

Marek Jerie

Music Publishers

Lukáš Vasilek

Ždeněk Fibich's Operas



2010 Spring

Music Bridge Prague — Dresden

Collegium 1704

Collegium Vocale 1704

Václav Luks / artistic director

W. A. Mozart

Symphonies, Divertimenti & Concertos

28. 1. 2010 Dresden

7.30 pm, Annenkirche, Annenstraße

Polyphony of Naples

A. & D. Scarlatti

15. 2. 2010 Prague

7.30 pm, St. Martin in the Wall, Martinská 8

16. 2. 2010 Dresden

7.30 pm, Annenkirche, Annenstraße

A. Caldara

Maddalena ai piedi di Cristo / oratorio

19. 3. 2010 Prague

7.30 pm, St. Martin in the Wall, Martinská 8

20. 3. 2010 Dresden

7.30 pm, Annenkirche, Annenstraße

Musica di San Marco

C. Monteverdi, G. Gabrielli, H. Schütz

1. 4. 2010 Prague

7.30 pm, Church of Our Lady of the Snow
Square Jungmann 18

2. 4. 2010 Dresden

7.30 pm, Annenkirche, Annenstraße

Concerti grossi

A. Corelli & his successors

26. 6. 2010 Prague

7.30 pm, Church of Our Lady of the Snow
Square Jungmann 18

27. 6. 2010 Dresden

7.30 pm, Dreikönigskirche, Hauptstraße 23

with kind support of



MINISTERSTVO
KULTURY



partners



Brücke|Most-Stiftung
zur Förderung der deutsch-tschechischen
Verständigung und Zusammenarbeit
Nadace Brücke|Most
pro podporu českoněmecké
společnosti a spolupráce



AVANT-
GARDE
PRAGUE

media partners



czech music *quarterly*



dresdenticket.de



Tickets

Prague:

300 & 250 CZK

Serial Ticket: 960 & 800 CZK

Dresden:

15 & 10 EUR

Serial Ticket: 63 & 42 EUR

Reduced price 50 %:
children, students, retirees

www.ticketpro.cz
www.dresdenticket.de

From 6.30 pm in the concert hall

info@collegium1704.com
gsm: +420 773 99 1704 (Prague)
gsm: +49 (0)173 3 877 588 (Dresden)

www.collegium1704.com



Dear Readers,

We apologise for the delay in bringing you the last issue of 2009. Unfortunately we too have been affected by the economic problems of the past year, and so were forced to put off publication of this issue for a few weeks. I trust you will forgive us and I also hope that in 2009 *Czech Music Quarterly* will be coming out on time and as it should.

This issue's thematic block is devoted to the publishing of sheet music in this country. Although the article primarily gives an overview of the present situation, it also contains a brief historical account - and so we couldn't resist accompanying the text with old, nostalgic illustrations of the more or less vanished craft of printing. I would also like to draw your attention to the article on the Czech romantic composer Zdeněk Fibich. Fibich is (or definitely used to be) one of our "inviolable national classics" but I have the feeling that his music is actually still waiting for rediscovery, this time independent of local historical stereotypes but simply thanks to its own distinctive energy.

With all good wishes for the New Year

Czech music information centre

Czech Music Information Centre
Besední 3, 118 00 Praha 1, Czech Republic
fax: +420 2 57317424, phone: +420 2 57312422
e-mail: info@czech-music.net
http://www.czech-music.net

Czech Music Quarterly is issued by the Czech Music Information Centre with support of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and the Czech Music Fund.

Editor: Petr Bakla, Producer: Lenka Hradílková
Translation: Anna Bryson-Gustová
Graphic design: Ditta Jiříčková
DTP: HD EDITION. Print: Tiskárna Macík.

ISSN 1211-0264 (Print), ISSN 1804-0586 (Online)

MK ČR E 7099

Price and subscription (shipping included):
Czech Republic: one issue Kč 60, subscription (4 issues) Kč 200
Europe: one issue € 6.25, subscription (4 issues) € 25.
Overseas countries: one issue \$ 9, subscription (4 issues) \$ 36 or respective equivalents

CONTENTS

Cellist Marek Jerie:
"I found that music was the great thing for me."
by Dita Kopáčová Hradecká
page 2

Music Publishers in the Czech Republic
by Mojmír Sobotka
page 12

Musica Nova 2009
by Lenka Dohnalová
page 25

Lukáš Vasilek:
"Becoming a good choir conductor is no easy ride."
by Iva Oplištilová
page 28

Zdeněk Fibich
The Opera Composer Who Returned to the Opera
by Jiří Kopecký
page 34

Reviews
page 43



PHOTO © TOMASZ TRZEBIATOWSKI

MAREK JERIE: I FOUND THAT MUSIC WAS THE GREAT THING FOR ME

Today there are already very few who can remember being a pupil of Pablo Casals, André Navarra, Mstislav Rostropovich and Antonín Kohout. “The cello, love of music, culture, humane ideals and a great gratitude for the fact that I can devote myself to a career that is also my hobby – that is the unifying thread that runs through my life,” says the cellist Marek Jerie (1947). Teacher and member of the celebrated Guarneri Trio Prague, he talks about his unusual family background, meetings with cello legends, and life under communism, but also gives his views on contemporary politics, for example, because Marek Jerie is a man of many interests and his concerns are far from being restricted to the cello and music.

Your father Bohumil was a sculptor – does the artistic tradition go back even further in your family?

My grandmother was Milada Topičová, who had an arts salon and a publishing house. She was not a blood relation, because she adopted my mother, but an arts environment was basic to me from the start. My mother wrote fairytale books that the Topič Press brought out just after the 2nd World War. It was only after the 1989 revolution, as late as 1995, that we managed to get her fairytale Obr Dobráček / The Giant Goodheart published in a reworked version I did myself and with illustrations by Helena Konstantinová.

Topič is a famous name in the cultural history of this country. Do you see some continuity here with the period of the First Republic?

Yes, when I think of how many artists and writers our “granny” Mrs. Topič supported I get a sense that she made a major contribution to the cultural life of her time, and that this is always important for the future as well. I have beautiful memories of the visits of Cyril Bouda, for example, who used to come and stay with us once a year in Raspenava and always brought us fairytale books. He would draw in them for us as we watched – a virtuoso kind of dedication.

