992, "at twelve noon", Adolf Čech was to raise his baton for the premiere of the entire cycle of Smetana's symphonic poems, My Country. It was here that the Prague Hlahol Choir first appeared, and the violin virtuoso Jan Kubelík, and here that in 1878 Antonín



Dvořák had his first independent concert. In the 1890s Žofín was the place where Zdeněk Fibich had his romantic rendezvous with his pupil (and the librettist of his five operas) Anežka Schulzová. These meetings on Žofín inspired the composer to write the major piano cycle Moods, Impressions, Memories, which is essentially an intimate musical diary of the affair, and from which stems also the orchestral idyll "Early Evening" – its central section is known in various arrangements as Poem. Since 2000 the large hall of Žofín has borne Fibich's name. In 1925 the island was renamed Slovanský (Slav) Island to commemorate the opening of the Slav Congress here on the 2nd of June 1848, but the name Žofín stuck. Since 1946 a bronze statue of a piper, made by Ladislav Šaloun in 1927, has stood in front of the side facade to symbolize Czech national music and dance, for Žofín has always been a centre of both, especially in the national revival period.



The Rudolfinum

Alšovo nábřeží 12, 110 01 Praha 1 (Czech Philharmonic) tel: +420 227 059 111, fax: +420 222 319 051 e-mail: sekretariat@cfmail.cz internet: www.ceskafilharmonie.cz

Smetana Hall of the Municipal House (above)

The Rudolfinum

Named after the Austrian crown prince, the Neo-Renaissance Rudolfinum, which took over the role of Žofín in Prague concert life, is to Czech concert music what the National Theatre is to drama and opera. Its architects Josef Zítek and Josef Schulz (who had built the National Theatre) designed it specifically for concerts and exhibitions, which is why its balustrade is adorned by a gallery of statues of the world's greatest composers and artists. From the beginning it housed the Prague Conservatory and from 1946 the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts as well. The Czech Philharmonic gave its first concert here on the 4th of January 1896, with Antonín Dvořák conducting, and it is still the Czech Philharmonic's home today. What is now called the Rudolfinum's Dvořák Hall is still the best Prague concert hall for orchestral music. Innumerable international musicians have performed there, especially as part of the Prague Spring Festival, and a large proportion of the core works of Czech music written since the late 19th century have been premiered there, as well as many works by foreign composers. Recently the tradition of holding art exhibitions in the building has been revived. Since 1911 the Rudolfinum has had an impressive "little brother" in the form of the Municipal House, an art nouveau building in the square Náměstí Republiky that is likewise lavishly decorated with paintings and sculptures. Its largest interior, the Smetana Hall,

serves as a venue for balls and other events, but is above all the home of the Prague Symphony Orchestra. Famous premieres of works by Leoš Janáček, Josef Suk, Josef Bohuslav Foerster, Vítězslav Novák, Vladimír Sommer's Vocal Symphony and others have been held here. At times the Smetana Hall has even fulfilled the role of main Prague concert hall, especially in the period of the "First Republic" when the Rudolfinum served as the republic's parliament building.

Nová Říše – The Pavel and Antonín Vranický Memorial and the Jan Novák Permanent Exhibition

The Premonstratensian monastery in Nová Říše, founded in 1211 and originally a convent before becoming a male institution in 1641, was the centre of the musical life of a village that from the start has had much more than its share of misfortune. In 1278 it was looted by the army of Rudolf Habsburg after the Battle of the Moravian Field, and in 1423, 1424, 1430 and 1433 it was pillaged by the Hussites. In 1458 it was laid waste by the army of George of Poděbrady, in 1468 it was devastated again during George of Poděbrady's war with Matthias Corvinus, and two centuries later yet again by Swedish troops in 1645 during the Thirty Years War. In 1813 most of the monastery burned down in a fire. In 1942 the Premonstratensian monks were arrested and sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp by the German fascists, where they all perished except for three novices, and in 1950 the monks were imprisoned by the communist regime and the monastery converted in a military depot. The dilapidated monastery was finally returned to the Premonstratensian order in 1991. In view of this chronology it is no surprise that the monastery's musical culture developed most vibrantly in the 18th and 19th centuries, when secular music was cultivated alongside sacred music. The monastery school provided a basic musical education for the brothers Pavel and Antonín Vranický, the contemporaries and friends of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. They were both outstanding violinists and composers in a Haydn-Mozartian style, and worked mainly in Vienna. These brothers are the subject of a permanent exhibition with an important collection of music built up in co-operation with the Archives of the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna (Archiv der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde Wien). A lay brotherhood of church singers was active in Nová Říše for most of the 17th and 18th centuries, and its function was then taken over by local teachers. In the first half of the 20th century there was a children's ensemble and Musicians' Club here. The local musical traditions were carried forward by the Novák family, whose scions included the important composer Jan Novák (1921-84), Bohuslav Martinu's only pupil and his follower in the development of the Neo-classical line in Czech music. Like Martinů eventually emigrated to escape domestic political conditions that he found intolerable. One room is devoted to him in the monastery permanent exhibition.



Nová Říše

The Pavel and Antonín Vranický Memorial and the Jan Novák Permanent Exhibition Part of the National Museum, Czech Museum of Music Premonstrátský klášter – Premonstratensian Monastery, 588 65 Nová Říše tel. a fax: +420 567 318 110 e-mail: c_muzeum_hudby@nm.cz internet: www.novarise.cz/english, www.klaster.novarise.cz Tours from May to October daily at 11.00 a.m., 2.00 and 4.00 p.m., at other times by prior telephone arrangement





Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou – The Chateau

Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou, a small town about 20 km south of Třebíč, is first mentioned in historical records in 1325. The original manor stronghold here was replaced by a Renaissance chateau, which a later art-loving owner of the Jaroměřice estates, Jan Adam Questenberk, reconstructed into a monumental Baroque complex completed in 1737. The complex includes the Church of St. Margaret and a garden of French type with an outdoor theatre, lavishly embellished by statues of ancient gods and goddesses. Under Questerberk the earlier mainly sacred tradition of music here was significantly enlarged by the foundation of a thirty-member chateau cappella and adult choir, and a children's choir. All aspects of the direction of the whole ensemble were entrusted to the composer František Václav Míča, who was also its first tenor. In 1730 his opera On the Origin of Jaroměřice (L'origine di Jaromeriz in Moravia), acknowledged to be the first Czech opera, was performed here in Czech translation. In his cantatas and operas Míča still kept to the style of the Late Baroque Italian composers, but in the preludes ("sinfonia") to the works of this kind that he wrote in the years 1730-35, i.e. even before the emergence of the so-called Mannheim School, there are already signs of a secondary theme and development, and in this way Míča prefigured the later development of sonata form. It has not been reliably established whether the wellknown Sinfonia in Re is the work of this Míča or his nephew of the same name. After the death of Jan Adam of Questenberk in 1752, the life of the arts here declined. The importance of Jaroměřice music for the birth of the classical style was to be rediscovered and explored in the 20th century in the works of the musicologist Vladimír Helfert. Thanks to Helfert, interest in the musical traditions and monuments of Jaroměřice revived in the later 20th century. Since 1999 the International Peter Dvorský Music Festival with singing courses has been held in and around Jaroměřice annually in August (this year 4th-18th).

The Terezín Memorial

Terezín is a small town in North Bohemia near Litoměřice. It was built under the Austrian Emperor Josef II from 1800 as a fortress at a time when Bohemia was part of the Austrian empire. During

Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou The Chateau

nám. Míru 1 675 51 Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou tel. a fax: +420 568 440 257 e-mail: jaromerice@brno.npu.cz internet: www.zamek-jaromerice.cz (Czech only) Visitors's hours in 2007: May - June, September: Tues. -Sun. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. July, August: Tues. - Sun. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. October: Sat., Sun. 9 a.m. - 4. p.m. (on weekdays open only for groups by prior arrangement) You will find 30 shots of the chateau exteriors and interiors at http://virtualniprohlidky.cz/virtualniprohlidka/zamek-jaromerice-nad-rokytnou/ virtualni-prohlidka.php?

The Peter Dvorský International Festival

internet: www.arskoncert.cz/mhfpd/en/

the 2nd World War the Small Fortress in Terezín was turned into a prison run by the Prague branch of the German Gestapo (Geheime Staatspolizei); it was after a short stay here that the composer Rudolh Karel died on the 6th of March 1945, although even in these terrible circumstances he had not stopped composing. In the Main Fortress, including the residential part of the town, the Nazi occupiers set up a ghetto for Jews from the countries controlled by Germany. From this ghetto the Jews were then regularly sent on in transports to the extermination camps, especially Auschwitz, but even in Terezín itself 34,000 people perished during the four and a half years of the ghetto's existence. Despite the inhuman conditions the prisoners in the ghetto cultivated a rich musical life. The two Terezín performances of Verdi's Requiem directed by Rafael Schächter and the several performances of Hans Krása's children's opera Brundibár - Bumblebee are famous. Soloists, the Ledeč Quartet, Kvarteto mladých (the Quartet of Young People) and other ensembles were active here, and for a short time there was a string orchestra conducted by Karel Ančerl. There were regular chamber and choral concerts, and even jazz and cabaret performances. One of the most extraordinary features of this musical life in the shadow of death was the presentation of a number of operas with piano accompaniment or small instrumental ensemble. Smetana's The Bartered Bride was performed 35 times. At first the music activities were illegal or semi-legal and during transport to Terezín the Germans would confiscate the Jews' musical instruments. Later, especially before expected inspections by the International Red Cross, non-political cultural activities were tolerated in order to mask the real misery of life in the ghetto. The Czechoslovak Jewish composers Pavel Haas, Gideon Klein, Hans Krása, Viktor Ullmann, František Domažlický and Karel Reiner were all interned in the ghetto, and wrote many pieces there. Only the last two on the list survived. Among the most famous interned musicians, the conductors Karel Ančerl and Robert Brock returned, as did the singer Karel Berman, who also wrote songs and conducted choirs in Terezín. Apart from commemorative events, performances and presentations by young avant-garde artists are now welcomed at the Terezín Memorial.

Kuks Chateau

Kuks is a village in North-Eastern Bohemia near the town of Dvůr Králové. It was founded as a result of the discovery of mineral springs towards the end of the 17th/18th century. It is dominated by an imposing complex of buildings including the chateau itself, a theatre, monastery with hospital, and bathhouse. Matyáš Braun provided much of the unique Baroque statuary, and we should at least mention his two rows of statues representing the "Virtues" and "Vices". In 1724 Count Špork engaged A. Denzi's Italian opera company for his opera – in the winter it played at Spork's Prague theatre. Over ten years the company performed around sixty operas by Italian composers. A theme from Czech mythology was also given operatic treatment, with a text by Baron Schingen: Praga nascente di Libussa e Primislao (Prague founded by Libuše and Přemysl). The work was performed in Prague in 1734. The aesthetic high points of the company's repertoire were the operas of Antonio Vivaldi. Some had their premieres in Prague and were greatly acclaimed by the



The Terezín Memorial

Permanent exhibition in Magdeburg Barracks (including music, theatre) Tyršova ul., 411 55 Terezín tel. + fax: +420 416 782 948/9 e-mail: pamatnik@pamatnik-terezin.cz internet: www.pamatnik-terezin.cz Open daily all year round: April – October: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m., November – March: 9 a.m. – 5.30 p.m.

Kuks Chateau

Festival Theatrum Kuks, 544 43 Kuks tel. & fax: +420 491 423 615, +420 602 470 459 e-mail: theatrum@post.cz, bohadlo@jmc.cz internet: www.theatrum.zde.cz (Czech only) photographs of the chateau: http://virtualniprohlidky.cz/ virtualni-prohlidka/zamek-kuks/





noble audience. Like J.S.Bach, Vivaldi was in personal contact with Count Špork. The day-to-day musical life of Kuks was provided by musicians from cappellas in other Špork residences. One new development was play on French horns: Count Špork introduced it into the Bohemian Lands by sending two of his serfs – Václav Svída and Petr Rohlík – to France to learn to play the instrument. Since 2003 the Theatrum Kuks festival of Baroque theatre, opera and music has been held annually, always in the last week of August.



The Birthplace of Bohuslav Martinů Tylova 114 (nám. B. Martinů), 572 01 Polička tel.: +420 451 725 769, fax: +420 451 721 207 e-mail: pbm@muzeum.policka.org, muzeum@policka-city.cz internet: www.muzeum.policka.net

The exposition in the municipal museum is temporarily closed due to reconstruction of the building, however, Martinů's birthplace in the church tower can be visited; for opening hours see the website.



The Birthplace of Bohuslav Martinů

Bohuslav Martinů was born in a room in the tower of the local Church of St. James in Polička in East Bohemia, the son of a watchman who was also a shoemaker by trade. Today the room is a small museum with original and other period furniture, while the municipal museum houses what is (after the Prague Bohuslav Martinů Institute) the second most important centre of documentation on the life and work of Bohuslav Martinů and a permanent exhibition of visual art inspired by his music. In 1978 the composer's wife Charlotta was buried in Polička and the next year the remains of Bohuslav Martinů were solemnly brought here and laid to rest in his native town. Various commemorative festivals have been held in Polička in the composer's honour - currently there is a Martinů Fest in May. Bohuslav Martinů spent most of his creative life abroad, but his music is closely connected with his native land and especially with the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands (Vysočina) at the edge of which lies Polička. It was here that one of Bohuslav Martinů's most beautiful works, the chamber cantata The Opening of the Wells on words by Miroslav Bureš and based on local folk traditions, received its premiere in 1956.

Hukvaldy – The Leoš Janáček Memorial

Under the ruins of a massive castle lies the village of Hukvaldy, where on the 3rd of July 1854 Leoš Janáček was born as the ninth of thirteen children of the local teacher Jiří. While Leoš's childhood was materially poor and simple, he grew up surrounded by majestic countryside and in the inspiring world of his father's music-making in the choirs of the church of Hukvaldy and Rychaltice. Janáček is commemorated here by a permanent exhibition in the former school, and since 1948 by the summer festival Janáček's Hukvaldy, whose visitors are greeted by a statue of the Cunning Little Vixen. In the nearby North-Moravian metropolis of Ostrava, the festival Janáček's May accompanied by a musicological conference on Janáčekiana has been held annually since 1976, and the regional philharmonic and string orchestras bear his name, as does (since 1996) the conservatory. Ostrava has promising conditions for contemporary music that have prompted the Czech-American flautist, composer and conductor Petr Kotík to found the biannual Ostrava Days course and festival (see the separate article in this number). In Brno, Janáček's study in a little house in the garden of the former Organ School has been perfectly preserved; it is managed by the Moravian Land Museum and is open all year round (www.mzm.cz/mzm/expozice/pamatnik_janacka.html; Czech only). The Brno Janáček Theatre completed in 1965 is the youngest and biggest opera house in the CR.



Kroměříž

The residential seat of the archbishops of Moravia, the town Kroměříž has such grand buildings and so rich a cultural tradition that it is sometimes known as the Athens of Moravia, or the Haná region. The oldest records of music here date back to the mid-13th century and are associated with the Church of St. Maurice, where in the course of the century an episcopal cappella was established. At the end of the 16th century it was led by Jacob Handl Gallus, who also wrote a number of his works here. One particularly important



The Organising Committee of the Festival Forfest Czech Republic Kojetínská 1425, 767 01 Kroměříž tel. & fax: +420 573 341 316, +420 603 973 432 e-mail: forfest@guick.cz internet: www.forfest.cz Photographs of the town, chateau and the Flower Garden: http://virtualniprohlidky.cz/ virtualni-prohlidka/zamek-kromeriz/



Hukvaldy The Leoš Janáček Memorial 739 Hukvaldy 79

tel.: +420 558 699 252, +420 558 699 337 e-mail: janacek-nadace@janacek-nadace.cz internet: www.janacek-nadace.cz/indexeng.htm open daily except for Mondays April, October: 10 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. May, September: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

June - August: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Janáček's Hukvaldy International Music **Festival**

The Janáček's Hukvaldy Fund tel.: +420 558 431 524, e-mail: info@janackovy-hukvaldy.cz internet: www.janackovy-hukvaldy.cz photographs of the castle: http://virtualniprohlidky.cz/virtualni-prohlidka/ hrad-hukvaldy/

figure for the musical life of the town was Pavel Josef Vejvanovský, originally a trumpet player, who revived the cappella after the devastation of Kroměříž by the Swedes in 1643. We know that the cappella played at the Shrovetide balls held by the bishop for the nobility. The capella had about 60 instruments, and although they have not survived, a collection of more than a thousand items of written note material has. These are mainly church compositions including sacred sonatas by musicians active at the court of Leopold I. The collection includes pieces by the important domestic composers Heinrich Ignác Biber and Adam Michna of Otradovice, as well as 130 pieces by Vejvanovský, who transcribed around a third of all the compositions for the archive. The most important of the music festivals held here is the Forfest festival of contemporary spiritual music, accompanied by bi-annual conferences. It was founded in 1990, and the following year saw the opening of the closely associated Church Conservatory, which operates alongside the Pavel Josef Vejvanovský Conservatory established in 1971.



Český Krumlov

Foundation of the Baroque Theatre at the Český Krumlov Chateau Zámek 59, 381 01 Český Krumlov tel. & fax: +420 380 711 298 e-mail: foundation@ckrumlov.cz internet: www.ckrumlov.cz/uk/zamek/oinf/i_nadace.htm visits to the Baroque theatre must be arranged in advance Photographs of the town and chateau: http://virtualniprohlidky.cz/ virtualni-prohlidka/zamek-cesky-krumlov/

Český Krumlov

International Music Festival internet: www.auviex.cz/index.php?l=en Festival of Chamber Music internet: www.ckrumlov.info/apps/en/fekohu.xsp



Český Krumlov

The Český Krumlov Chateau with its imposing cylindrical tower stands on a rocky promontory above the River Vltava. The original 13th-century castle of the Rožmberks (a powerful dynasty of South Bohemian magnates), was reconstructed as a renaissance chateau at the end of the 16th century. By this time Český Krumlov was already an important musical centre. More than 200 instruments appear in the inventory of the Rožmberk cappella, which was founded by Vilém z Rožmberka in 1552. Its glory is being revived by the contemporary Prague ensemble of the same name. While the current collection of 161 musical instruments at the Český Krumlov chateau is valuable, the oldest exemplars date back only to the end of the 17th century. The chateau's Baroque theatre is famous, boasting not only the original architecture of the 1760s but also decor, technical equipment and props. It is still functional, and since 1992 it has been in the care of the Foundation of the Baroque Theatre at the Český Krumlov Chateau, which has for example added electric lighting that perfectly imitates the effect of Baroque wax candles. Since 1958 the České Budějovice South Bohemian Theatre has been presenting annual summer opera and ballet performances in the outdoor theatre with revolving auditorium in the Old French Chateau

Park created in the later 17th century. The concerts in the chateau's dance hall with its unique painted interior are also a memorable experience. The summer Český Krumlov International Music Festival in July and August, immediately preceded by the June Festival of Chamber Music, has already become an established and successful tradition. Also worth mentioning are the summer composing courses led for ten years (1995-2005) by the professor at the Academy of Performing Arts Marek Kopelent. You will find Gabriela Němcová's detailed historical study of music at the Český Krumlov Chateau in Czech Music 2005/1.



Kaliště u Humpolce – The Birthplace of Gustav Mahler

Gustav Mahler's House

Gustav Mahler was born on the 7th of July 1860 in Kaliště, in a simple village house. Two and a half months later (on the 22nd of October 1860), his father Bernard and mother Marie moved with the small Gustav to settle in the city of Jihlava in Znojemská Street, where Gustav's father set up a shop. In 1875 the young Gustav Mahler left home to study at the Vienna Conservatory; thereafter he came home only rarely and after the death of his parents in 1889 he sold the house. The Gustav Mahler Society, inspired by the activities of the great Mahlerian conductor and for many years head of the Czech Philharmonic Václav Neumann, renovated the house where Gustav Mahler was born. Since 2002 the society has been holding composing workshops and meetings for lovers of Mahler's music here as part of the annual September Mahler festival, although most of the festival's programme takes place in Jihlava. In Jihlava, in the house where Gustav Mahler grew up, a permanent exhibition entitled "The Young Gustav Mahler and Jihlava" was opened last year. An overall view of the life and work of Gustav Mahler with opportunities to listen to his music is also provided by the permanent exhibition in the Humpolec Museum. (http://www.infohumpolec. cz/muzeum/; Czech only).

Kaliště u Humpolce The Birthplace of Gustav Mahler

Mahler 2000, Gustav Mahler Society Balbínova 14, 120 00 Praha 2 tel.: +420 224 238 673-6, +420 777 687 797, fax: +420 224 238 619 e-mail: info@mahler2000.cz

Gustav Mahler's House

Znojemská 4, 586 01 Jihlava tel. +420 567 306 232 e-mail: info@dum-gustava-mahlera.cz internet: www.dum-gustava-mahlera.cz Open daily throughout the year 10 – 12 a.m., 1 – 5 p.m. Znojemská 4, 586 01 Jihlava tel. +420 567 306 232 e-mail: info@dum-gustava-mahlera.cz www.dum-gustava-mahlera.cz Open daily throughout the year 10 – 12 a.m., 1 – 5 p.m.



www.czechtourism.cz www.czechtourism.com

OSTRAVA DAYS 2007 INSTITUTE AND FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSIC

An extraordinary biennial event, organised in the city of Ostrava but with an international dimension that goes far beyond the borders of the Czech Republic, will be taking place from the 13th of August to the 2nd of September 2007. The Ostrava Days combines international courses for young composers – the Ostrava Days Institute - with an attractive week-long festival that presents new and experimental music together with key, in a sense already "classic" avant-garde compositions of the second half of the 20th century. The main focus of both the festival and the composition courses is music for large symphony orchestra, and the festival programme will include not only top pieces in world repertoire but compositions by the students-residents of the Institute.

The first biennial Ostrava Days was organised in 2001, and the response in the Czech Republic and abroad has been considerable since then. The Ostrava Days Institute is attended by around 35 young musicians, mostly composers, from Europe, North and South America, Asia and Australian, who spend three weeks consulting and discussing questions of contemporary music with leading figures on the world new music scene (the principal lectors this year are the composers Beat Furrer, Petr Kotík, Alvin Lucier, Kaija Saariaho, Christian Wolff and the pianist and composer Muhal Richard Abrams) and at the same time working under their guidance with the resident orchestras - traditionally the Ostrava Janáček Philharmonic, and more recently with the Ostravská Banda as well (more than twenty-member international ensemble consisting of mainly young musicians, formed specially for the needs of Ostrava Days 2005), and other invited ensembles: the Melos Ethos Ensemble (Slovakia), the Flux Quartet (New York), the choir Canticum Ostrava, and other ensembles and soloists. In the second week of the Institute, the participants will then rehearse their own pieces, which will be presented at the Ostrava Days Festival 2007.

The event will thus climax in the week of the festival with fifteen concerts. Highlights of the festival programme this year include Morton Feldman's opera *Neither* and a thematic concert devoted to music of the early 1960s in Prague with an accompanying panel discussion involving the protagonists of the time. The Fluxus concert with happenings will be another unusual experience. The festival concerts will present music by Muhal Richard Abrams, Pierre Boulez, Earl Brown, John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Morton Feldman, Beat Furrer, Karel Goeyvaerts, RudKurt Weil, Christian Wolff, Stephan Wolpe, Iannis Xenakis, La Monte Young and other composers. As far as the guest performers are concerned, festival audiences are looking forward to appearances by



the Flux Quartet from New York, the pianist Daan Vandewalle from Belgium, the American cellist Charles Curtis (in the Feldman concerto), the violinist Hana Kotková (in the Ligeti Concerto) and the soprano Piia Komsi (in Feldman's opera Neither). The distinguished German conductors Roland Kluttig and Peter Rundel will also be making their debuts at the Ostrava Days. For detailed information about the Ostrava Days and the festival programme go to www.ocnmh.cz.

To mark the forthcoming fourth Ostrava Days we are bringing an interview with its founder and artistic director, the composer and conductor Petr Kotík.

How much does Ostrava Days differ from other summer courses such as Darmstadt, Acanthes, Impuls, Royaumont and so on? What is so special about it?

Ostrava Days is quite a different project and for several reasons. First of all, it is one of the longest summer programs in existence, lasting three full weeks. Secondly, Ostrava Days focuses on working with orchestra. OD has two resident orchestras: our symphony orchestra the Janáček Philharmonic and the chamber orchestra Ostravská banda. We have of course plenty of solo and chamber music as well. Another exceptional aspect of the project is that it is conducted entirely in English. English has become the universal language of educated people (it may be similar to the use of Latin in the past). In Ostrava all communication is done in English, not only the lectures, seminars and organizational matters, but also the rehearsals, including communication with and among musicians. This creates a homogenous environment where everyone understands everything and people can freely communicate, whether they come from China, Brazil or Macedonia. This is one of the ways in which Ostrava Days differs from Darmstadt, for example, where communication involves translations into and from German. It might seem trivial, but it isn't. It connects all the participants in a spontaneous way, and very often people from various parts of the world form professional and personal bonds (OD has already been responsible for a few international marriages). Also, there is an advantage to not wasting time on translations. I believe that this kind of linguistically unified environment would not have been possible even just a decade ago. Another unique feature of the Ostrava Days Institute is its direct connection to the week-long festival held in the last seven days of the project, with 15 concerts, 3 of them symphonic and 5 involving the Ostravská Banda. The festival is linked to the Institute and to its residents/students, whose compositions are programmed on equal footing with works by established composers.

What should ideally, a young composer attending Ostrava Days get out of it?

I am sure that everyone benefits in a different way. The experience itself, a three-week residence and the participation in Ostrava Days benefits everyone on some level. We can see that from the reaction of those who came to OD in the past: many students want to come year after year and every one of the artists enjoyed being part of Ostrava Days. Still, it would be hard to generalize about this experience.

In a way, there is an extraordinary environment at Ostrava Days. Not only because of what is going on in the Festival itself, but also because of our purpose and methods. Our aim is to create an informal working community, and that can only be done in an environment with a sufficient duration. The idea of organizing OD for three weeks came from my past participation in summer programs, which were usually week-long affairs. These programs always ended just at the moment when we started to know each



other and could begin to do something meaningful. It is the same in Ostrava: the program starts to unfold full speed really after the first week, and there is enough time and opportunities to create a tight community where all relationships produce valuable experiences.

Another important aspect, especially for the students, is our focus on orchestra. For many of them, Ostrava Days represents the first chance to work with an orchestra. This goes not only for the students, whose music we perform, but also for their colleagues, who can closely observe the work and participate in preparations, rehearsals etc. They all get the sense of the real situation that exists outside of the academic environment. Music schools have a handicap in their isolation from reality. In Ostrava we work with professional musicians who react in many different ways to the music they are asked to perform - the reaction is not always positive, and we have to struggle with these sometime negative attitudes. This is what every composer faces after he or she leaves school. To observe the struggle and the progression from an uncertain situation to a successful realization is an invaluable experience one cannot get anywhere else.

One aspect of Ostrava Days that is also important to point out is the limited number of participants. We keep the number of students to about 35, with five or six lecturers along with guests and guest performers. This is a relatively small group, and so over

three weeks the relationships develop on a fairly intense and personal level. Our residents have the unique chance to work with leading figures in contemporary music, not just on the level of the classroom, but also at individual meetings and encounters. This would be impossible with a large number of participants. In Darmstadt for example, there are about 150 students. That's a totally different situation. Imagine, that you come to Ostrava, where for the price of an inexpensive vacation trip, you get the chance to work personally with people like (among others) Christian Wolff, Louis Andriessen, Kaija Saariaho, Tristan Murail, Alvin Lucier, or Rebecca Saunders, not to mention several leading performers, from the Arditti Quartet to Joseph Kubera, Charles Curtis and Roland Kluttig.

Does the program of Ostrava Days Festival have any objective? What are you aiming for? What do you do to have such well known musicians participate?

It is difficult to explain what we are aiming for, or whether we have any goal when we design the program for each Ostrava Days Festival, other than our desire to create an efficient working environment – but that is too broad to be called a goal. To some extent, the Festival draws from the program of the Institute. For example, it is a given that we would perform works by the lecturers. When we work on the festival's program – and it's a lot of work, as you can imagine – we don't think about or even discuss such issues as a particular goal, or aim. Although it



might seem, in hindsight, that we have some exact purpose, but that is not the case. The program simply evolves organically. I personally am not goaloriented. To set priorities and goals is completely against my way of thinking. In fact, I believe that this focus on goals that young people are continually advised to have, is a grave mistake. But that is different question altogether.

What I am trying to do is to bring to Ostrava Days the most interesting lively events, pieces and musician, given our limited resources. The result, of course, reflects my own views. I don't have a Czech or European perspective – that's probably the least of my concerns. I look at things globally. There are no rules in choosing individual pieces, composers, guests and performers. There may be in the end a specific reason for every choice, but often these reasons greatly differ. I simply keep my eyes and ears open and when I see an opportunity, I go for it. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. There is a great deal of responsibility in creating a program such as OD Festival, and it doesn't happen without a lot of pain. Sometimes I use my personal contacts and they are renewed: for example, I haven't seen Andriessen since the 1960s. Other times I use ongoing contacts or make new ones. In each case there is a mutual understanding about what we are trying to do and a real interest to participate in such a project. It's clear that no one comes to Ostrava Days for the money.

On the other hand, there are a few events that have been programmed for a reason. We may consider, for example, an idea and deliberate how would it fit in the context of the music scene in the Czech Republic. Is it something that has never been done here before? This may decide whether we go ahead with the idea or not, but again it's not a principle that we go by. The "New Music in Prague 1959-1964" roundtable and the inclusion of pieces from the 1950s and 1960s on the OD 2007 program was inspired by misconceptions and sometimes outright false information about this period that is being disseminated in this country (unfortunately, we are substituting here work that the musicologists and historians here should be doing, but the sorry state of both disciplines in the Czech Republic is a whole other chapter). This roundtable will be conducted by those who participated in the early 60s Prague new music scene, so we can try to avoid opinions and concentrate on facts.

Sometimes we also program historical music, but only in the context of what is going on today. You will probably also find a great deal of American music in Ostrava. This is not only because I happen to live in New York, but also because we believe that in the last sixty years or so, the American contribution to new music has been one of the most interesting and vibrant, and definitely the most surprising. This is a view that not many people share, especially European institutions, so our program might look quite unusual in comparison. The chamber orchestra Ostravská banda, all young musicians, came to existence in the framework of Ostrava Days 2005. What has the Ostravská Banda done since and what are its future plans?

Ostravská banda was formed out of practical necessity. Initially, we wanted to invite a well-known chamber orchestra from Germany but when we realized that this idea was beyond our means, we decided to form our own group. You can see how one thing leads to another and before you know it, you are in an entirely new situation. At first, we planned for Ostravská Banda to be the resident chamber orchestra at Ostrava Days only. That was in 2005. But when we witnessed the banda's success, how quickly this diverse group of musicians who came from North America, West, Central and East Europe formed a tight group and how well they worked together, we started to plan events beyond Ostrava Days. Last year the Ostrava Center For New Music organized a three-week European tour, including workshops, recordings and concerts in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and France. On May 21, 2007, Ostravská banda will receive its American debut with an appearance in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall. The Ostrava Center for New Music just committed the banda for a major concert at Prague Spring 2008 festival and there are plans for more touring. Obviously, the main function of Ostravská banda is its residence at Ostrava Days and we are now working out details for the two-and-a-half-week residency in Ostrava in August 2007.