Did you yourself have any inclination to visual arts?

A little, but I found that music was the great thing for me. But we (I mean me and my wife Beatrix) have many friends among fine artists. Our best friend from that society is the painter and graphic artist Konstantinová.

What’s the etymology of your name Jerie? It’s not a very usual surname.

The most accepted theory is that a Swedish officer called Jeremias came to Bohemia in the Thirty Years War and there he shortened his name to Jerie. The Jeries settled in the foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains, and made living producing fabrics.

You were five when the communists forced your family to move from Prague to Raspenava in the borderlands. So your attitude to the regime was clear...

In our family it was clear from the start what was black and what was white, what we could talk about and what we needed to keep quiet about. I can’t remember having any problems at school – I had many friends in the same boat. What is more, a child perceives things differently. I have beautiful memories of my childhood. I was often out in the country with my parents or by myself or with my brother. I love the Jizerské Mountains and above all their undiscovered corners.

When did the cello come to be your goal in life?

Sometime when I was thirteen. Like every child I had various dreams – first I wanted to be a magician, and then a pharmacist... I went to the people’s arts school in Liberec, and at thirteen I realised – of course intuitively – that if I played the cello I would have more freedoms in society. My parents strongly supported my idea. I started going to Prague once a month for lessons with Professor Bohuš Heran. He taught me free of charge, but for that I had to play puppet theatre for his grandchildren, and he would sit in the corner and enjoy it too. I was good at that because our granny Milada Topičová used to play theatre for children from the whole neighbourhood. My father carved the puppets.

After your studies in Prague at the conservatory you left the country for Switzerland. How did you manage to get there?

Getting there was hugely difficult. I first went to Switzerland for a master course with Pablo Casals, which was the very last course he gave. There I met a teacher in the university in Basel, Paul Baumgartner, who arranged a scholarship for me.



with Pablo Casals

I found a very nice civil servant at the Culture Ministry, Dr. Cyril Polach, who ran around doing everything to get me a permission when I showed I would have a scholarship there. It took immense efforts to get me an exit permit to the West. So from 1966 to 69 I studied in Switzerland, and then just when my fellow students were leaving for academies in New York or Paris, I went back to Prague.

What is your memory of Casals?

It was a great experience. By that time he was already a legend and if he said something wise the next day it was published in the newspapers. I remember playing Bach's Fifth Suite to him and him asking – "What's the matter with your F?" I said, "It's too high". And he said with humour, "You know it, so why are you playing it like that?"

You also met another legend – Mstislav Rostropovich.

That was a very beautiful relationship. Rostropovich's course in Basle was the most beautiful I ever experienced: I was already twenty-seven and able to appreciate how exceptional it was. Rostropovich was able to deepen my joy in music over six weeks of work. He was a musician of genius: when sometimes the répétiteur left early, he would sit down at the piano himself and play all the accompaniments from memory. He improvised the fugue from the Fifth Bach Suite on the piano in five parts. I had a special position on the course because having coming from Czechoslovakia it was obvious that I wouldn't have the money to pay the course fee, but then again I could speak Russian, and so they made me second translator. In fact it wasn't necessary, because while Rostropovich made big grammatical mistakes, he spoke every language. Very occasionally he would say something in Russian. The wonderful thing was that despite the fact that he met tens of thousands of people, when I was in Paris and saw on the posters that he was conducting, but the concert was sold out, I dropped in on him in his dressing room and he immediately recognised me and promised to arrange tickets for me and my brother-in-law. And he did. Whenever



with Mstislav Rostropovich

he was in Basle, we would meet up regularly in a close circle of friends, with great cordiality.

Did you experience the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 in Switzerland, or at home for the vacation?

In Switzerland. It was a big shock – I had no idea that something like that could happen. On the 21st of August alarmed Swiss friends came looking for me asking if I'd heard the news on the radio. So you don't have a clue what is happening in Czechoslovakia - they were saying.

Didn't you consider staying in Switzerland at that point?

I wanted to study, and carry on playing the cello, and I never actually thought of emigration – I had parents, my brother and many friends in Czechoslovakia and as a musician I had been enjoying greater freedoms, after all. Even though – talking of freedoms, I remember that at the time I started to teach in Lucerne, the first year I had an exit visa for the whole world, the second year it was only for Europe, and the third year just for Switzerland, and so the next year I had to move. But being married to a Swiss citizen made things easier.

Did you get to know your wife there?

Yes, she is a violinist. Because of me she left and came to study at the Music Academy in Prague, where we lived for fourteen years. Here she found a different world, without luxury, but full of strong human friendships. She soon learned to speak Czech, with a Prague accent, and since she spoke only Czech with our three children, Czech was still our family language even in Switzerland. In the days when we were able to travel abroad from Prague, we were a sort of window in the aquarium for many of our friends; we would bring back medicines, brushes, paints, strings, rosins, and for example bananas or special foods for children. Everything that wasn't available here. I didn't escape the attention of the StB (Secret Police), either. Before my first interrogation I went to get advice from

our friend Helena Konstantinová, who already had experience of this kind. They wanted to use me to get information on the Swiss embassy, because they knew we were friends with the “number two” there, the embassy counsellor. The StB tried to pump me, but from the start I had been brought up to know black from white, and I made it clear that there was no question of me collaborating. They gave up.

Did you immediately feel at home in Switzerland? Did the country accept you?

Thanks to my mother, who had studied eurythmics in Dornach in Switzerland and had friends there, I had a good basis of support from the beginning. In music circles you soon find kindred spirits and so feel at home sooner. It's a beautiful country, in terms of nature and traditions. If you travel through Germany, you see villages all in the same style, while the Swiss Landscape is full of different distinctive histories, each little town was built slowly and you see great diversity there.

How did the Guarneri Trio Prague come to be founded (I see that next year it will be celebrating a an honourable twenty-five years of existence)?

I founded the New Prague Trio with Arnošt Střížek and Jiří Klika when we were students at the Prague Music Academy. After we won a national competition,

The Guarneri Trio Prague



the culture ministry started to send us to faraway countries, with us getting just the airfares and a daily allowance. So when still a student I got the chance to go to Cuba, India, Laos, Burma... I have wonderful memories of all this. But when it was clear that I was heading for Switzerland, we agreed that Jan Zvolánek would take over from me, and I gave him my parts with my fingerings too...

The founding of the Guarneri Trio Prague emerged out of my collaboration with the pianist Ivan Klánský. We recorded together for the radio in Klagenfurt when Ivan stood in for Josef Hála. From that first recording we were constantly playing together. After ten years we decided that we would promote the duo to a trio, because Ivan was also playing with the violinist Čeněk Pavlík. I never wanted to play in an orchestra, I didn't refuse solo opportunities and we had many recitals, but the trio became our main focus. The Guarneri trio appears on top podiums, while it is harder with recitals.

What does the piano trio mean for you? Is it something different to a string quartet, or duo...

A piano trio has more soloistic glamour than a string quartet. Combination with a piano also allows us to create greater dynamic differences. And we have the advantage of being able to rehearse for intensive periods and then have a break, which isn't possible with a quartet. A quartet has to live in the same town and play together several times every week, while we can get together before concerts if we can have three weeks of intensive rehearsal. The reason is that the intonation of a piano trio relates to the piano, whereas the intonation of a quartet has to be constantly found and renewed.

Given the teaching and other demands on the time of members it must be organisationally quite a challenge...

It is certainly a big advantage that Ivan Klánský and I teach at the same Music Academy in Lucerne, and so we meet there at least three times a month. Čeněk Pavlík is very adaptable as far as dates for rehearsals are concerned because he doesn't teach on a regular basis. We have agencies in various countries – in Prague for Spain, an Italian agency in Germany, in South America, in Switzerland... It's a question of coordination, and my wife Beatrix helps by being the link between all the agencies. She looks after the contracts and the photography...

Cellists learn not just from other cellists, but from conductors too, and pianists – which musicians have inspired you in that sense?

I've learned a great deal from Ivan Klánský. I would say that pianists are ahead of string players in their concepts of differences between styles. This means that at the time when we were playing a Haydn concerto in the romantic style, the pianists had a clear sense that in classicism you need to create a horizontal melodic level and a vertical rhythmic dimension and deliberately alternate between them. I gathered all these insights from Ivan Klánský. Also, one of my friends from my student years is Jiří Bělohlávek, and it is from him that I learned what the conductor's overview means. We see each other regularly as far as his schedule allows. This year he invited me and my wife and youngest daughter Felicia to Dvořák's *Rusalka* at Glyndebourne, which was marvellous.



The Guarneri Trio Prague

If you compare your students today in Lucerne with you and your fellow students at their age...

I would say that the technical level of play on the instrument has improved. What was a good enough standard for admission in our day wouldn't be considered today. On the other hand, I would say that highly distinctive personalities are fewer on the ground today. Rostropovich used to say it was interesting that many really musical people don't have technique while those who have the technique don't have the musicality. And then he would add that actually this is right – if everyone had everything, then we would have nothing but international stars.

But there are fewer personalities yet more stars.

It's because the agencies try to medialise some musicians, and this is all about financial calculations, while at the same time they have to sideline others. In my youth there was definitely greater respect for teachers – but this doesn't bother me, students are my friends. Actually I like it when they question me about everything. What grieves me, though, is that most of them give priority to "business with music". The moment that they get a chance to play for money, they let everything else go. For me, when André Navarra came to Prague, it was more important for me to be at his concert than anything else, even if I could have been earning any sum. Students today are willing to play even as background music for meals, which was out of the question for students like us in classical music. My friend Bishop Václav Malý told me he was sorry that almost all politicians today just give monologues – they don't know how to listen and don't even try. In chamber music it's not possible not to listen. Chamber music is a kind of social exercise. To contribute to a successful result I often have to draw back and let the person who has the solo rise to the surface. That is the basis of a healthy society. It's a great pity that today there are constant moves to chip away at musical education – to give it less and less funding – part of the next government "package" to reduce the budget deficit is a further cut in spending on music education. We don't seem to realise that we are exceptional in our music culture and that what is at stake is a major contribution for Europe and one that we ought to preserve. Our Czech network of 400 music schools with 400 branches is completely unique. They are educating 200,000 children in music, which is quite exceptional. Today we know that playing a musical instrument helps to raise children's intelligence,



Marek Jerie teaching

and improves their social attitudes and behaviour. Of course, this is just a nice side effect. Music needs to be cultivated primarily for the sake of music, which becomes an inner need for us and enriches our lives.

Do you know offhand how many countries you have visited with the trio and how many concerts you have given with the trio?

Ivan Klánský is a former successful chess player and keeps the statistics. A lot of countries, and a lot of experiences too. Many listeners have told us that we ought to write some memoirs. I plan to do it, but only when I find enough time.

But there are people who travel without much registering other cultures...

For me it's a fundamental enrichment of my life. For example my trips to South America, where I go often, are like pilgrimages. You come back and reassess your views. You see that people who are living there just in garages, for example, are still happy, and that it's not what someone owns that is the main thing, but the kind of relationships he has built.

You give concerts in South America quite frequently. What sort of tradition does chamber music have there?

Concert opportunities are generally few there, but if you get into the main concert series, there's an immense response. For example in Peru, in Lima, there is a chamber concert series that has a tradition going back more than a century. The concerts are held in a hall that seats twelve hundred people and the audience is bigger every time we play... Soon it will probably be sold out.

The Beethoven Society in Chile has been in existence for more than forty years and everyone who is interested in music goes to a concert, because there will be nothing similar for another few weeks.

How do you get on together off the podium?

As friends. It takes a great deal of tolerance, because we each have different habits that have to be accepted. But tolerance doesn't mean having to change your opinion. You need to know what you firmly believe, but still tolerate the other's

view. Over those nearly twenty-five years we've experienced a lot, and when we three are travelling, it's a kind of community, we can often help each other and that makes everything simpler. I remember when Ivan had a broken leg and after a month he decided to play concerts and we pushed him around in a wheelchair... Ten years ago I had a bicycle injury – I smashed my shoulder – and my colleagues were fantastic: I couldn't play for four and a half months, we agreed on who would stand in for me, and they kept phoning from abroad to ask how I was...