Besides organising Ostrava Days, what is the function and the mission of the Ostrava Center For New Music?

The mission of the Ostrava Centre For New Music (OCNM) has evolved since its inception in 2001 and is still in the evolutionary process. The organization was formed to produce the biennial Ostrava Days. It's like buying an automobile to commute to work: once you have it, you also use it for other purposes. The Ostrava Center office activities have crossed over into other areas, even though the most important task is and will be producing Ostrava Days. For example, the Ostrava Center is responsible for the management of the Ostravská banda. Another task is maintaining and expanding a very interesting library, which is open to the public. Ostrava Center is also planning publications and is engaged in organizing concerts outside Ostrava Days. These concerts are not only with Ostravská banda, but often also involve a co-operation with other institutions like the Janáček Philharmonic in Ostrava and the Prague Spring festival.

I should add that the Ostrava Days didn't just drop from the sky. The artistic concepts are just a part of the process of producing this event. As Antonín Dvořák said, working as a composer consists of 5% inspiration and 95% perspiration. It's the same here - 95% of the success of Ostrava Days is the result of the intensive and selfless work of the team in the Ostrava office and the support of the Ostrava public, both the general public and the wide range of public figures, from government officials to business people. The participation of individual supporters is not unusual; what is so surprising to me is that we have a wide audience here, who so enthusiastically to our concerts (it's not unusual to have a full concert hall for a three-hour concert ending at midnight). If it were not for all that, Ostrava Days would have remained just a utopia. This enlightened environment puts Ostrava on a different level from similar places in the Czech Republic and Europe, including Prague and other big cities.

What about your own current work as a composer and the activities of the S.E.M. Ensemble?

My composing has been suffering a lot recently. After Ostrava Days 2007 I intend to put this right (I hope this isn't a utopia). I have several pieces I am working on now, that I don't want to talk about, because I am a little superstitious. I am also correcting older works, pieces I am preparing for upcoming concerts. For example, I found to my surprise that in 1966 I made a new version of my 1962 piece, *Counterpoint II.* I looked at it and found that the new version is really better. So my next task is to use the outline from this corrected score and make a final notation of the piece. It has to be done by hand, because the piece uses notation that cannot be computer-generated.

On the other hand, the S.E.M. Ensemble's work has not suffered. Our work in New York has been continuing at the same tempo as in the past, thanks, above all, to the very efficient SEM office that not only looks after the S.E.M. Ensemble, but also functions as an offshoot for the Ostrava Center. I find it a little funny, but it pleases me very much that the Ostrava Center for New Music has a branch in New York City. In fact, the S.E.M. Ensemble has had very few seasons that are more active than the present one.



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF CONTEMPORARY MUSICOLOGY AND THE NEW COMPLETE EDITION OF HIS WORKS



It was at the beginning of 2002 that we first provided brief information on the pages of this magazine about the planned project for a *New Complete Edition of the Works of Antonín Dvořák.* After more than five years we now have an opportunity to write on the theme once again. What is the state of play now with regard to Dvořák's music, the reactions of audiences and musicologists and the critical edition?

On the one hand we are very pleased to be able to say that Dvořák's fame is truly immense and goes far beyond the frontiers of today's Czech Republic, that his music has travelled throughout the world and made an impression on the public in the Germanspeaking lands, Great Britain, the United States, Japan and Australia. On the other hand, it remains true that the composer's fame rests - today as it did a hundred years ago - on a small number of "evergreens" like the New World Symphony, The Slavonic Dances and Humoresque in G flat major, while many of his chamber works, songs, choral songs and especially operas continue to be overlooked. In the past few years and decades the interest of specialists (musicologists) has tended to fluctuate, with waves of comment and analysis occurring around the jubilee years of 1991 and 2004.

In 1991, when the Czech and world music public commemorated the 150th anniversary of the composer's birth, three major international conferences were organised for the occasion: in New Orleans (Louisiana, USA), Saarbrücken (Germany) and the Chateau of Dobříš (CR). The published proceedings of these conferences brought us a colourful mosaic of views on Dvořák the composer and the man,

and also new and ground-breaking research findings on Dvořák's work and activities as a musician. At the same time two remarkable treatments came out in German. These were Klaus Döge's monograph Dvořák. Leben-Werke-Dokumente, designed for a broader reading public, and Hartmut Schick's doctoral dissertation on Dvořák's string quartets. From the 8th to the 11th of September 2004, to mark the 100th anniversary of the composer's death, a major international conference was held in Prague entitled The Work of Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904). Aspects of Composition – Problems of Editing – Reception. The active participation of more than 40 musicologists from twelve countries and four continents was convincing proof of the durability of Dvořák's creative legacy and the lasting interest in his life and work. The collection of papers from this conference should be ready for the press at the end of this calendar year (2007). Among domestic publications of recent years we should highlight the second, substantially enlarged edition of a Dvořák Thematic Catalogue from Jarmil Burghauser, which alas came out shortly after the author's death at the beginning of 1997, and the ten-volume critical edition of Dvořák's correspondence and documents produced by Milan Kuna et al. and published over the years 1987-2004. Among

foreign publications, lively interest has been aroused by the American musicologist Michael Beckerman's book *New Worlds of Dvorak. Searching in America for the Composer's Inner Life*, which came out in 2003.

The existence and accessibility of reliable printed editions of his or her works is the fundamental and essential prerequisite for the performance and dissemination of the music of any composer, and for its specialist musicological study and interpretation. Collected critical editions of the classics of European music - J.S.Bach, G.F.Händel, W.A.Mozart, L. van Beethoven, F. Mendelssohn, R. Schumann and others – were produced as early as the 19th century, but Czech composers rather lagged behind in this respect. In the case of Antonín Dvořák the first complete edition project, under the Editing Board for the Works of Antonín Dvořák (its members were Otakar Šourek, František Bartoš, Jan Hanuš, Jiří Berkovec, Jarmil Burghauser, Antonín Čubr, Antonín Pokorný and Karel Šolc), was officially launched in the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the composer's death (1954), when his works had come "free" in accordance with the then law of copyright. In the course of the next thirty years the greater part of Dvořák's musical legacy was published in the framework of this project, but from the end of the 1980s critical voices were increasingly to be heard pointing out that some of the volumes of this collected edition contained a number of inaccuracies and mistakes, and that in fact the whole edition as originally conceived no longer met contemporary standards. In 1999, therefore, a fundamental decision was taken not to carry on in the same way, not to try to finish the original edition and instead to start again, on a qualitatively different level and using different methodological principles.

The aims and principles of the *New Complete Edition* of the Works of Antonín Dvořák can be summed up in the following main points:

- The New Complete Edition of the Works of Antonín Dvořák is being produced in Prague and will also be published in Prague by the publishing house Editio Bärenreiter Praha. From the outset, however, it is conceived as an international project and assumes substantial involvement on the part of foreign specialists and institutions in several European countries and the USA.

- The aim and ideal that the edition strives to achieve is the compilation and publication of note material that will embody the highest possible level of authenticity, i.e. will represent the intentions of the composer as these are contained in surviving sources as well and as faithfully as possible. The earlier complete edition had set itself the same goals in a general sense, but its results had only gone half way

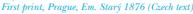
Commented Examples

Example 1: "The Wild Rose" from Moravian Duets op. 32



Autograph







First print, Berlin, N. Simrock 1878 (German text)



First print, Berlin, N. Simrock 1882 (German, Czech and English)



Complete Critical Edition, Prague 1955

In the four-bar passage (bars 43–46) from a six-bar piano interlude, we can clearly see how Dvořák's original differentiated instructions on the dynamics in the first prints are progressively changed by shift and location in the space between the staves. For reasons not further explained, in this passage the collected critical edition of 1955 presented a reading that is not to be found in any of the sources given above.

Example 2: *Slavonic Rhapsody in G minor*, op. 45, no. 2



Autograph



First print, Berlin, N. Simrock 1879



Complete Critical Edition, Prague 1959

Bars 35–36, 2nd bassoon: The accent on the last note of bar 35, recorded in the autograph, has either been interpreted in the editions to date as a decrescendo sign, or has been entirely omitted (the preceding collected edition).

to meeting them – either because it did not take into account all the important sources and circumstances, or because it deliberately tried to "remedy" supposed inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the composer's autographs. In contrast to the earlier edition project, the *New Complete Edition of the Works of Antonín Dvořák* is working with an essentially broader range of primary and secondary sources, including many that the editors of the earlier edition left entirely unnoticed. One typical example are period manuscript and printed performance materials, i.e. orchestral and vocal parts for symphonic, chamber and operatic works.

- In some cases, including for example the *Piano Concerto in G minor* op. 33 or the cantata *Stabat mater* op. 58, the *New Complete Edition* has unique newly discovered or newly accessible sources to hand. Everywhere that it has to work with the same range of sources as its predecessors, it will compare and evaluate them again with a view to uncovering and understanding

the composer's intentions. As a result the edition will present some editorial approaches to and readings of Dvořák's note material that differ from those we know from the earlier editions.

– Priority attention is being directed to those of Dvořák's works that have never yet been printed or for which there have as yet existed only unauthorised and unreliable printed piano arrangements. Naturally, this situation relates mainly to operatic works. Titles that are due to be prepared for publication within the next five to six years include for example the composer's first opera *Alfred*, his one-act comic opera *The Stubborn Lovers* op. 17 and his last completed opera *Armida* op. 115.

- For the very first time ever, the *New Complete Edition* is systematically dealing with the composer's surviving versions and arrangements of his own and other people's compositions, which it is presenting as an integral part of Dvořák's output as a composer. These include for example the *Stabat mater* op. 58 in a version for soloists, choir and piano, the piano trio *Dumkas* op. 90 arranged for four-handed pianio, or Dvořák's orchestral arrangement of Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*.

- The New Complete Edition of the Works of Antonín Dvořák also reflects the contemporary trend towards digital reproduction and presentation of critical note material. In collaboration with the EDIROM project (academic EDItions on cd-ROMs), developed since 2005 at the University of Detmold-Paderborn (Germany) it is planning to use this form to publish for example the autograph version of the piano Silhouettes op. 8, which differs markedly from the more commonly familiar printed version, the composer's school works from the years 1857-1859, and what is known as the American Sketchbooks of 1893-1895, containing sketches and outlines for the New World Symphony, Cello Concerto in B minor op. 104 and other pieces later to be completed as well as those that remained just ideas.

In the preparatory phase represented by the last few years (2000–2006), extensive heuristic work has been carried out with the aim of creating an internal catalogue of sources for individual Dvořák compositions and building up an archive of copies of Dvořák sources. Despite many obstacles and difficulties it has proved possible to establish and secure several years of advance funding for the Dvořák Editorial Centre that now operates at the Cabinet (Department) for Music History of Institute of Ethnology of the ASCR, p.r.i, and in addition to its heuristic and editing work has a primarily managing and co-ordinating role for the *New Complete Edition of the Works of Antonín Dvořák*. The international Editorial Board, which has a supervisory and consultative function

Example 3: String Quartet in A flat major, op. 105



1st movement, bars 23–27, 1st Violin Part: An example of the different approach to the dynamics in the autograph and the first printed version (Berlin, N. Simrock 1896), which generally appears to be much more "standardised"; the individuality and plasticity of Dvořák's autograph often gets lost in it. The preceding collected edition adopted the reading of the first printed edition without commentary. In the critical section of the NDE such variant readigs will receive detailed commentary and the evidence made accessible in note examples.

Example 4: String Quartet in A flat major, op. 105



2nd movement, bars 105–108, autograph and first print (Berlin, N. Simrock 1896): Here we can pose the question of where the 2nd Movement ends (in the da capo form), which no one has yet considered. The answer is not clear, but on the basis of a reading of the autograph and its layers, the variant of the "earlier" end of the movement in bar 107 is entirely acceptable. In this case too the preceding collected edition adopted the reading of the first print and gave no indication of the different reading of the autograph. In the critical section the NDE will provide a proper commentary on this passage. for the *New Complete Edition*, was set up in September 2004 and has met once a year since then. The preliminary phase of the project has also seen the proposal and approval of the division of the *New Complete Edition* into seven main series and 65 volumes, and binding editorial principles and other instructions valid for all current and future editors have been drafted and published. August 2006 saw the launch of the web pages of the *New Complete Edition* www.antonindvorak.org where anyone interested can find more information and details in Czech and in English.

On the current projected schedule, the first volumes of the New Collected Edition, which will for example include the Slavonic Rhapsodies op. 45, the String Quartets op. 96, 105 and 106 together with Cypresses for string quartet or Poetic Moods op. 85, the Suite in A major op. 99, Humoresques op. 101 and other pieces for two-handed piano, will be sent to press and then published in the course of the years 2007–2009. In the next period (2010-2012) the plan is for preparation and publication of the operas and cantatas mentioned above, and also Dvořák's symphonic poems based on ballads by K.J.Erben (The Water Goblin op. 107, The Noon Witch op. 108, The Golden Spinning Wheel op. 109, The Wild Dove op. 110), A *Hero's Song* op. 111, overtures and music for the play Josef Kajetán Tyl op. 62 and other volumes of piano and chamber pieces. Today it already looks almost certain that the whole project will be the work of several generations of musicologists. If it could possibly be finally completed in 2041, the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of the composer, by today's standards it would be an extraordinary scholarly and organisational achievement and a remarkable contribution to the treasury of the Czech and European cultural heritage.

ONDŘEJ ADÁMEK: I ENJOY WORKING WITH A SIMPLE IDEA

In the music of Ondřej Adámek (*1979) the influences of distant ethnic cultures are organically integrated with the exploitation of the most modern composition techniques and refinements of sound peculiar above all to contemporary French music. We talked about these and other issues in the following interview, which introduces one of the most striking representatives of the coming generation of composers in the Czech Republic. Although Adámek currently lives in Paris, where he is completing his advanced studies, and has been collecting international awards and, quite naturally, is orientated to wider European contexts, in my view his music still retains a certain specific "Czech" identity. This is neither good nor bad in itself – it is simply the case.

Tell us how you came to study in France after a period at the Prague Academy.

Immediately I got to HAMU (the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague), I started to look around for possibilities of studying abroad for a time. It was a great piece of luck that one student from Paris had applied to go on exchange to HAMU in the framework of the Erasmus Programme. I first went to Paris in 2000, and my three-month stay there convinced me that it was a very stimulating cultural centre and I had a great deal to learn there. I prolonged my stay as long as I could and after a year's pause I did the entrance exams for fulltime studies at the Conservatoire Superieur. During my studies there in Paris I then came to the conclusion that the professors were too concerned with details and weren't addressing the issues of the basic conception of pieces, the basic idea behind them. So I applied for another study trip somewhere else abroad. I went to Göteborg in Sweden for three months. Here the spirit was completely different. Now I'm back in Paris in my sixth year. I finished the four-year cycle and I'm carrying on with the higher level course. I have a completely

free programme, and I'm devoting myself entirely to composing.

Do you plan to stay in France when you finish your course?

I don't know if I'll stay in France. That depends on a lot of things. Most of all on my private life. It would be worth just for the sheer number of concerts of contemporary music. What's more, I spend most of my time holed up at home and concerts are the only opportunities I have for being in contact with the music world.

Has there been some fundamental turning point in your composing since you've been in France? What are the most important things that you've learned and got to know there?

I think there was a big shift in my work when I gradually managed to integrate the new things I had learned in France into my music, and at the same time I was able to continue in my Slavonic approach with a certain detachment. In Paris many of my dreams were fulfilled. I learned how to work in an electro-acoustic studio. The school gave me the



chance to present and record ensemble pieces at very high quality, and I gained experience with players and many conductors. I learned the most in orchestration lessons. I discovered the charm of the orchestra. I improved a great deal in terms of careful work with detail, refinement, work with sound and also in work with "virtual space" in instrumental music. I learned how to work in a concentrated way and elaborate scores in full. In France the emphasis is on detail, sound, craft. Often what is lacking is a clear thought, idea, form. I enjoy working with a simple idea, which I try to take to the limit. The French often talk about naivete, simplicity or predictability in music as a fault, but I work with these things deliberately. It's something I believe I brought from Bohemia.

The simple initial ideas of the kind you mention can be very different with different composers. Can you tell us something more about your own?

It seems to be very hard to maintain and develop a certain idea right to the end, and not to abandon it after the first few bars. The original ideas behind my compositions tend to be partly a matter of sound and partly from outside music. In the piece *Sinuous Words* it was a desire to transpose the spoken word into instrumental music in a way that would make the instruments speak, whisper, utter, that would shake them up. At the same time I was creating a certain intimate world then drowned out by an extrovert, exaggerated, almost menacing merriment. In the piece *Shiny or Shy* I was trying to transfer the sound of the gamelan, the spectrum and vibration of gongs to the orchestra, and to work with contrasting patterns inspired by music from Bali and with tempo

changes. The idea of a delicate world overwhelmed by violent inroads crept in here as well. The piece *Rapid Eye Movements* for string quartet and electronics is based on continually pulsating semi-quavers in a 90 tempo and a breathing sound evoked by the instruments.

As my graduation work at the Conservatoire in Paris I wrote a piece for three voices and 35 instruments on a text of my own entitled Jardin perdu [The Lost Garden]. I wrote the text at the same time as the first music sketches and the text later dictated the form of the composition. The theme is the garden as an ideal place and also as the chamber of the soul. The garden is undermined by various different sources of interference. The first are the weeds growing up inside the garden, the second is a crowd trampling it, and the third is the corrosion of the garden. At the end the garden is bulldozed by machines. In the piece I used various forms of singing, an intimate even voice, and fast rap declamations, and I also used a sixteenth-tone piano, a harp tuned to quarter-tones, a sample with snatches of voice and the singers' breath, a lot of percussion instruments, like the chromatic octave of Java gongs, two octaves of cow bells, 3 octaves of boo-bams, a vibraphone tuned a quarter tone higher... It's a piece tailor made for the performance possibilities here.

In the piece for large orchestra that I'm working on recently, the initial idea is of endless fall. For the whole 16 minutes of music it actually contains just descending glissandos created out of many layered fine lines. I am playing with different timbre possibilities, with the changeable depth of space and also with the paradoxical glissando – whether endless or the kind where the listener won't be able to tell it if



it rising or falling. Like when a painter paints a line leading upwards with his brush, but the colour is flowing directly downwards.

In my pieces I also work with the metaphor of mechanism, machines and the mechanical, uncontrollable technological forces.

Various different influences can be traced in your work. So for example that transcription of gong sounds into the orchestra clearly has a link with spectralism, and in my view the overall impression given by your music aligns it pretty clearly with the French stylistic and technological (IRCAM) circle. On the other hand, in that "conceptual" quality, that concentration on one idea, one might detect influences from the American avant-garde. How aware of these and other influences are you, and how do you try (or maybe you don't try?) to escape them and find a way to your own distinctive style and originality?

It's my feeling that originality, just like the spiritual content of a work, is something that the artist shouldn't be consciously concerned with. Escaping from influences it the last thing I would be worried about. The truth is that the analysis of sound as a source of pitch-based structures is one of the typical techniques of the spectralists (especially Murail and Grisey), i.e. composers active at the IRCAM. The endless glissando is a phenomenon for which Jean-Claud Risset is famous, once again IRCAM. I am not afraid of either French or Czech or American influences, but the French often have a very academic or theoretical approach to composing, while what interests me is what brings something strange, unusual, direct, animal, full of energy.

I would like to look at the question of influences from yet another point of view. In your music I also hear inspirations from ethnic music, mainly Asian (and I have the feeling that you don't hide this yourself). Can you tell us more about this? How do you treat these influences, so that they don't become just superficial exoticism?

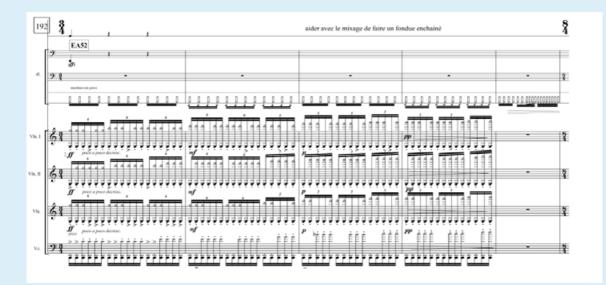
That's the whole question – how to do it so it doesn't become a matter of superficial exoticism... In *Sinuous Words* I work with a voice from New Caledonia, in *Kapky, kapičky [Drops, Droplets]* I work with the trumpets of Tibetan monks, and in *Shiny or Shy* with the gamelan, and I'm planning to work on Japanese influences. For me music is one great diverse world. I don't feel any need to observe any kind of boundaries and not do I feel bound by some kind of loyalty to western culture. I work with elements from "different musics" so long as I have a reason to do it, a concept. The feeling that music is one everywhere gives me new possibilities and freedom of choice. I don't see it as necessary to study the historical, sociological or religious contexts of a musical element I choose as part of the material for a new piece. But I always think hard about the need to "take from elsewhere". I always try to find a new personal way of treating these elements, I'm not just looking for some cheap beauty to stick on somewhere. I always look for a new technique and sensitive integration of the elements. With the music of other cultures I'm often interested in its more general character, in energy, colour, temperament, movement...

You have won prizes in quite a number of composing competitions. Apart from the financial benefits, do these successes have a positive effect in opening doors for you?

Most competitions are for young composers, and usually for compositions they have written but haven't yet managed to get performed – i.e. for composers who need the competitions most. I am gradually growing out of this category and I only send pieces to competitions very rarely. For me competitions were important as encouragement and mainly as small financial injections. Only a few, for example two last year, have developed into new projects – two orchestral pieces.

By the way, is writing for orchestra really as seductive as is usually claimed? Why do you need so many instruments? Isn't a composer better off with chamber musicians who are truly interested in the music they play?

The orchestra is an absolutely wonderful invention of European culture that has no parallel. Musically it is something completely different to a chamber ensemble. In the first place I am fascinated by the way it still exists today. The discipline and perfection it requires from every player doesn't correspond to the European mentality at all (you can find something similar in gamelan or in the Beijing Opera). And then, an orchestra isn't just a multiplication of instruments. Acoustically and psychologically it functions in a completely different way to smaller musical ensembles. I'll give you a simple example: I can write pp – crescendo poco a poco – ff – sffz pppp subito for solo violin, but that doesn't work in an orchestra. The group of violins would play just a variously coloured mezzopiano. You have to compose it into



layers, to divide the role between other instruments, to add them to each other for the crescendo, to underline the sffz using another group and to colour the fade away in the *pppp* in yet other instruments. Everything has to be exaggerated. At the same time this single wave of energy moves across the podium in a frame of many metres. And that fascinates me. Rehearsals with an orchestra are limited in terms of time, and it's always a matter of just a few hours for one piece. So the piece must be written in such a way that it works from the very beginning. Looking for new colours by using special performance techniques is quite risky. On the other hand, it is exciting to look for new colours using unusual combinations of established modes of play. Not long ago I saw Eötvös conducting the French Radio Orchestra, Debussy's Images. It worked unbelievably well in terms of colour and space. Play with the strings, the first violin solo, the string tutti, the first row of first violins, the first two rows of violas, it was enormously playful and imaginative work. I am fascinated by the contrast between instruments that shine out directly (for example trumpets, oboes, clarinets and flutes in the highest registers) and instruments that work as background, shadow, resonance (horns, clarinets and flutes in the middle and lower register). I could give you many other similar examples. Maybe a lot of people will find these ideas banal, but they strike me with new force every time I hear an orchestral concert.

As regards work with space: do you try to underline the spatial aspect of your pieces in some way, do you work with space deliberately (for example in chamber music as well)? Do you draw inspiration

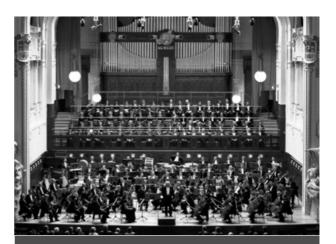
for example from the virtual three-dimensionality commonly used in electronic music?

Space has existed in instrumental music since the invention of the piano pedal. In the orchestra the sound of the pedal was replaced by the sustained tones of French horns and woodwind. Space isn't something that everyone notices in music, and not everyone works with it consciously. Just as in painting, music can be entirely two-dimensional, or it can have three dimensions. I happen to be interested in working with space, because it contributes atmosphere, colour, diversity, nostalgia... I'll give you an example. Suppose I have a musical object that I am gradually shifting into the background. This can be done by working with sustained tones in pianissimo, with smooth registers, by reducing the high frequencies, with echo, with repeated notes or with tremolo, but you can also work with micro-intervals and resonant instruments (the piano, harp, metal percussion instruments and so on). In electro-acoustic music, three-dimensionality is something taken for granted, perhaps like instrumental range in instrumental music. Space is created partly by the system of having several speakers (stereo, quadrophony, octophony, 5.1 etc.) and partly by using artificial echo, delay, dynamic envelopes, registers or filtering (when the higher frequencies are reduced the music gets further away, and sound that is very rich in the highest frequencies sounds as it is directly on the speaker membrane). While in electronic music the three-dimensionality is virtual, it is at the same time more or less absolute, while in instrumental music we are talking more of a metaphor, which brings another poetic dimension, and this is what I find particularly interesting.

Do you have any idea of the direction your music will take in future? What do you dream about, what attracts you?

In every new composition I unconsciously take a bite of something that at time I use only on the margins, but which at the same time opens up a new path for future compositions. In the future I want to take these "nibbled" directions as far as they will go: constant obsessive pulsation leading to a trance state; the construction of unbroken, uninterrupted forms, for example twenty minutes of gradation; work with changes of tempo, with halting, acceleration, with a mechanical and an animal energy of tempo; new orchestral colours such that the ear cannot make out their origin.

Ondřej Adámek (*1979 in Prague) studied composition at the Academy of Performing Arts (AMU) in Marek Kopelent's class and at the Conservatoire National Superieur in Paris, as well as taking part in different composition courses to study under a number of well-known composers. In addition to his instrumental, vocal and electro-acoustic work he also works with contemporary choreographers. His compositions have won awards at many international competitions (Prix des Editions Musicales Europeennes, Brandenburg Composers Prize, Métamorphoses, IMEB-Bourges, the Hungarian Radio Prize and others). He currently lives in Paris. You can listen to his piece Strange Night in Daylight on the CD "Young Blood", which we send free of charge to subscribers to Czech Music guarterly on request (info@czech-music.net).



PRAGUE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CHOICE OF CONCERTS

June 13, 2007 | Wed., Smetana Hall, Municipal House, 7:30 p.m.

Conductor: SERGE BAUDO

Soloists: KATEŘINA KNĚŽÍKOVÁ | soprano JANA ŠTEFÁČKOVÁ | mezzo-soprano JANA SÝKOROVÁ | mezzo-soprano

Narrator: DANIEL BAMBAS

CZECH PHILHARMONIC CHOIR BRNO Choirmaster: PETR FIALA

Claude Debussy: THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. SEBASTIAN based on a mystery play by Gabriele d'Annunzio

June 19, 2007 | Tue., Smetana Hall, Municipal House, 7:30 p.m. June 20, 2007 | Wed., Smetana Hall, Municipal House, 7:30 p.m.

CONCERT CELEBRATING THE 80th BIRTHDAY OF SERGE BAUDO

Conductor: SERGE BAUDO

Serge Baudo: Peut-être demain, WORLD PREMIERE Bohuslav Martinů: Les Fresques de Piero della Francesca, H. 352 Georges Bizet: L'Arlésienne, Suite No. 1 Albert Roussel: Bacchus et Ariane, Suite No. 2, Op. 43

June 28, 2007 | Thr., III. court Prague Castle, 8:00 p.m. June 29, 2007 | Fri., III. court Prague Castle, 8:00 p.m.

Conductor: JIŘÍ KOUT

Soloists: MARIE FAJTOVÁ | soprano JAN MIKUŠEK | tenor IVAN KUSNJER | baritone

PRAGUE PHILHARMONIC CHOIR Choirmaster: JAROSLAV BRYCH BAMBINI DI PRAGA, Choirmaster: BLANKA KULÍNSKÁ

Carl Orff: Carmina Burana

czech music | **history** by Jaromír Havlík

The first postwar vears (1945-48/49) were marked by a remarkable amount of international activity in Czech music culture. Naturally this was partly an attempt to reestablish contacts broken by the war (and in the field of music these had been particularly intensive under the prewar First Republic), but it was also a response to the perceived necessity to enter discussion on newly emerging themes. One of the most pressing themes, raised immediately the war ended, was that of a "crisis of contemporary music". What was also behind therenewed international se activities was, however, the attempt to represent the reestablished Czechoslovakia to the world - and music had traditionally been a successful Czechoslovak cultural export. The political clima-



"Ahead Towards the Socialism with Comrade Gottwald" Poster for the 9th Congress of the Communist party of the Czech Republic

te of postwar Europe was generally orientated to the left, and this was even more the case in those areas of Europe that had found themselves in the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union as a result of wartime developments. In the ascendant, the left wanted to express its hegemony on an international stage, and leftist campaigning in the sphere of culture (as in other spheres) was considered an important instrument of propaganda and ideological struggle (the communists liked to appropriate the category of "progress" for example, identifying it with fundamental political doctrines based on a single "scientific world view").

THE PRAGUE MANIFESTO AFTER (ALMOST) SIXTY YEARS

2nd International Congress of Composers

Zněcka jehletky

From its very first year (1946) the international Prague Spring music festival was a highly respected musical event. Other influential international activities in Czech music culture included the two international congresses of composers and music critics organised by the Syndicate of Czech Composers in May 1947 and the following year – always timed to coincide with the Prague Spring Festival. The 1st International Congress of Composers and Music Critics met in Prague on the 16th to the 26th of May 1947 and was attended by delegates from 16 countries. The main theme was of course the establishment of contacts and the programme motto was the question "Where is contemporary music going?" The papers presented at the congress were published in a collection entitled The Music of the Nations¹. As far as can be gathered from these papers, the claim that contemporary music was in a state of crisis was universal and made spontaneously by the delegates of both "western" and "eastern" countries. In the following year (20th - 29th of May 1948) the 2nd International

Congress of Composers developed the themes introduced at the 1st Congress, and its conclusions were

¹ Hudba národů – Musique des nations. Prague, Syndicate of Czech Composers 1948, 187 pages. formulated in one of the official congress documents, entitled the *Proclamation (Provolání)* but also known as the *Prague Manifesto*. The question "Where is contemporary music going?" was considered in detail at the 2nd Congress in terms of the creative problems of the contemporary composer and the problems of the contemporary music critic.