But of course audiences can hear the Guarneri Trio Prague outside the world's capitals as well, in small Bohemian and Moravian towns...

We regularly go to Moravia, to Uničov, where the organiser Jan Morávek arranges around 200 concerts every year. We started off there, so we've stayed faithful. We also play for example for the handicapped in Schitz Sassen in Germany, when we have gaps between major concerts. In Sassen there is an excellent music tradition founded by the pianist Wilhelm Kempf, and they have a concert every Sunday. They tell us that this means that they then don't have problems with people with Downs Syndrome – such as aggression or sexual harassment – apparently the music calms them.

Presumably your repertoire must already be virtually complete?

There are a lot of pieces for piano trio. It's always possible to discover and choose from the treasures of the music of the past, or to concentrate on pieces by our friends. But we still haven't finished the complete Brahms set – there is just one trio missing and we shall be recording it for CD in the coming months. A Chopin year is coming, and so we are repeating the Chopin's Trio. There is always something new to rehearse.

We haven't yet mentioned the instruments that have given your trio its name.

The violin made by Guarneri del Gesù, that Čeněk plays, is lent from a private collection, as is usual these days – they are so expensive that a normal musician couldn't afford one. The cello by his grandfather Andrea Guarneri, the founder of the Guarneri dynasty, was bought by my father-in-law, a paediatrician and surgeon who collected beautiful things. He bought instruments and gave them to his family at the time when the instruments were still not out of range in terms of price. I have other cellos – a Špidlen, a Pilař – that I lend to my students.

Marek Jerie

Born in 1947 in Prague. In 1952 his family was forced to move to Raspenava. He studied cello at the Prague Conservatory and Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, and in between also in Switzerland with Paul Baumgartner. He took part in master courses with Pablo Casals, André Navarra and Mstislav Rostropovich. While still a student he founded the New Prague Trio, with which he made a number of foreign tours after winning a national competition. After moving to Switzerland, where he teaches at the Music Academy in Lucerne, he started to play in a duo with pianist Ivan Klánský and since 1986 they have formed the Guarneri Trio Prague with violinist Čeněk Pavlík. The trio has made many recordings on the Praga Digitalis label (Dvořák, Brahms, Suk, Shostakovich, Mozart and others), where it is also finishing a complete set of the Brahms trios.

MUSIC PUBLISHERS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In the following article we are focusing on current activities in the field of sheet music in the Czech Republic. We shall be looking at the production of the most important publishing houses with their ambitious critical editions, but have not omitted information on all kinds of smaller publishing houses specialising in particular areas of music. The list is not of course complete (for example we have not dealt with music materials for teaching purposes), and in the age of the internet the article does not need to try for comprehensive coverage. On the other hand, we have regarded it as interesting and useful to start the article with a brief look at the history of sheet music publishing in the CR – this information, probably available here for the first time in English in compact form, is important for those with an interest in 20th-century Czech music and especially for researchers in the field.

Beginnings

The founding of a publishing house in Prague in 1811 by an Italian, Marco Berra, may be considered the beginning of dedicated music publishing in Bohemia. In the same year teaching started at the Prague Conservatory, another phenomenon associated with the growing interest in cultivating arts music in an expanding circle of citizens, and also an important condition for successful sales of printed music. Berra's firm published not only the works of established European masters but also contemporary Czech composers such as Jan Václav Tomášek, Jan Bedřich Kittl, and in the last years of the firm in the 1850s Bedřich Smetana too. In 1838,



Jan Hoffmann, who was originally employed by Marco Berra and married his daughter, opened his own music shop and lending service, and also press and publishing house, at first in collaboration with his father-in-law. When Hoffmann died in 1949 it was inherited by his wife who ran it under the name of Hoffmann and Widow, and after her by his son Jaromír. The firm published mainly song, choral and piano pieces in the spirit of the national revival. Its production ranged from often pedestrian little works by today entirely forgotten authors to music by Jan Václav Tomášek, Karel Bendl and Bedřich Smetana. In 1867 at the height of the national revival the Emanuel Starý Publishing house was founded; Starý sang in the Prague Hlahol Choir and published collections of the Hlahol male four-part choral works in his own press.

Five years later the Music Foundation's (Hudební matice) Arts Association (Umělecká beseda) launched its activities by publishing

a piano excerpt of Smetana's opera, *The Bartered Bride*, which sold out over just three weeks in October 1872. Over the eighty years of its existence the Hudební matice published a major part of the works of Smetana, Dvořák, Fibich, Suk, Novák, Janáček and their successors. More of a complement to the Hudební matice than competition was F.A.Urbánek's publishing house, which started in 1879 with a new piece by the then 29-year-old Zdeněk Fibich – his String Quartet in G major, which the firm followed up with a four-handed piano arrangement of Smetana's cycle of symphonic poems, *My country*. All these works were new on the market at the time.

The Pazdírek Family Publishing House, which published mainly Moravian composers, teaching and sacred pieces, settled in Brno after several moves. It is interesting that Bohumil Pazdírek founded his own works in 1868 in Vienna, and these were taken over in 1880 by the well-known Doblinger firm. With his brother František he went on in the years 1904–10 to publish the 34-volume *Handbuch der Musikliteratur*, a work of lasting value that contained all the printed music known up to that time. The firm also collaborated on a series of titles with the Prague Melantrich publishing house under the name Melpa, among them the first volumes of the *Musica antiqua Bohemica* series.

We might further mention, for example, the Česká hudba (Czech Music) publishing house in Kutná Hora – this primarily published easy vocal pieces by Czech composers in the form of a magazine, thus informally carrying on from the publication of the periodical booklet *Wěnc ze zpěvů vlastenských* (A Wreath of Patriotic Songs), published at monthly intervals in the second half of the 19th century.

The Situation after 1948

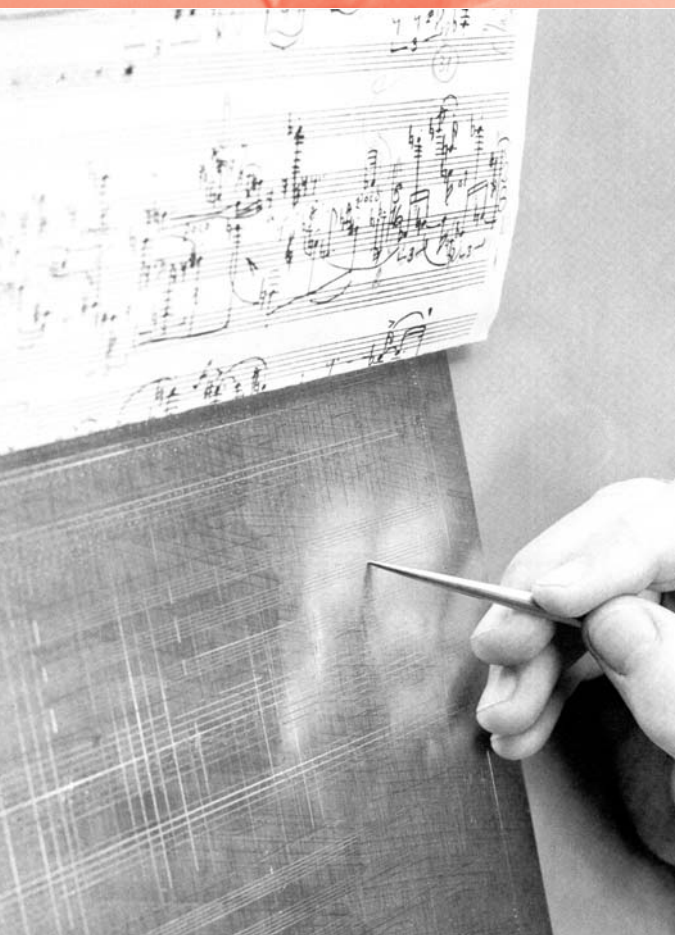
After the Communist takeover these and many other smaller musical publishing houses were dissolved and their production – to the extent that it was considered valuable and acceptable to the new regime – was transferred through a number of successive steps to the State Music Publishing House, renamed **Supraphon** in 1967. Apart from publishing the titles from the work of Czech, Slovak and foreign composers that were most in demand and permitted by the state, this house also published volumes in (unfinished) complete editions of the works of Antonín Dvořák, Bedřich Smetana and Zdeněk Fibich and two series of editions of old music.

The overall character of the production of this state monopoly press was deliberately markedly conservative in terms of style, and so in 1958, at a time when a slight political thaw was beginning, the more free-thinking section of the Czech composers' community founded the **Panton** publishing house to publish contemporary Czech music. In fact, pieces departing from the grey mainstream only started to be published in the 1960s. The temporary greater thaw in political conditions, culminating in 1968, not only gave this second publishing

house a real chance but also made it possible for the State Music Publishing House, then Supraphon, to publish a series of the most audacious pieces in new composing and intellectual trends from the mid-1960s to the beginning of the 1970s under the editorship of the composer Marek Kopelent. This innovative movement in publishing was then nipped in the bud with the arrival of the era of “normalisation” under the aegis of the Soviet occupying force from the start of the 1970s to November 1989. The only exceptions were a few titles from composer who showed loyalty to the existing regime even under these conditions.

The sale of selected titles from Supraphon and Panton abroad was made possible on the one hand by co-editions, almost always with the Bärenreiter publishing house, and in the case of a few avant-garde pieces with the Gerig publishing house and very exceptionally others, and on the other by formal co-editions with Artia, which was the state monopoly concern for the export of art articles. (Artia ceased to have any purpose after the fall of communism and so was dissolved in 1990).

The **Czech Music Fund**, founded in 1954, had a special position and function in the publishing field. Its mission was to use its income, the most important part of which was 2% from the authorial fees of composers, arrangers and performers, and 1% from all fees for the use of music, to support in various ways the development of musical life in Bohemia and Moravia. One of its activities in this context was the running of a lending library of parts and scores of concert pieces by contemporary Czech composers, the core of which was an archive of performance materials built up by the first unified composers' organisation in Bohemia – the Syndicate of Czech Composers. After two years of its existence this had been incorporated into the Union of Czechoslovak Composers. In close co-operation with this organisation and after 1972 with its successor organisation – the Union of Czech Composers and Concert Artists, this archive was enlarged, mainly with new works by Czech composers and soon after by works of Czech composers from the late 17th century to the beginning of the 19th century and to a lesser extent works by the classics of Czech music of the 19th and early 20th century. The scores and performance materials were also lent abroad, and for Czech musicians the Czech Music Fund roughly until the end of 1989 was the monopoly agency for the hire of performance materials from abroad, which was also one of its basic sources of income. The most successful works – often successful less for artistic standard than for their non-musical content or just a title corresponding to the needs of communist propaganda – were usually immediately included in the Panton or Supraphon publishing plans. Others that also had good prospects for wider use were multiplied by small offset print in runs of 50–100 exemplars with the author's copyright as “author's multiplied manuscript”. These musical materials were provided by



the Czech Music Fund free of charge to those interested in them. From 1964 this function was taken over by a newly founded section of the Czech Music Fund – the Czechoslovak Music Information Centre, succeeded by an organisation that after a number of changes is now the **Czech Music Information Centre**. It became the rule for pieces that were also in demand to be published by Panton from matrices furnished by the Czech Music Fund. From 1972 Panton became the publishing house of the Czech Music Fund.

The Situation after 1989

Significant changes came after the fall of communism in 1989. By the decision of the government of the Czech Republic in 1993 the Czech Music Fund ceased to receive a share of the revenues for the performance of music by Czech composers and was therefore forced to radically cut back its expenditures and find new sources of income. One of its responses was to sell sheet music and book series of the Panton Publishing house, which was making a loss, to the German firm Schott Musik International. Under the name Schott Music Panton it is now bringing out editions of previously published successful titles, and, on a more limited scale, new works from well-known contemporary Czech composers. So far the biggest project is the planned complete edition of the works of Bedřich Smetana. Part of the **Schott Music Panton** publishing house is a lending library of performance materials for selected pieces from the Panton catalogue.