The political changes that had just occurred in Czechoslovakia (the communist takeover in February 1948), increased the importance of the 2nd International Congress of Composers and Music Critics for its time. From the outset the communists concentrated a great deal of attention on the field of art and culture as an extremely useful instrument in its political struggle "for the soul of every person", as the Czechoslovak Communist Party Cultural Political Programme put it in a declaration at the Congress of National Culture soon after (in April 1948) the political coup. The communist cultural offensive was planned in detail and skillfully coordinated. The main speakers at the Congress of National Culture were the leaders of the communist regime - Klement Gottwald (Prime Minister), Václav Kopecký (Minister of Information), Zdeněk Nejedlý (Minister of Education and Enlightenment) and Ladislav Štoll (literary theorist, communist critic, essayist, high-ranking functionary of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party). They all made the same general

points about the need for an ideologically unified cultural political line that would reflect the process of building socialism and become an active force in this process. Štoll focused on the question of the function of art in socialist society. One point that he made may seem rather surprising in retrospect, given our experience of the usual attitude of the totalitarian regime towards (at least some aspects of) the phenomenon of creative freedom: "As regards the question of "how", the question of form, here no one can prescribe anything "At this moment, then, artistic individuality, later to be repressed and deformed for so many years, was still being defended as autonomous and untouchable even by a high ranking communist. As we shall see, subsequent events were to take a different course.

Nejedlý devoted most of his paper to the questions of the relationship between art and ideology, art and reality, and the national quality of art. He stressed that the art of the future must be based on a certain ideology, for that that is the essential nature of art and corresponds to the facts of historical development. On the question of the relationship of art to reality he proclaimed realism to be the only progressive approach, and so the only approach with a future, unlike the deformed alternatives of naturalism, formalism and surrealism (here we should highlight the way in which these concepts are linked together, despite the logical incoherence of the equation - a linkage that was to acquire an

"Let the Success of the Socialist Cultural Revolution Be Achieved Through the New Musical Creation"

almost magical ritual function in communist music criticism). Nejedlý's argumentation is in places very much an appeal to the "people" in the sense of "popular demagogic". For example, he offers his audience the following intellectual sleight of hand: "Realist art grows out of reality - and if that reality is Czech, then our art too must be Czech. Only a typically Czech art can also find a place in world culture. National character is therefore the best guarantee of the internationality of art". Nejedlý had in fact been obsessed with this conception of Czech national art (and by extension music) for many years and had been working hard to promote it practically from the very birth of the republic in 1918. He was not alone, and it became a very influential concept of the development of modern art in the new Czechoslovak state, and one with both positive and negative consequences in interwar Czech modern music.

The Zhdanov Theses

One very significant impulse behind the ideological political line and concrete programme of the 2nd International Congress of Composers and Music Critics was what is known as Zhdanovism or the Zhdanov Theses - or more precisely the Resolution of the Soviet Central Committee of the 10th of February 1948 on Muradeli's opera The Great *Friendship* and the overall situation of Soviet Music. This document had a very pronounced effect on the discussions of the congress - and naturally also on the content of the Proclamation, i.e. the Prague Manifesto. In any case, the Soviet delegates were among the most important foreign celebrities at the congress² and the delegates to the

² They were T. Khrennikov, B. Zarustovsky and J. Shaporin



congress scrutinised the Zhdanov theses very thoroughly. No more than Neiedlý's theories about national-international character and realism were the basic principles of Zhdanov's theses anything new. The term "socialist realism" - one of the key terms of the whole period and specifically the 2nd International Congress as well - had first been formulated in 1932 at the Congress of Soviet Writers and soon became current abroad. In Czechoslovakia it had been used for example in debate on the pages of the journals Rytmus and Tempo in the years 1936-37, by Vladimír Helfert in Czech Modern Music and of course by Nejedlý in his book on Soviet Music. The Zhdanov Theses nonetheless brought the issue of socialist realism to a political head, and formulated it in a very authoritarian, uncompromising and normative way. The 2nd Internal Congress in Prague became a major international platform for these theses, and so aroused lively reactions from both its supporters and its opponents. Indeed, the Prague Manifesto has not infrequently been directly identified with the Zhdanov theses, but this is far from justified either in terms of time or place, or even to some extent in terms of content.

The Prague Manifesto

The Prague Manifesto declared first of all that that contemporary music was in deep crisis, caused above all by the sharp contradiction between socalled "serious" and so-called "light" music. It criticises serious music for extreme subjectivity and complexity of form, while attacking light music for flatness, leveling down and standarisation, cheap pandering to low taste and commercialisation. The manifesto claims that the way out of the crisis is for composers to recognise the seriousness of the situation and so to give up extreme subjectivism and complexity of expressive technique. The manifesto explicitly denies any desire to establish norms and binding regulations for composers, and merely appeals to their consciences and good will, but in later sections it does actually contain concrete instructions on how to overcome the critical state of music. Specifically, there are 4 areas of requirement: 1. Composers ought to recognise the state of crisis and give up extreme subjectivism. Then their music will become the expression of the new, highly progressive ideas and feelings of the broad masses and everything that is currently progressive. 2. Composers ought in their

music to identify more deeply with the national cultures of their countries and defend them against cosmopolitanism, for "music cannot be truly international except as a result of the development of its national character."

 Composers must turn their attention to forms that have the potential to be the most concrete in content, specifically operas, oratorios, cantatas, choral works and songs.
Musicians should make efforts to educate the broad masses as a way of overcoming musical illiteracy.

Three of these four points are addressed directly to composers, who are expected to take the main role in overcoming the alleged crisis. The last point relates to another serious problem, i.e. education to musicality, the cultivation of cultural interests and needs, the encouragement of a sense for art. In this point the Proclamation goes beyond the terms of the Zhdanov Theses, although it evidently starts from the view expressed in them.

All the delegates to the congress unanimously agreed on the text of the Prague Manifesto. The problems began rather later – especially in Czechoslovakia, with the further concrete elaboration and practical implementation of the individual ideas set down in the document. Concurrently there was a similar "elaboration and practical application" of the Zhdanov theses. Here of course political pressures exerted by the regime played a much stronger and more immediate role.

Implementation

The 1st Working Congress of the Composers and Music Scientists of Czechoslovakia, which met in September 1948 in Prague, identified with the ideas of the Prague Manifesto. At this congress the ideas of the Manifesto were elaborated with a view to application in domestic conditions. The focus of attention was the "people's" character of new music, postulated here as an obligatory aspect of art. The participants at the 1st working congress declared support for the policy of the Czechoslovak

RÁMCOVÝ PĚTILETÝ PLÁN SKLADATELŮ A HUDEBNÍCH VĚDCŮ

(Vyblášen na spolešná scházj Syndikátu českých skladatelů a Syndikátií slovenských skladatelů dne 20. XII. 1948 v Národním klabií v Peazy).

ÚVOD

Kdykoliv se mluvilo o plánování, myslilo se obyčejně na plánování v sektoru hospodářském. Proto snad mnohé překvapilo, že nyní plánují dokonce skladatelé a hudební větei. Jčišé před takovým rokem – před dvěma lety nebylo by skoro ani možné provšt nčeo podobného v měříku tak šinokém, jak to provšdíme dnes tésně před začátkem první československé pčtiletky. Na tom jest vidět, jak se dík únotovému vitězství načeho lidu podstatně změnila funkce umíčle ve společnosti a jeho poměr k pracovnímu kolektivu, a jak se mění celá naše společenská struktura. Dnes dobře ctíme, že i skladatelům jest třeba spolupřece, že jen kolektivním úsilim urychlíme vývoj k socialismu, že jen vzájemnou kontrolou a pomocí zbavíme se starého liberalistického nánosu, který právů u umělčtů zapustil tak hluboké kořeny. K tomu všemu potřebujeme jednotnou celostátní organisační základnu; k tomu všemu potřebujeme i společný plán.

Při plánování vycházíme ze současného stavu. Základem jest nám program Gottwaldův a Slánského přednesený na posledním zasedání ÚVKSČ, program hospodářské pčtiletky jako plánu přestavby a výstavby, dále provolání a usnesení II. Mezinárodního vjezdu skladatélů a kritiků, resoluce I. sjezdu celonárodního, jakož i výsledky školení uměleckých patronů. Z toho všeho vyplývá

 a) aktivní působení hudby v budovatelském plánu a v zostřeném třídním boji. Chceme hudbou pomáhat splnit pčtiletku.

b) zaměření hudební tvorby k aktuálním potřebám titáním a budovatelským, zaměření hudební tvorby na lid. Psát pro lid, znameňa psát o tom, čím tento lid žije, čerpat z toho, co jest podstamé pro život nově se rodicího člověka. Všeobecný výrok "zamíření na lid" může vést k špatnému chápáni. Budi domněnku, že jde prostě o to, přizpisobit se vkusu lidu, kterému byla v minulé kapitabistické čér vuncována zkomercionalisovaná t. zv. lidová hudba. O nie takového nejde. Naopak. Východiskem tu je nejpokrokovějši títida a jeji potřeby, tak jak jest representována komu visitcík v uvédomělým pracujicím lidem. Jeji potřeby nezjistíme anketami, nebo z dopisů posluchačů rozhlasu. Jde tu spíše o marxistické předvídání směru vývoje. Dněnín skladatelé už dobte védi, že nemohou neustále pasivně a dodatěně se vrtovnávat s běžnými politickými problémy. Každý umělee a tedy také skladatel se musí stát průkopníkem socialistických idel. Krásně to tylo řečeno na školení patronů: "Umělem usi bý, vyslancem lidově-demokratického režimu, hlasatelem nového řádu, bojovníkem za socialismus. To předpokládá, že musi svým dílem umět přesvědčit druhé. Aby mohl přesvědčit druhé musí být sám přesvědčen."

Zjístění lidových potřeb není záležitosti nějakého objektivistického sociologického výzkumu večiného mínňn, nýbrž konkretního třidního boje a budování, který prolíná celý náš život. Odtud plyne nutnost marxistického ikolení viech skladatelů a hudebních včedí, ovšem ikolení ne pouze theoretického, nýbrž ikolení na konkretních každodenních úkolech, ve spolupráci s vedouci pracující třídou v místních organisatich, v závodech a na verkově, Jednou formou tohoto školení jsou na příklad umčlecké patronáty, protože nová tvořba předpokládá nový zážitek, a ten nepoznáme doma u svého spracovního stolu. Nový zážitek musíme hleda v jednozé s pracujícími, v jedné linii s těmi ebětavými budovateli socialistické regubliky, kteří na př. dne 19. XII. 48 dostali od předsedy vlády vyznamenání a čestné standaty "Hrdinů přáce".

Vytvoření nové socialistické kultury se často chápe jako odvržení veškreť dosavadní tverby, protože prý jest novyhovujíci a vytvoření něčého z brusu nového. Zde upozorňujeme na starou leninskou zásadu, že socialismus přejímá z dosavadního vývoje všecko, co jest progresivná a přetváří to v novou monumentální symdnesu. Není pravda, že jest třeba psát jen masové písně, taková tvrzení chtějí skrytě a faléněn naznačovat, že nový hospodáť naší zemé – dlinická třída e pracující lid – nedorostil ještě ničeho "umělečtějšího" než jest obyčejná pisnička. To musíme už v zárodku odmitat; protože psát pro lid neznamená, že bychom něli psát primitívně. Mětíko lidovostí jest naopak to nejpřísnější měřítko, které můžeme použít při posuzování uměleckého díla.

Nová socialistická hudba není jak se někdy tvrdí záležitosť nových hrmat, textů, programů a podohň, Jest třeba domýške problém nové hudební stavby. Pathos socialistického umění se často mylně ztotožňuje s uměleckým novotářstvím. Jindy se zase pokrokové nebo zpátečnické umění chápe jednostranně jako problém technických prostředků. To jest typická kritika formalismu z formalisti ských posic. Ve skutečnosti, komkretně: o zamětení hudby na to, aby působla v třídním boji. Jest samozřejmé, že v našem plánu nepůjde o to, slovi, že ten či onen skladatel napíše ročně jednu operu, že ten či onen hudební včdee rozluků tpřes noe otřaku socialistického tralismu. Tyto příklady jsou uvedeny

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Five-year Plan for Composers and Musicologists from 1948 (in Hudební rozhledy magazine)

Communist Party and proclaimed a five-year plan for composers as an expression of the will of the artistic front to contribute to the fulfillment of the economic fiveyear-plan through the effects of music during socialism-building and in the conditions of intensified class struggle. To get an idea of the atmosphere of the practical application of the conclusions of the 2nd International Congress of Composers and Music Critics (in this country) it is instructive to note the tone of various articles and commentaries in the press, which elaborated the individual articles of the Manifesto. Characteristically, almost all the journalistic argumentation is clearly focused on composers, on the creation of music. The leader of the 1st issue of Hudební rozhledy magazine (September 1948) is typical for its radical uncompromising attitude: "...we are convinced that only a perfectly politically conscious artist can use his talent to the full to the benefit of his nation... we are convinced that only the progressive artist is predestined to be



ROČNÍK II., ČÍSLO 2-3. V PRAZE 15. XII. 1949

HESIČNÍK SKLADATELÚ A HUDEBNÍCH VEDCÚ ČESKOSLOVENSKA



JOSEF VISSARIONOVIČ STALIN

the creator of new artistic values in the epoch of the birth of socialism... we are convinced that artists in their attitude and above all with their music can not only contribute to the building of a new society but even speed up the process... we do not want to play at being mere sound musicians or jugglers of tone combinations; we want to return music from its social isolation to the heart of the living human being ... "The leader also calls for a radical revision of artistic values, and here the line taken on the concept of "creative freedom" is very relevant. " ... we definitely do not regard it as humiliating for creative artists to be assigned tasks... we do not consider there to be anything objectionable about the fact that composers will not now succumb to the fads of excessive experimentation, but instead of games of art for art's sake will be integrated into the nationwide working process, and instead of individual Bohemianism will get to know the needs of a healthy collective."

After the national congress the Czech musicologist Antonín Sychra tried to assess the results of the two meetings – the international meeting in May and the national in September – in a long article.³ In one passage he tried, very unusually in this period, to actually define what was then one of the HUDEBNÍ BOTHERING ROCHIK II. CISLO 4-S. V PRAZE IS. II. 1930

HESICNIK SKLADATELO A HUDEBNICH VEDCO ČESKOSLOVENSKA



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most commonly used (or perhaps abused) concepts in music aesthetics, criticism and journalism - the term formalism: "We might perhaps (present author's emphasis) be able to define formalism in general as the tackling of creative questions, questions of aesthetic structure, without regard to the functional union of art and reality, and without consideration of the tasks that society imposes on it. In musicology we might call formalistic those concepts that explore the development of musical structures, and musical techniques, in isolation from their meaning, from their social function, thus elaborating the idea, which is in any case deeply rooted, that music creates its own reality, that it is an independent world of "sounding forms of motion (Hanslick)".

This is a very vague and empty definition - but it was on this kind of principle of argumentation, essentially too vague and schematic for any real judgments on music, that most of the theoretical and critical literature of the time is based. This included a lengthy attempt to put forward some kind of scientifically founded exposition of the concept of progressive music and social realism (using concrete "analyses" of model musical works as effective ways of getting the message across) by Sychra himself, entitled Party Music Criticism, Co-Creator of the New Music [Stranická hudební kritika, spolutvůrce nové hudby] (1951). Sychra invested huge labours and his undoubtedly penetrating intellect to

Hudební rozhledy magazine covers of 1949 and 1950

his theoretical elaboration of socialist realism. Naturally it was a completely hopeless task and a waste of energy and time, making it one of the greatest professional tragedies of this undeniably able, erudite and creative scholar.