In 2008, the Czech Music Fund lending library was incorporated (as unprofitable on its own) as a separate part into the sheet music archive of **Czech Radio** on the basis of a co-operation agreement between the Czech Music Fund and Czech Radio. This is the biggest sheet music archive in the Czech Republic and serves primarily to provide the necessary materials for the work of the radio, but it also lends materials to other individuals and bodies in the Czech Republic and abroad. Interest in the music materials of the Czech Radio led in 2001 to the radio founding its own publishing house with the largest volume of any publisher of production of titles of Czech music of the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century, even if in terms of artistic quality the choice of titles is sometimes debatable. It is also continuing with the acquisition of materials and publication of print scores and parts of works that are in historical collections.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CURRENT MUSIC PUBLISHING HOUSES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Amos Editio

specialising mainly in teaching
literature

Opletalova 55, 110 00 Praha 1
Fax: +420 224 222 244
E-mail: redakce@amos.cz
www.amoseditio.cz

Czech Radio Publishing House

publication of contemporary
Czech music and on a smaller
scale 18th-century Czech
music, institutionally linked
to the most extensive lending
archive of performance
material in the CR

Římská 13, 120 99 Praha 2
tel.: +420 22 155 3316
fax: +420 22 155 3355
e-mail:
nakladatelstvi@rozhlas.cz
www.rozhlas.cz/nakladatelstvi

Dilia

(theatre, literary and
audiovisual agency)
hire of performance materials
for opera and other musical
dramatic works
music department

Krátkého 1, 190 03 Praha 9
tel.+ fax: +420 266 199 876
e-mail: harvanek@dilia.cz
www.dilia.cz

Editio Bärenreiter Praha

publishing of music of the Czech classics and a selection of contemporary Czech music, complete critical editions of the works of Antonín Dvořák, Leoš Janáček, Bohuslav Martinů and Miloslav Kabeláč, critical editions of early Czech music, sale and hire of performance materials from its own list and those of other publishing houses

Běchovická 26, 100 00, Praha 10
tel.: +420 274 001 911
e-mail: info@ebp.cz
www.ebp.cz

Editio Janáček

involved in the complete critical edition of the works of Leoš Janáček, lends performance materials

Krkošková 45a, 613 00 Brno
tel.: +420 541 246 824
fax: +420 541 246 824
e-mail: info@editiojanacek.com
www.editiojanacek.com

Editio Moravia

publishing of pieces by Leoš Janáček and other Moravian composers

Hvozdec 55
66471 Veverská Bítýška
tel.: +420 549 420 675
e-mail: info@editiomoravia.cz
www.editiomoravia.cz

The Supraphon sheet music and book edition became part of the German publishing house Bärenreiter taking the current title **Editio Bärenreiter Praha**. With certain alterations this is continuing with the Supraphon line as biggest Czech music publishing house, i.e. focusing on making works of Czech and Slovak music available to the public by publishing their scores and by lending out performance materials. Unlike the old Supraphon, however, it publishes almost no works by composers from other countries, because these materials can be obtained without restriction from the production of Bärenreiter-Verlag central in Kassel and the other publishing houses that the Editio Bärenreiter Praha represents in the Czech Republic and other states of Central and Eastern Europe. This publishing house is also continuing with work on complete editions of the music of the most important Czech composers and a series of old Czech music. More modern works of value and selected pieces by composers of the young generation are also increasingly on this publisher's list.

Critical Editions

The first attempt at a critical edition of the music of one composer in the Czech Lands was the work of Zdeněk Nejedlý, who on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of **Bedřich Smetana** embarked on a complete Smetana critical edition, but got no further than a volume of pieces from Smetana's youth and a three-volume edition of *The Bartered Bride*. From 1940, what was known as the "Study Edition of the Works of Bedřich Smetana" started to come out; it contained his orchestral and choral works, and the score of *Libuše*, but for reasons of economy it was published without critical notes and was never finished. Over the years 1944-72 the whole of Smetana's work for piano came out in a critical edition by Václav Holzknecht, Mirko Očadlík, Karel Šolc and other editors. The Czech Museum of Music, which administers the Bedřich Smetana Museum, has now embarked on a new complete critical edition of the works of Smetana. Commissioned for publication by Schott Music Panton, this edition is supposed to be complete in time for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Bedřich Smetana in 2024.

Marking the centenary of the birth of **Zdeněk Fibich**, a complete edition of his works was launched in 1950. 20 volumes of orchestral and chamber music including the concert melodramas were eventually published.

The greatest progress in production of a complete critical edition has been made with the music of **Antonín Dvořák**. The project was initiated by Otakar Šourek, author of the first major monograph on Antonín Dvořák and a comprehensive series of analyses of his works. The first volume came out in 1954 for the 50th anniversary of the composer's death. Over the following 30 years the great majority of Dvořák's works were published, but only *Rusalka*, *The Jacobine*

and the *Devil and Kate* among his operas. After the death of Otakar Šourek in 1956, responsibility for this Dvořák edition passed to the composer Jarmil Burghauser, the author of a thematic catalogue of Dvořák's work. Outside the critical edition, he produced the commentary for a facsimile edition of Dvořák's 9th Symphony published by PressFoto in 1972. Given the great progress in editing technique and Dvořák scholarship, including a ten-volume edition of written materials on the life and work of Antonín Dvořák, the first Dvořák edition is already beginning to look out-of-date. For this reason a team led by Jarmila Gabrielová under the aegis of the Czech Academy of Science has prepared the project for a new complete critical edition of the works of Antonín Dvořák, to be published by Editio Bärenreiter Praha on a timescale estimated at 25–30 years, and so the completion of the project should coincide with the 200th anniversary of the birth of Antonín Dvořák in 2041.