Further concrete elaborations of the conclusions of the Prague Manifesto were to take ever more extreme and bizarre forms. At the end of a joint meeting between representatives of the Syndicate of Czech Composers and the Syndicate of Slovak Composers on the 20th of December 1948, the participants adopted a Framework Five-Year Plan for Composers and Musicologists. The plan was based on the principles of the economic Five-Year Plan promulgated for the years 1949-53. The premise of the composers' Five-Year Plan was the demand that music should play an active role in inspiring efforts to build socialism and in the intensified class struggle. The second premise - closely related to the first - was that music must be composed with a view "to current class and socialism-building needs", i.e. addressed to the people. Emphasis was placed on the need for composers and musicologists to have political training, and not of a theoretical kind, but practical as well "in co-operation with the working class on concrete everyday tasks". The plan identified one effective form of such practical

³ A. Sychra: Sjezd mezinárodní a celonárodní [The Congress International and National]. In: Hudební rozhledy I, 1948/49, no.2, pp. 22-25

training as what was known as "artistic supervision" (artists were obliged to go regularly to factories and plants, usually near their homes, and to lead art activities for the workers, especially young people, with composers for example writing mass songs for works choirs and so on), because "... new art depends on new experience - and we do not get that at home, at our desks" ... and furthermore, "...Hitherto we have placed too little emphasis on vocal music. We have regarded symphonic music as the main centre of gravity of our work ... Vocal music must be the reflection of the class struggle against reaction within ourselves and outside ourselves... This means that we must stop any attempts to make vocal music apolitical... We must get rid of naturalism in declamation in the interest of a new, developed cantilena, and avoid all purely instrumental formalism in vocal music..." I do not think there is any need to make further comments on these extracts from the (official!) proclamations of the time. They are as authoritarian and uncompromising as they are contentless and absurd.

International response

Let us, however, return to the international response to the Prague Manifesto, which was not deformed by such political pressures and where discussion was at a rather more serious intellectual level. Soon after the end of the congress the manifesto became the subject of very lively debate and polemic involving many well-known figures on the international music and musicological scene. Probably the most famous contribution to the debate was Adorno's essay, Die gegängelte Musik (which came our in August 1948⁴), and triggered other, mostly polemic reactions.5 Apart from these responses and criticisms shortly after the end of the congress and publication of the Prague Manifesto, reactions to the document were to resume much later. One well-known example was the interrupted discussion seminar held on the theme in April 1969 in the Institute for New Music and Music Education in



Darmstadt, originally conceived as part of a broader thematic series of discussions on Music and Politics (Musik und Politik). Two years later a collection of articles came out entitled Über Musik und Politik , with a content that overlapped with the theme of the Darmstadt Seminar but was not identical. Czech musicologists were among those who took part in the seminar and made contributions to the collection. To judge from the testimony of the direct participants in the seminar the atmosphere of the discussion in Darmstadt differed greatly from the tone and direction of the collection two years later. In Darmstadt the theme seems to have produced a very diverse range of opinion including views of an extreme leftwing type - voiced not by the Czech musicologists but above all by the "western" participants (K. Boehmer: The Art of Revolution). These radical leftwing views did not appear in the collection, however, which on the contrary included papers that had not been presented

"Work, Strength, Peace, Happiness for All People, Abundance. The Whole Nation With the Communists" Poster for the May Day celebrations

at Darmstadt and were critical of the principles of the Prague Manifesto. A particularly sharp attack on the Prague Manifesto (set in the context of a broader argument) was presented in the essay by Vladimír Karbusický, "Ideologie umění a umění ideologie. K podstatě pamfletické hudební literatury 1948-1952" [The Ideology of Art and the Art of Ideology. On the Crux of Pamphlet Literature on Music 1948-1952].7 This essay aroused great antagonism among the official representatives of Czechoslovak musicology, all the more so since its author, former radical Marxist, had by this time emigrated.

If, then, the tendencies of the Darmstadt discussion were more "to the left" – i.e. orientated to criticism of the current state of western cultural and cultural politics and so to the defense of the principles of the Prague Manifesto, the tendency in the collection two years later was in the opposite direction – to sharp criticism of the Prague Manifesto and the social system that had applied its principles. For example,

⁴ First published in the magazine Monat, May 1953, and in book form in Dissonanzen 3, 1963, pp. 46-61

⁵ R. Leibowitz: *L'artiste et sa conscience. Esquisse d'une dialectique de la conscience artistique.* Preface by J.P.Sartre, Paris 1950.

⁶ Über Musik und Politik. Neun Beiträge, hrsg. von Rudolf Stephan, Mainz 1971

⁷ The article came out in the collection *Über Musik und Politik*, Mainz 1971 on pp. 67-85 in somewhat abridged form. It had already been published before (1969), this time in significantly censored form – likewise in the journal Hudební věda (Hudební Věda, 1969, no.3, pp. 281-311). It was published in full form only 22 years after it was written in Hudební věda under the title *Ornament revoluce [The Ornament of Revolution]*, Hudební věda 1991, no. 4, pp. 341-359.

in his essay Karbusický claims that the Prague Manifesto had essentially been drawn up beforehand in Moscow. This was a claim that was of course rejected by some of those who had actually attended the 2nd International Congress: Antonín Sychra and Ivan Vojtěch declared that the Soviet delegation had in fact behaved very correctly and with great restraint at the congress, and that it had been leftwing composers and critics from western countries who had contributed most to the more radical formulations of the Prague Manifesto. One whom they mentioned in this regard was the English composer, pianist and conductor Alan Bush (1900-1995), a convinced radical Marxist and from 1935 a member of the British Communist Party. Other congress documents would potentially provide objective and very valuable evidence - especially the detailed minutes of discussions (these were made by stenographer, but have been lost with the whole archive of the Syndicate of Czechoslovak composers, and historians have been searching for them vainly to this day).

There would seem to be some analogies between the situation in Prague in May 1948 and in Darmstadt in April 1969: 1. Radical left-wing totalitarian views were far from being expressed only by representatives of the "socialist" countries, who as it were had them in their "job description", but were to a significant extent voiced by some representatives of the West, usually convinced left-wingers of Marxist orientation.

2. The problems of music and politics, music and ideology, music and state power, music and society, artistic freedom and the communicative powers of music (and art in general) remained live issues in the later period, despite the death of Stalin, the ensuing criticism of his "cult of personality" and the gradual revelation of Stalinist (and other totalitarian) crimes. The end of the 1960s actually brought a new radicalisation of the left, especially among students in the West (disturbances in France, West Germany) - paradoxically at the

same time as a wave of protest against totalitarianism in Czechoslovakia, Poland and elsewhere. Incidentally, the problems at the Darmstadt seminar were caused above all by radical leftwing students who whistled and heckled the main speaker off.

T.W.Adorno

Since we are well aware of the ideological principles behind the views of the supporters, promoters and administrators of the Prague Manifesto – especially in this country – let us now briefly consider at least the main opponents of the Prague Manifesto on the international scene.

Undoubtedly the most carefully argued and well thought out response was Adorno's essay Die gegängelte Musik. It became very popular both as itself a manifesto of a particular intellectual platform and as a support for future arguments of a similar kind. It was published in Czech translation in the "Darmstadt" vear of 1969 under the title Music on a String [Hudba na provázku]. The parallel printing of the original text of the Prague Manifesto, to which Adorno was reacting, was a particularly useful aspect of the edition. Czech orthodox Marxists naturally tried to engage in polemic with it⁸ but in doing so they paradoxically also popularised the work and distributed it with commentary to the broader public. Adorno brilliantly exposes the "formless melodising" of a document as rife with empty phrases as the Prague Manifesto. This fault in itself, however, would not have made it worth his while to write a reply at the standard of Die gegängelte Musik. The Prague Manifesto also contained some opinions that Adorno believed were worthier of deeper examination.

Adorno started from his own current theories of the linearity of the historical development of music based on the evolution of the material of music (it was on this theory that he built his argument in his book, *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, which was more or less complete when he wrote the reply to the Prague Manifesto). Mainly on this premise, he argued that there was no real and fundamental differences between the "bourgeois music of the West" (denounced and rejected by the Prague Manifesto), and the progressive music of socialist realism: "... the avant-garde music denounced in the East is once again creating aesthetic contradictions at a higher level and taking on something of the mechanical and objectified essence peculiar to traditional musical language". Seeing music in terms of linear historical development from lower to higher forms means that Adorno practically inevitably concludes that reality, "provides no justification for returning music to its earlier lower level by means of reglementation."

Here Adorno was actually playing into the hands of later critics of his critique (Marxists of Soviet type - Adorno as we know was also a Marxist), since the theory of the linear historical development of music (evolution from the simpler to the more complex) was generally considered to be unsustainable from the late 1950s/early 1960s (Georgiades and others). His attack on some of the theses of the Prague Manifesto as voluntarism was also potentially a boomerang, since elements of voluntarism are undeniably present in Adorno's own philosophico-historical concepts. Nonetheless, Adorno's objections to the Prague Manifesto are more complex than this suggests and relate to many different levels of such huge themes as the problem of the relationship between the artist and society, for example, where Adorno defends the autonomy of artistic attitudes unfettered by political or other kinds of social decision (the concept of creative freedom). Here Adorno was very sensitive to the potential consequences of the political administration of the principles of the Prague Manifesto in totalitarian conditions – speaking

⁸ For example Miroslav K. Černý: Ke kritikám pražského manifestu. Od Adorna ke sborníku Musik und Politik [On Critiques of the Prague Manifesto. From Adorno to the collection Musik und Politik]. Hudební věda 1973 pp. 234-243, 326-338. Cited below just as "MKČ".

of the "horror ... at subjects who still speak for themselves...in totalitarian societies". Practice showed that he was not mistaken. These tendencies did indeed come to the fore, if only for a limited period since in their most radical manifestations - regardless of any paper philosophical solutions to the dialectic of the subjective versus the objective - they came into collision with simple "common sense". This, however, was a matter of the subsequent concrete applications of the Prague Manifesto rather than the document itself. Of course, almost every word of the Prague Manifesto may be "taken at its word" from Adorno's point of view and forced to disclose its full implications, but the same is true the other way round. Many of Adorno's philosophically overargued positions (and as a mainly politico-propagandist document the Prague Manifesto definitely is not philosophically on the same level as Adorno's reply, which in places seems like the proverbial use of a "hammer to crack a nut") were also taken "at their word" sometimes more and sometimes less adroitly by his critics in the East.

Today we have perhaps advanced in our understanding of the position of art in totalitarian society in one aspect: we see totalitarianism in its universal character and do not make a distinction for example between communist and Nazi totalitarianism. During the period of communist totalitarianism this view was not tolerated in the areas under communist rule, and was considered one of the most criminal of heresies. Ironies therefore abound in the earlier polemic. Adorno's critics argued for example against his theory that "objectivity...is closed to those who are surrounded by the mist of terror and propaganda" by pointing out the undoubted historical fact that for instance in Hitler's Germany (consider, Adorno's native land!!!) there were some strong individuals whose perception of objectivity could not be clouded even by the most brutal terror and propaganda. This is true, but it could be added that the same could be said (certainly more easily today than back them, with the

necessary minimum lapse of time) of the situation under communist totalitarianism as well.

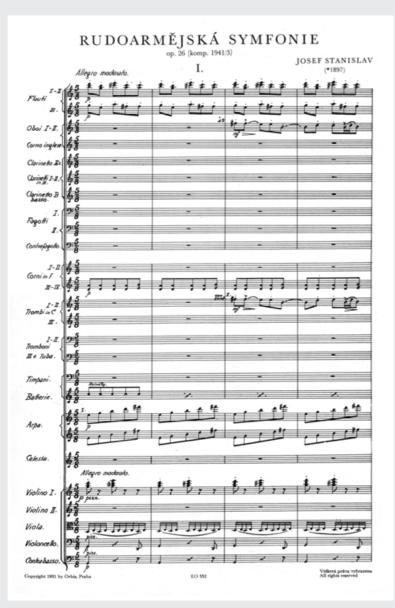
Adorno was well aware that even the "free world" of the western democratic type is not entirely free of theses mystifying tendencies (see his book Über den Fetischcharakter in der Musik und die Regression des Hörens, 1938). This was used likewise used as fuel for eastern counter-arguments in the polemic with Adorno's reply to the Prague Manifesto: "...Adorno is saying nothing else than that the contemporary capitalist world creates its own norms of terror and propaganda, which are even more effective and violent than those open norms that he foists on the socialist world"(MKČ p. 240). The subjects of "mass art" (the critical, free subject versus the ignorant masses), the relationship between art and ideology, art and politics etc. etc. generated an immense amount of heated polemic. In many aspects the discussion became bogged down in insoluble stalemate between perspectives that overlapped but had different premises and of course different agendas. It should be noted that Adorno actually conceded that the Prague Manifesto had a number of positive elements, even if these were of a more or less "technical" character (for example he praises the Manifesto's call for a unification of social criticism of the existing institutional leadership of the music industry, to be pursued with skilful tactics in the interests of the new regime's policy - although of course this was the cultural policy of the communists which was specifically unacceptable to him).

Other critics

René Leibowitz's critique (see note 5) is not on the same intellectual level as Adorno's polemic. Leibowitz criticises the Prague Manifesto primarily for the excessive abstraction of the formulation and then moves on to concentrate on the problem of the commitment of the artist. He agrees with the Manifesto that commitment is something desirable, but attacks the Manifesto for a one-sided emphasis

on civic (political) commitment, which is potentially easily manipulated by the ruling power. Leibowitz himself stresses the other side of commitment - commitment that is purely artistic, autonomous and individual. Both sides combine in an indivisible whole. This is an obviously so transparent a problem that it can be interpreted differently from any side. Unlike Adorno, Leibowitz is willing to concede that society has a natural right to make certain demands on "its" artists (he points out that this has always been the case historically, and has not led to total artistic conservatism and "non-productivity" but often to the opposite).

As already noted earlier, the Czech musicologist Vladimír Karbusický was one of the most bitter critics of the Prague Manifesto in 1969. His position was very radical, far more radical than the views of many western theoreticians. One reason was certainly his personal psychological state following his emigration to West Germany (at the end of 1968), his need to ventilate the accumulated intellectual and emotional tensions that many other Czech intellectuals of his day also experienced (not excepting composers). Paradoxically, this internal psychological pressure was particularly characteristic of those who had earlier been strongly engaged in support for the ideas of the Manifesto (particularly its "practical elaboration" as mentioned above). These had a sudden urge to purify their consciences, to let out their traumatising feelings of guilt both in their own minds and in the public arena. It was the curse of the whole generation of "intellectuals committed to the ideal of socialism in the fifties", who later became disillusioned and in many cases performed a very extreme volte face. This is understandable, if only to a certain extent. It was something that depended on many circumstances: strength of character, momentary human weaknesses and fatal doubts, which the totalitarian regime was very skilful in exploiting to break characters, to corrupt and to compromise. Karbusický claims in



Josef Stanislav: Red Army Symphony (1941/43 according to author's statement)

his article that the programme of the 2nd Congress was entirely prepared and staged by the Soviet regime and under the influence of the Zhdanov Theses. Karbusický does not actually manage to prove his claim convincingly, and it was therefore just a hypothesis, certainly interesting and attractive in its time - and calculated to have this effect (as I have already noted, the stenographic minutes of the whole proceedings of the congress have been lost and their whereabouts are still unknown). In fact the Prague Manifesto was not a piece of pamphleteering, as Karbusický claimed, but an attempt at serious material - and this was the way it was received abroad and debated at the time it was produced.

The Afterlife of the Manifesto

Despite all the contradictory aspects of its content, the Prague Manifesto is testimony to the great international campaign launched by Czech music culture in the immediate postwar years. Despite all the pitfalls it aroused crucial and seriously intended international discussion in the period of incipient Cold War just before the Iron Curtain came down. From our point of view it was to be the last act of its kind for the following ten vears, during which Czechoslovakia more or less excluded itself from the international context (we might mention for example the attempt at leaving the ISCM in 1951, which was a typically bizarre sign of the times), only to start cautiously stepping back into it at the beginning of the sixties - and it is significant that it was in the sixties that discussion on the themes raised by the Prague Manifesto started again. The Prague Manifesto was a major event organised in response to the then universally felt problem of the "crisis of contemporary music". This is why it was discussed and provoked reactions in a wholly serious spirit. The real problem - for Czech music

culture in particular –started with the Manifesto's practical implementation in the following years, involving undeniable decline and obvious elements of crisis in the form of loss of contact with modern trends in music and an unproductive traditionalism. This process was unusually lasting and resistant in Czechoslovak conditions. In 1959 we still find the following journalistic pearls being published in Hudební rozhledy magazine:

"We are faced with a decisive period. In the next few years as the Soviet Union catches up with and then outstrips the USA economically, the risk of a new war will drop to a minimum. How much this will all mean for mankind! Liberation from fear, anxiety, appalling images and visions - the removal of the sword of Damocles, in the razor sharp shadow of which people live and even heroically build the future. What will Messrs Stockhausen and co., who currently claim that the results of their electronic experiments express mankind's inescapable fear of atomic war, do then? Is it not the case that on the contrary the aims of today may be fully realised, working their way through every doubt and anxiety to the optimism of the victory of life over death, peace over war, socialism over capitalism? The Soviet seven-year plan and the prospect of outstripping the most advanced capitalist countries of the world is not a fantasy or wishful thinking. It is a real prospect based on real conditions. This cannot even be denied by the spokesmen of the western capitalist countries, who until recently were accustomed to make light of all the plans of the Soviets. Faced with the facts, the figures on the economic development of the USSR today, faced with the Soviet satellites and serial production of ballistic missiles in the Soviet Union, they have suddenly fallen silent. Of course, we must not lull ourselves into a false sense of security

- the battle is not over yet. The next decade will decide. I therefore think that now we all of us have to make even more effort. In resolution and faithfulness to communist ideals and work, in the remolding of our own selves into people with a new socialist morality, which will unite us in a strong and firm collective. So that we may get closer even faster to the ideal of the socialist artist – the artist of the future".⁹

The 2nd Congress of the Union of Czechoslovak Composers held in February 1959 was certainly important (nor could it have been otherwise) for development in the field of music from the turn of the 50s/60s. In preparations for the event and in the course of the congress we can already detect those specific "decentralising tendencies" (Marxist interpreters later called them "symptoms of the ideological crisis of the 1960s") which after roughly a decade in which intellectual life, and above all discussion had been suppressed and the country had been isolated from the world, were leading to a "clearing of the intellectual atmosphere". It was becoming obvious the totalitarian regime had not managed to convince a great many people of the correctness of the socialist course, that many - especially intellectuals - were at that time cultivating what was known as the shadow culture (the equivalent off the shadow economy) with various illegal and semi-legal societies, that the embargo on information from the West was not being effectively maintained and that "undesirable information" was seeping in through various unofficial cracks, and even sometimes paradoxically as an unwanted side effect of official policies. In short, much was already known in this country at the end of the fifties and beginning of the sixties - and when the Union of Composers presented an unusually broad platform for discussion before the 2nd Congress, the floodgates were being opened for something

that the official regime was less and less effectively managing to control. In the discussions the supporters of the old dogmatic line of argument were pushed ever more onto the defensive (Podešva's risible article cited above is one of the desperate cries of this kind which by this time tended to do little more than raise a smile), while the upper hand was with the heralds of new "fresh, untarnished and unworn" ideas, attractive like everything from the West for the thirsty senses and minds of Czechs and Slovaks, parched as they were from the years of building socialism. Once pushed a little way open, the floodgates could not be sealed shut again, and the current of ideas toxic to socialism became ever stronger - until August 1968, that is, when "big brother" stepped in with the armies of the Warsaw Pact. And it was precisely in period of thaw that discussions returned to the still live and sensitive theme of "art and politics", already developed soon after the war by - inter alia - the Prague Manifesto. Then came the seventies and once again the repression of the free expression of ideas in socialist Czechoslovakia. including another, apparently final official settling of accounts with serious domestic and foreign critics (of Marxist approach, of course) of this remarkable document (see note 8). In the nineties the Czech musicological community returned to the Manifesto a number of times, although usually only marginally and in most cases as part of sharp polemics with a different focus, related to the fall of communism in 1989. Next year the Manifesto will be sixty years old. Is it ripe for deserved retirement?

⁹ J. Podešva: *Blíž k ideálu socialistického umělce!* [Closer to the Ideal of the Socialist Artst!]. Hudební rozhledy XII/1959, no. 4, March 1959, p.136.

in cooperation with the magazine **HARMONIE**



Marek Zvolánek - trumpet, New Prague Collegium. Production: not stated. Text: Eng. Recorded: 11/2002, Prague. Released: 2005. TT: 45:45. DDD. 1 CD Cube-Bohemia CBCD 2529.

have written reviews of recordings by many trumpet players, but objectively I have to admit that listening to Marek Zvolánek's CD I find that it reveals two basic features that surpass the now usual and sometimes self-indulgent technical mastery typical of the field these days. These features are on the one hand the soloist's enormous musicality and brilliant feeling for melody (evident mainly in the cantilena of the slow movements) and on the other the outstanding sound and phrasing of the accompanying orchestra (enhancing the sense of excitement in the fast movements). The most important motto of the recording is naturalness, in tempos, in rhythm, in expression and musical thought. The music flows with exceptional lightness and ease, as if it were part of everything around it. This all creates almost perfect scenery for an exceptional listening experience, which is something rare even in the international context especially in terms of the depth of musical expression of all the musicians involved, who are clearly entirely at home in the world of the arching of Classicist melodies, rhythmic pulsation and dynamics. I'm talking of Classicist melodies, for the first three composers have almost nothing in common with Baroque. They lived in a time of great transformations of style, in which the musical idiom of the first Vienna school prevailed (headed by Georg Chr. Wagenseil). Johann W. Hertel, Michael Haydn and František X. Richter adopted this musical idiom and so communicate much more closely with Mozart than with Bach. Giuseppe Tartini stands on the road somewhere between these two currents, as is clear not only from music history, but above all from listening to this CD. Naturally there is no need for Marek Zvolánek to know about all this, but it ought to be known to the people

who have contributed their expertise to the final product. The reviewer judges not just the musical experience from an album, but the other aspects that together with the recording itself form a probe into the musical and social issues of the music's time. In this regard I must draw attention to the absence of information on editions of the recorded titles, on the authorship of the transcription of Tartini's Violin Concerto in E major, or on the solo instruments used. There is also no reference to the iconographical sources that serves as the artistically interesting basis for the title page of the booklet. The excellent sound of the recording and the quality of the soloist and orchestra are definitely trump cards despite these minor inadequacies of presentation. I think that Marek Zvolánek's CD Baroque Trumpet Concertos has a strong chance of making an impact on musical consciousness even at the international level.

Baroque Trumpet Concertos

Josef Šebesta

Caesar vive! Prague 1609. Music for **Emperor Rudolf II.**

(Luython, Monte, de Santa Maria, Harant z Polžic a Bezdružic, Sales, Luzzaschi, Maier, Cavazzoni, Rore, Orologio, Fatorini, Regnart)

Fraternitas Litteratorum, Stanislav Předota - artistic director, Martin Horvna, Production: not stated. Text: Cz, Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: 2/2006, Chapel of the Chateau of Brandýs nad Labem. Released: 2007.

TT: 55:49. DDD. 1 CD Supraphon SU 3898-2.

here are many repeated reports of the eccentricity of Rudolf II (1552-1612), whether in connection with politics or occultism. We do not as vet understand the arguments of the chroniclers of the time, however, since the basis on which the character assessments were made seems slender in terms of real information. Yet evidence more valuable than the reports of Rudolf's behaviour in terms of protocol and etiquette glimmers between the lines of Rudolf's closest associates or spurned functionaries of the imperial court. In the light of this evidence we can discern the natural features of Rudolf's

character and psychological make-up, which were not only crucial for his time but were to project themselves in full only in the distant future. The historian Robert Evans made the best assessment when he noted Rudolf's court was full of the best diplomats, artists and learned men of their time, and a mere eccentric with a tendency to succumb to melancholia would hardly have been capable of attracting them there. Rudolf as a man showed marked maturity in all the branches mentioned and considered from the point of view of modern psychoanalysis it is clear that he had more than a touch of universal genius which then hindered him in practical conduct and decisions. In this environment the Muse of music had a high place, but only the kind of music that could partner emotional and mystical complexity. It was not then music for the liturgy. We have a great deal of evidence for this assertion. We also know that in 1589 Rudolf gave a large sum of money to his deputy cappellmeister Camillo Zanotti as a reward "for return to madrigals", when a new collection of the latter's madrigals came out in the same year, preceded nota bene by a Missarum

CAESAR VIVE!

3

On the pages of the brilliantly conceived booklet to the new CD - Caesar vive! -, the musicians therefore pose the question of "What could Rudolf II have heard?" if then rather sidelining the question of "How would he have heard it performed?", even though it is only by tackling this latter question that they could hope to gain some deeper insight into deep affect structure. The CD contains a total of 23 numbers, of which 14 are played in the tempo band of 54-56 MM. I really do not understand this monotony of tempo. The pieces concerned are of different genres (mass, motet, canzoneta, songs), with different styles of text (sacred, secular), and in different modes, and to force them into a single template of rhythm is to be insensitive to the materials. In the text of the introductory motet Incipite Domino in Tympanis the psalmist declares "Rejoice, make merry, sing" but the delivery is without excitement and establishes what proves to be the almost unified degree of emotional tension implicit in the tempo arrangement of the CD, without regard to the jubilant Gloria or the introverted Credo. In the mass Super basim-Caesar vive! (it is significant that Super basim is the title of one of the subchapters of the Magie naturalis

(Hertel, Haydn, Richter, Tartini)



Alois Hába The String Quartets, Complete Set

The Stamic Quartet: Vítězslav Černoch, Josef Kekula – violin, Jan Pěruška – viola, Vladimír Leixner – cello, Radovan Lukavský – recitation. Production: Rudolf Bayer. Text: Eng., Ger. Recorded: 1-12/1996, Hall of the Community of the Bohemian Brethren in Prague-Kobylisy. Released: 2006. TT: 67:07, 63:36, 62:18, 72:02. DDD. 4 CD Bayer-Records BR 100 282-5 CD (distribution Euromusica).

he Stamic Quartet's complete recording of Alois Hába's sixteen string quartets, together with two other pieces for quartet, was made in 1996. Back then the Stamic Quartet performed all Hába's quartets for the Prague Spring Festival and their series of Hába concerts was one of the festival's high points. It was assumed that the recording would exploit the momentary wave of interest in Hába's work and help to overturn prejudices about the indigestibility of his "off key music". But this failed to happen and the complete set of 4 CDs has come out only after a ten year interval. Why the delay? This is something only the firm Bayer-Records knows. It should of course be said that it is a good thing the complete set has finally come out, but questions arise about how the distribution agency is promoting it ... The set is clear proof that Hába's music is not "off key" even though it requires a very sensitive ear, and is on the contrary very diverse in style, from the romantically expansive first quartet to the last "Webernesque" quartet. Unfortunately, dissatisfaction and disappointment is mixed with "better late than never" relief. The Stamic Quartet achieved a great feat just by taking the task on, there are few opportunities for comparison (the quartets nos. 11, 12, 15, 16 exist on CD performed by the Novák Quartet), and the interpretation is extraordinarily painstaking but at the same time full of the feeling of spontaneous musicianship that can never be denied in Hába's works. From the technical point of view as well, the recordings are of high quality - the director was Milan Slavický and the sound director Stanislav Sýkora. Also

praiseworthy is the inclusion of the Six Pieces for Sixth-Tone Harmonium (or String Quartet) op. 37 in Johannes Kotschy's arrangement and the Diary Entries (Tagebuch-Notizen) op. 101 on texts by Renata Pandulová, although Radovan Lukavský's strongly Czech diction in recitation of the German text will probably not go down well in German-speaking areas and it would have been better to engage a German actor. It would also have been a good idea to print the text. My main criticisms, however (apart from the delay in release), relate to the accompanying information and commentary. First of all, the list of members of the Stamic Quartet on the sleeve gives Bohuslav Matoušek as first violin, when the Hába quartets were in fact recorded when Vítězslav Černoch was still first violin, and although Černoch is listed inside (without diacritics) and appears on the photographs, a gaffe of this kind is inexcusable. The fourth CD has wrongly numbered tracks (no. 30 is given twice, and so when your CD player indicates track no. 32 and there are apparently 31 tracks in the booklet, you have to go back and work out the puzzle), the designation of the movements is sometimes wrong, and there are other slips like the absence of Czech diacritics on other names and so on. For the accompanying text the sleeve reprints an article by Kerstin Bartel, published in 1993 for the centenary of Hába's birth in the magazine Das Orchestr. It is a decently written compilation article drawing on Hába's autobiography, his published essays on composition and the monograph by Jiří Vysloužil, and while there is nothing to be said against it, the Hába scholar Vysloužil with all his years of experience might certainly have wanted to contribute directly. The basic article on the Hába quartets themselves is by Rainer Zerbst. It is pleasant to find included an article by the violinist Dušan Pandula, for many years a member of the Hába-Novák-Pandula Quartet, who always promoted Hába's music both at home until 1968 and later in emigration. This is a text which Pandula wrote to mark Hába's eightieth birthday in 1973. It should be taken as testimony to the times, and as strongly coloured by the feelings of a man who had recently decided to leave his country (Hába tried to dissuade him right up to the last minute, as their correspondence shows). The biggest mistake is the cover-

- 1558, in which the author Giambattista della Porta (1535-1615) is concerned with number symbolism) Luython plays with the symbolism of the number 7, which was Rudolf II's number. The mass is essentially a six-part piece, with the seventh voice melodically declaiming the central Latin text of the mass: "Live happily, Emperor! May it be God's will. All the nations cry: Live happy, Emperor!", taken up alternately by Cantus, Altus and most often Tenor part. During the mass the call "Caesar vive!" is repeated 35 times, i.e. the symbolic number 7 multiplied by the number of sections of the mass (5, 7, 14, 7, 2). In fact I envisage the other sing parts revolving around the "Caesar vive!" rather like planets around the sun, almost unnoticed. It is a pity that just this concentric effect created by the outside voices entirely vanishes. The interpretation of Alessandro Orologio's canzoneta Cor mio non mi lasciar (printed in 1594, not 1596, as the booklet states) is a similar case in point. Three entirely different emotional levels emerge out of the sensuously erotic text: dying, weeping, laughter, without nuance of interpretation. Like the paintings of the time, the music is full of deeply experienced symbolism, but this way of seeing has fallen over the course of the next 400 years of harmonised melodies into the depths of hieroglyphic oblivion. On the other hand, the three fugues by Michael Maier are brilliantly performed. The fleeing Atalanta, Hippomenes catching up and his golden apples slowing Atalanta down... all this acquires a genuinely dramatic dimension, and what is more one that is carefully modeled by the metre of the text. For any understanding of the function of Renaissance music in the culture of the time it is important to realise that non-discursive techniques were considered forces able to move the emotions, an idea reflected in the frequent formulation "Muovere dell' affetti" ("the movement of mind/emotions"). This CD only opens a chink in the door to these powers. Nonetheless, the outstanding voice technique of the members of the choir and painstaking work in the studio gives the CD a quality that guarantees it success. Josef Šebesta

Josef Šebesta





photo, a portrait of Alois Hába in some kind of holographic or other version (it is based on a detail from the photo on the Supraphon Hába-Centenary set of 1993), which is more intimidating and off-putting than eye-catching. If it was intended somehow convey Hába's anthroposophical views, it hasn't come off. It would have been so much better to use a print by his pupil Miroslav Ponc, for example ... Those with a serious interest in (today actually already classical) music experiments will certainly find the recording for themselves. But the disappointment at lost opportunities and unnecessary slips remains.