Producing a complete critical edition of the works of **Leoš Janáček** is a particularly daunting task. His musical language and notation is highly eccentric even from today's point of view, in his greatest period he hurled his musical ideas onto pieces of paper without music staves and in many places he altered and added to his notation, making it very hard to read. To produce "final" scores he used the services of permanent transcribers, with the version for publication emerging after several stages of editing by the composer himself. But in many cases Janáček made further changes even later, and so a number of pieces exist in different variants. More than thirty years ago the composer Jarmil Burghauser and the pianist Milan Šolc spent more than ten years drawing up a basic order and schedule for a complete critical edition of Janáček's pieces and editorial rules for publication. The edition of individual volumes started and has continued since then without major changes according to this plan. As an example of the difficulty of the work for the editors we might take one of the earliest volumes, which in addition to 98 pages of the score of the orchestral rhapsody *Taras Bulba* contains another approximately 60 pages of preliminary, alternative or abandoned versions of the work and 10 pages of facsimiles showing different phases of the final moulding of the work into its definitive form. The recently published critical edition of the *2nd String Quartet* (Bärenreiter) contains more pages of preliminary, alternative or abandoned versions than are taken up by the score itself as completed for performance. In these circumstances editions are coming out for practical needs without critical notes and additions, but only with a preface and the final form of the score as produced by editors. Some volumes published earlier are being republished on the basis of new research in a second, expanded edition. Representatives of Bärenreiter are now involved in drawing up principles for editing the material, and its Czech section, which took over the Supraphon publishing house, is continuing with completion of the whole set. The Leoš Janáček Foundation considers that the work

Helvetica & Tempora

**publishing of the works
of Gideon Klein and other
composers**

Pod Kaštany 8, 160 00 Praha 6
tel.: +420 233 324 101
fax: +420 224 317 858
e-mail: helvetica-tempora@mbox.dkm.cz
www.helvetica-tempora.cz

Czech Music Information Centre

**disseminates information
about Czech music, directly
or indirectly responds to all
questions, requests and orders
in the field of contemporary
Czech music**

Besední 3, 11800, Praha 1
tel.: +420 257 313 717
e-mail: his@vol.cz
www.musica.cz

Salve Regina Music Publishing House

**mainly music of Bohemian and
Moravian church choirmasters
of the 18th century**

Černého 3, 635 00 Brno
tel.: +420 568 864 062
e-mail: regina@menea.cz,
f.maly@volny.cz
www.salve-regina.cz

The Bohuslav Martinů Institute

academic institute concerned
with cultivating the legacy
of Bohuslav Martinů and
promoting his music,
producing complete critical
editions of his works

Bořanovická 14,
182 00 Praha 8
tel: + 420 257 320 076
e-mail: martinu@martinu.cz
www.martinu.cz

The University of South Bohemia, Educational Faculty

critical editions of South
Bohemian musical heritage

Jeronýmova 10, 371 15 České
Budějovice
tel.: +420 387 771 111,
387 773 048
fax: +420 387 312 194
e-mail: evba@pf.jcu.cz
www.jcu.cz

is going too slowly, and so in 2001 founded its own publishing house in Brno, the **Editio Janáček**, led by Eva Drlíková, which has already published 15 volumes of Janáček's music. The senior editor of Editio Bärenreiter Praha Miroslav Srnka is also a member of the board of the Leoš Janáček Foundation Board and the editors of the Editio Janáček (among whom Leoš Faltus and Miloš Štědroň have for example already reconstructed and presented the violin concerto *Pilgrimage of the Soul* using Janáček's sketches) are in addition collaborating on the preparation of the volumes being published by Bärenreiter Praha and the independently published series by Universal Edition, which is orientated mainly to Janáček's operas, as envisaged by the original plan of the founders of the Janáček edition. It is the opera series that is the least complete while the others are already almost ready.

The work of **Bohuslav Martinů** was so successful that it was published by many publishing houses during the composer's lifetime, but because the composer spent most of his life abroad for political reasons, his music has mostly been printed by foreign publishers. In the Czech Lands, it was one of his Prague friends, Karel Šebánek who started the systematic publication of Martinů's works for the Melantrich publishing house. When the music desk of this publishing house was cut, Šebánek became director of the performance materials lending archive of the Czech Music Fund. Among other things he ran the multiplication of scores and parts for pieces by Bohuslav Martinů that had not yet been assigned for publication to any publishing house. Of course, these were practical copies containing many mistakes, and even though some prints have come out in new editions, many pieces have still never been printed at all.

For this reason after many years of preparatory work the **Bohuslav Martinů Institute**, directed by Aleš Březina, has embarked on a project for a Bohuslav Martinů Complete Edition that will meet the criteria of a critical edition but will also be adapted for the needs of performance. In the preliminary stage a worldwide search for all extant works by the composer and other artifacts associated with Martinů was initiated. In 2008 a course was held for music editors, for which a Music Editor's Manual was published and placed on the Bohuslav Martinů Institute website, which together with information on the most recent principles of editorial work and exploitation of the most up-to-date techniques sets out the principles for achieving the most precise visual record of the works of Bohuslav Martinů. The actual publication of the Martinů edition is due to start in 2010 at the Editio Bärenreiter Praha publishing house and given the size of Martinů's oeuvre it will take several decades.

A complete critical edition of the works of **Miloslav Kabeláč** (Editio Bärenreiter Praha, edited by Zdeněk Nouza) is underway. Kabeláč's protest against German fascism and against communist

totalitarianism, his commitment to enduring moral values, and his championing and exploitation of new composing techniques including electronics – all this characterises Kabeláč's music, which has qualities that are proving ever more evident as time goes by. His *8 Inventions for Percussions*, which he wrote in the years 1962–63 as a commission for the ensemble Les Percussions de Strasbourg, with many thousands of performances became the most frequently played Czech composition of the 1960s-70s even during his lifetime. The Editio Bärenreiter Praha is also preparing for edition selected works by **Josef Suk**; this edition, due to start in 2011, will mostly be intended to meet needs of practical performance purposes.

Early and Classical Music

The **Musica antiqua Bohemica** series was started by Oldřich Pazdírek's Brno publishing house in 1934. The first volume to come out was Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek's *Piano Impromptu*. After the publication in 1937 of the 3rd volume in collaboration with the Prague Melantrich publishing house – a volume of organ pieces by Bohuslav Matěj Černohorský – the series was halted until 1949, when it was continued with publication of the 4th volume, containing Voříšek's Sonata for Piano op. 20, by the Orbis National Music Publishing House. At Orbis and its successor concerns a total of 83 volumes of instrumental pieces were published, and in the 2nd series, launched in 1966, a total of 15 volumes of vocal pieces. Most of the volumes, which always included publisher's notes, were published more than once, and Editio Bärenreiter Praha is continuing to reprint them. In parallel, published from 1961 by the same houses, was the **Musica viva historica** series designed for practical performance; its 49 volumes without publisher's notes included pieces by non-Czech composers. Among the latter, the piano arrangement of Haydn's *Cello Concerto in C major*, discovered in 1961 in the collections of the National Museum, was republished as many as 11 times by 1997. The piano arrangement of František Vincenc Kramář's *Clarinet Concerto*, which came out in both series of early Czech music mentioned, was printed for the twelfth time in 2003. Seven volumes of pieces for brass ensembles, mostly from the 17th century, came out in the years 1983–86 in Supraphon's "Tower Music" series.