Vlasta Reittererová

Sir Charles Mackerras conducts (Delius, Dvořák, Elgar, Suk, Voříšek)

Pamela Frank – violin, English Chamber Orchestra, Wiener Philharmoniker, Orchestra of the Welsh National Opera, Chorus of the Welsh National Opera, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Charles Mackerras. Production: Volker Strauss, James Mallinson, Chris Hazell, Andrew Cornall. Text: Eng., Ger. Recorded: 1969–1997. Vydáno: 2005. TT: 75:30, 79:46, 81:09. ADD, DDD. 3 CD Decca 475 7061 (Universal Music).

ir Charles Mackerras is a dedicated interpreter of Czech music and has promoted it for many years. The choice of recordings on this CD set reflects this fact in the proportion of Czech composers to composers from Mackerras's own country. Two of the CDs are devoted to Czech music and one to English music. There is no need to stress Mackerras's affinity for the music of Antonín Dvořák and Leoš Janáček - here we find Dvořák's Czech Suite and Romance in F minor, and from Janáček the prelude Jealousy. The next composer is Josef Suk, who is represented by three pieces - Fantastic Scherzo, Fantasia for Violin and Orchestra (the brilliant Pamela Frank, who also

plays the Dvořák Romance) and A Summer's Tale. The last composer from Bohemia is Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek and his famous Symphony in D major. As regards the Voříšek, I only started to like Mackerras's interpretation after listening several times, and even then I still didn't find it a hundred-percent convincing. Voříšek just isn't Beethoven, after all, and the excessively lively tempo of the first movement blurs the outlines of its thematic material (it is around 1.5 minutes shorter than on Petr Altrichter's recording with the SWF Symphony Orchestra, for example) while the excessively sharp accents break up its structure, and in the second movement (shorter than Altrichter's by just under a minute) it means that the charming melodies lose their intimacy. Compared to the Slav music, the English music in the set is like a quiet shady valley in contrast to a lush mountain meadow. Frederick Delius's On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring flows in an unbroken, disciplined way, just like his Brigg Fair, An English Rhapsody and A Song of the High Hills. Edward Elgar's Enigma Variations is a showcase work of English music, and this recording offers a marvellous opportunity for savouring its instrumentation and treatment of themes.

Vlasta Reittererová

Antonín Rejcha 36 Fugues for Piano

Jaroslav Tůma – fortepiano. Production: Jaroslav Tůma,

Vítězslav Janda. Text: Cz., Eng. Recorded: Svatá Hora u Příbrami. Released: 2006. TT: 56:33, 76:36. DDD. 2 CD Arta F10146 (distribution 2HP Production).

■ aroslav Tůma deserves much credit for the very project of recording the whole Rejcha cycle on CD for the first time ever. Tůma enjoys picking out unresearched and dusty corners of music history for his projects, and this complete set on 2 CDs is undoubtedly one such corner. This has one big advantage for the performer – there is no one to make comparisons with. But I don't suspect Jaroslav Tůma of being afraid of competition, when after all not so long ago

he presented the public with his interpretation of the hundred-times recorded Goldberg Variations, likewise produced and beautifully packaged by the Arta firm. Rejcha's fugues - published at a time when the fugue was already quite "démodé", have always been considered to be mainly a theoretical work, a kind of caprice on the part of the great Paris teacher, enthusiast for counterpoint and friend of Beethoven. The cycle published in 1803 was only to be given its first (verified) complete performance two centuries later at the Prague Spring 2003, and precisely by Jaroslav Tůma. In the booklet (with brilliant accompanying text by Tůma himself), the performer poses the question of whether this music was written for the concert hall, or just as a practical supplement to Rejcha's theoretical treatise "On the New System of the Fugue". The answer to this question can actually be found in the history of performance of the cycle: the appearance of Rejcha's fugues in pianists' repertoire has been sporadic and isolated. A proper appreciation of this music demands active listening, someone willing to concentrate and ready to be surprised - to be surprised by themes that only a madman would choose for fugue treatments (for example the single repeated note in no. 18), to be shocked by chromatisms (no. 29), or disturbed by the sudden entrance of an unexpected key, by cuts in form by fantasia passage and so forth. This is a deliberate attack on established clichés. Tůma adapts himself with great skill to these changes of mood and ambivalences between old form and new content. Thanks to this the recording is not boring - the longer you listen, the more you find in these one-and-a-half to six-minute pieces. The fortepiano used for the recording in the undoubtedly inspiring Chapel of St. Ignatius on Svatá Hora (a famous place of pilgrimage), is an original of 1790 from the workshop of the celebrated Viennese manufacturer Anton Walther. Brilliant restoration and preparation of the instrument mean that we can hear no technical imperfections. The subtle but strong sound has a surprising range of colours and dynamics and makes it easy for the listener to follow the individual parts.





Close Voices from Afar

Schola Gregoriana Pragensis – chant, Gyosan-ry_ Tendai Sh_my_ – chant and traditional Buddhist liturgical percussion (mokugyo drum, gongs and nyo-hachi cymbals, shakudyhó rattle stick and sounding stones). Production: Text: Cz., Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: 11/2006, Chapel of the Holy Trinity of the former Augustinian Monastery (now the District Ethnographical Museum), Česká Lípa. released: 2007. TT: 68:31. DDD.

1 CD Sony 82876873042 (Sony BMG).

his recording - made following the extraordinary joint concert given by the Schola Gregoriana Pragensis choir and the Ohara Gyosan shomyo kenkyu-kai monks's choir in the Prague Church of St. Anne in November 2006 - is an exceptionally successful manifestation of the attempt to deepen inter-faith dialogue. For the director of the Schola Gregoriana and the key initiator of this usual project David Eben (see CM 3/2004) such dialogue is "one of the most urgent tasks of our day". Another of the initiators of this exceptional meeting of two cultures is the leading specialist on traditional Japanese culture Robin He man - here tucked away inconspicuously as the author of the brilliant erudite commentary on the Japanese element of the recording. With his charisma, energy and practical experience (including many years of practising Buddhism of the Tendai school in the celebrated monastery under Hiei Mountain in Kyoto), inspired and helped to arrange not only this particular meeting, but all the previous meetings between the Schola Gregoriana and Tendai monks in Prague and Japan. The idea of presenting the traditions of both Gregorian chant and the Japanese Buddhist liturgical chant known as shomyo on one album is not new. For example the CD Devotion - Gregorian Chant Meets Buddhist Chant (Victor VICG-5393) made back in 1996, presented the Italian Cantori Gregoriani and Tendai Shomyo Kenkyukai in similar counterpoint (even including a parallel layering in the final track, Agnus dei-Shichisan). This does not detract, however, from the pioneering originality of design and excellent standard of performance evident in the recording from David Eben and his friends, which takes the idea much further

and enhances its impact. In the solo Shoten Kango no san (track $\hat{2}$) and the immediately following Alleluia Magnus Dominus (track 3) we are already given a very vivid impression of the characteristic differences in work with the vocal melodic line. This is the key element, dictating the fundamental difference in the musical language of the two liturgical traditions. In contrast to the diatonic, perfectly unison and purely vocal line of Gregorian chant or early polyphony, shomyo chant exploits a very flexible intonation in slow glissandos. Furthermore, this is realised with a markedly expressive voice timbre with traces of biphonic singing, with elements of heterophonic blurring in choral passages, sometimes accompanied by traditional Buddhist percussion instruments. Immediately after this, in the section Sorai Kada / Ps. 50. Miserere mei Deus (track 4) we have a chance to hear in solos and then in choral arrangement the extraordinarily effective parallel combination of these sliding melodics with the European psalmody. We then encounter a marvellous contrast in the form of the European archaic polyphonic pieces included on the CD, such as conductus Mundus a munditia (track 5) or antiphon Sedit Angelus - versus Crucifixum in carne (track 11). The album makes its culminating and convincing point with the very cultivated and painstakingly produced layering of the two chant traditions, when the psalmodic recitation of the Lotus sutra by the Buddhist monks, underlined by the striking of the mokugyo drum (literally "wooden fish"), is at the same time a drone for the cantio Ave virgo gloriosa (track 10), and when the glissando sliding melody of the solo chant Amida kjó is integrated with the austere, ascetically returning entrances of the Kyrie IV (track 12).

To sum up: An original idea with real potential, outstanding musical design, top performances, marvellous technical quality, first-class erudite information in the booklet! Close Voices from Afar looks like a practically unbeatable candidate for album of the year. All honour to it!

Vlastislav Matoušek

Pavel Vranický

Symphony in D major op. 52, Symphony in C minor s. op., Symphony in D major op. 36, Symphony in C major op. 11

The Dvořák Chamber Orchestra, Bohumil Gregor. Production: not stated. Text: Cz., Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: September 1988 (CD I, CD II/5-7), Dvořák Hall of the Rudolfinum, May 1990 (CD II/1-4), Domovina Studio, Prague. Released: 2006. TT: 55:48, 56:31. DDD. 2 CD Supraphon SU 3875-2.

t is now several months since the release of 2 CDs of recordings of four symphonies by a composer who was part of what is known as the Czech musical emigration of the later 18th century - Pavel Vranický (1756-1808), brother of the five-years younger and later perhaps better known composer Antonín Vranický. It is certainly a very good thing that we now have this music on CD, because the symphonies of Pavel Vranický are among the real treasures of the Czech school of music. Their compositional qualities, especially the imaginative treatment of themes and motifs and ingenuity of sound effects only confirm that Bohemia in the 18th century truly deserved the name of "conservatory of Europe". The opening movements with slow introductions show the influence of the Haydn style and are proof that our masters were in no way lagging when it came to the musical trends of the day. These two CDs offer Vranický symphonies roughly from the period 1790-1805, i.e. the period when composers, influenced by the revolutionary events in Europe, were sometimes inclined to adopt certain "military" techniques. We can hear these overtones in several passages in Vranický's symphonies, and should add that (not only) the brass players show that the Dvořák Chamber Orchestra can boast very high professional standards and that they have carried off what are often relatively difficult tasks with distinction. Their treatment of the intricate small-scale detail of figurative and ornamental passages likewise reveals translucence and technical refinement. Bohumil Gregor has taken great care to ensure that the richness of Vranický's work with themes and his contrapuntal plasticity should be brought out in full on the recordings. This is





particularly the case in the exposition parts of the movements written in sonata form, where we are often at a loss to say whether we should have more admiration for the music itself or for its interpretation.

Also remarkable are Vranický's slow movements, in which he works with such melodious themes and which he instrumented with such refinement that we cannot be surprised to learn that Vranický even inspired Beethoven to write variations on his music. Listeners will undoubtedly be enthralled for example by the lyrical Adagio from the otherwise tragic-heroic Symphony in C minor, which brings tears to the eyes.

It is hard to find anything to criticise in these recordings. The conductor's regular alternation of dramatic, joyous and cantabile sound quality entirely corresponds to the musical aesthetics of the period. Perhaps the only very minor fault, audible on more sensitive CD players, is the slight noise that can be heard when only a few instruments are playing or when the music is played pianissimo. However, the full-bloodedness of the orchestral sound covers up this "addition" (which evidently came about during digital transcription of the recordings). So in conclusion I can only recommend these superb symphonies by Pavel Vranický as an enrichment of our sound resources, because they truly belong to our musical treasury both in terms of composition and in terms of performance.

Tereza Kibicová

Pavel Haas Quartet (Janáček, Haas*)

Veronika Jarůšková – 1st violin, Kateřina Gemrotová – 2nd violin, Pavel Nikl – viola, Peter Jarůšek – cello, Colin Currie – percussion*. Production: Petr Vít. Text: Eng., Ger., French, Czech. Recorded: April and 1May 2006. Released: 2006. TT: 57:35. DDD. 1 CD Supraphon SU 3877-2.

he Pavel Haas Quartet won the Prague Spring Competition 2005 and today we can already safely say that they are carrying forward the unbroken tradition of the Czech Quartet school. Combining Leoš Janáček and Pavel Haas on one recording is a logical idea. Haas was a pupil of Janáček and the quartet bears Haas's name and also works with the Janáček expert Milan Škampa. They approach Janáček energetically, and in the first movement even aggressively (Janáček would probably be pleased, since in his heart he remained young and "no old man"), and their performance is full of ecstasy and desire, as if they were illustrating the letters that Janáček was writing to Kamila Stösslová at the time. Haas's piece also illustrates something - the composer was transposing mood pictures from the "Monkey Mountains" (the Vysočina Highlands) into notes, but these are nonetheless bound together into a strong musical structure to which the performers give marvellous freshness and vivacity. Neither Janáček, nor Haas created a music of beautifully crafted notes - theirs are always gushes of emotion and sharply cut rhythms. The young quartet offers a very well-thought out and structured interpretation but has not forgotten the spontaneity essential to music of this kind.

Vlasta Reittererová

Jaroslav Ježek

Three Policemen, Isabel Valse, Grande valse brillante, Etude, Petite suite, Rapsodie, Bagatelles, Dance of the Puppet, Spring Wind, Bugatti Step

Tomáš Víšek – piano. Production: Šimon Matoušek. Text: Cz., Eng. Recorded: 24/2006, Jaroslav Ježek's Blue Room. Released: 2006. TT: 61:02. DDD. 1 CD Studio Matouš MK 0055 – 2131.

■ he pianist Tomáš Víšek has provided us with an inconspicuous but important and valuable contribution to the recent centenary of the birth of the composer Jaroslav Ježek (1906-1942; see CM 1/2007). The authenticity of the project is underlined by the use of the composer's own piano and the composers own "Blue Room" as the location for the recording. Jaroslav Ježek, a graduate of K.B.Jirák's class at the Prague Conserva-

tory and Josef Suk's master class, who went to Paris on a scholarship and was a member of the progressive "Mánes Music Group", is still not fully appreciated as a composer, and in the Czech public mind is known mainly as the "third saint" in the Werich-Voskovec-Ježek trio who created the satirical shows and reviews at the Liberated Theatre between the wars. His work for the Liberated Theatre orchestra has been fully mapped and a complete set of these "hits" has been released by Supraphon, but Ježek's "serious" music has been neglected. This CD tries to remedy the situation but at the same time to show that the apparently incompatible two sides of the composer's creative personality, the popular and serious, were inter-related. The greater part of the CD is taken up with the cycles Petite suite and Bagatelles. Some pieces (obviously not the extremely well known Three Policemen or the popular Bugatti Step) are here recorded for the first time - i.e. piano versions of orchestral scores. The meticulous pianist Víšek, who systematically devotes himself to repertoire outside the mainstream, has compared different printed versions with the manuscript in an attempt to find the ideal and authentic form of each composition. Fans of the Liberated Theatre will appreciate the way that Tomáš Víšek respects the original tempos and phrasing and that his interpretation has just the right dance panache evoking the atmosphere of the First Republic, with feet in low shoes and spats about to be set tapping and dancing ... He displays his spontaneous virtuosity and vigour in the Bugatti Step - and makes far fewer slips than the composer himself on a live recording with his orchestra! The Steinway piano, once used by Ježek himself, sounds quite "honky tonk" and out of tune in places - it's a riddle whether this is deliberate or just because the instrument could not be got into better shape.

Dita Hradecká

reviews

Pavel Haas Quartet



ner of the Year



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