A continuation of the critical series of Czech music from the 17th to the early 19th century entitled "Musica antiqua Bohemica, series nova" is planned by Editio Bärenreiter Praha. It will include mainly new titles with a greater proportion of vocal music than in the original series. The editors are the young musicologists Václav Kapsa, Tomáš Slavický and Milada Jonášová.

A number of new series are being devoted to critical editions of important musical works of the 16th and 17th centuries by composers, regardless of nationality, that are to be found in Czech music archives. In 1999 the L. Marek Brno Publishing house embarked

The Karel Emanuel Macan Library and Press for the Blind

lending and printing of music materials in Braille script for the blind and sight impaired, production of materials to order

Ve Smečkách 15
115 17 Praha 1
Tel: +420 222 210 492,
222 211 523
Fax: +420 222 210 494
e-mail: ktn@ktn.cz
www.ktn.cz

Koniasch Latin Press

editions of early music

Na Hubálce 7, 169 00 Praha 6
tel.: +420 220 511 681
e-mail: koniasch@quick.cz

Luboš Marek

critical editions series
of early music

Pekařská 18, 602 00 Brno
e-mail:
lubosmarek@hotmail.com
http://mujweb.cz/www/
lubosmarek

Národní knihovna (National Library)

publishing of series of early
music
Central Depositary of the
National Library of the CR
Publishing Section

Sodomkova 2, 102 00 Praha 15
tel: +420 281 013 316
fax: +420 281 013 333
e-mail: milena.redinova@nkp.cz
www.nkp.cz

on the publication of the **Monumenta liturgica Bohemica** series.

One major work to be published this year in the series is the *Litoměřice Gradual* of 1517, edited by Barry F. H. Graham, and in 2005 the first part of the *Jistebnice Hymnbook* (Gradual), edited by Jaroslav Kolár, Anežka Vidmanová and Hana Vlhová-Wörner. Publication of the series **Clavis monumentorum musicorum regni Bohemiae**, devoted to medieval music and theoretical treatises on music, was launched in 2000 by the Koniasch Latin Press with an edition of the score of the oratorio *Jephte* by Antonio Draghi, edited by Angela Romagnoli. The edition of the *Kutná Hora Codex* in 2008 was edited by Jan Baťa. Two volumes of pieces by Jan Trojan Turnovský, the *Prachatic Hymnbook* of 1610 and 22 polyphonic hymns from the manuscript of the Chapel Library in Český Krumlov from the 2nd half of the 16th century, edited by Martin Horyna, came out in the critical series **Monumenta Musicae Antiquae Bohemiae Meridionalis** in the years 2000–2005 in the city of České Budějovice; starting with the 2nd volume it has been funded by the University of South Bohemia. In 2002 the National Library in Prague launched a critical edition series of its own historical manuscript materials entitled *Fontes musicae* with Heinrich Isaac's *Missa Presulem ephebeatum*. In further volumes brought out at annual intervals it will publish pieces contained in the manuscript collection known as the *Graduale ecclesiae Sancti Michaelis Opatoviensis Neo-Prague*. The first part to be published is the *Officium in nativitate Domini* by Jiří Rychnovský. The editor of both volumes published so far was Martin Horyna.

Other Czech Publishing Houses Today

Editio Moravia, founded in 1990 by the composer Jaromír Dlouhý (until 2004 the Moravian Music Publishing House) focuses in classical music primarily on music by Moravian composers such as Miloslav Ištvan, Jiří Matys, Miloš Štědroň, Michal Košut and above all Leoš Janáček. Among Janáček's works it has for example published the recently discovered songs on texts by František Ladislav Čelakovský and Jaroslav Tichý (published 1998), which were premiered in 1999 at the Janáček and Luhačovice Festival, organised by the publisher. In collaboration with Universal Edition Wien it has also published a piano arrangement of Leoš Janáček's early opera *Šárka*, and is planning publication of a suite from this opera, realised by Jaromír Dlouhý, as well as Janáček's *Detva Songs* and the *Folk Nocturnes*.

The only independent sheet music shop in Prague at present, **Talacko**, started its own publishing activity in 1996. Its first titles included a number of instruction pieces by David Talacko. Among the current nearly four hundred titles, mostly reprints of music, published by Alliance Publications in Wisconsin, which is a firm belonging to Czech-American Joel Blahník, we find more than sixty titles of all kinds of arrangements of the music of Antonín Dvořák. Other composers represented include for example Otmar Mácha,

Zdeněk Lukáš, Jiří Laburda, Petr Eben and the young composer Lukáš Sommer. Overall this stylistically generally conservative list is geared to teaching and amateur music-making; solo vocal and choral music with a spiritual content forms the core.

The **Tempo** publishing house in Prague brings out music by leading Czech contemporary composers in collaboration with the German press Bote & Bock but has also produced editions of the music of the Jewish composers Pavel Haas and Hans Krása, who perished during the 2nd World War in German concentration camps. This publishing house was founded in 1991 and managed by Blanka Červinková until her death, when it was taken over by Boosey & Hawkes with their acquisition of Bote & Bock. Tempo will entirely cease operations in January 2010. Most of the works of Gideon Klein were published in 1993 by the Czech Music Fund in collaboration with the publishing house Bote & Bock. This production was taken over by the publishing house Helvetica & Tempora, which is continuing with publication of re-editions and new titles.

The Prague publishers **Amos Editio** specialise in music for teaching purposes and since 2000 has published more than a hundred pieces by Karel Stamic, Jan Evangelista Koželuh, František Vincenc Kramář-Krommer, Czech 19th-century classics but also Vítězslava Kaprálová, Klement and Milan Slavický, Ilja and Lukáš Hurník and other contemporary Czech composers.

Some publishing houses concentrate on sacred music. In Brno for example there is the **Salve Regina** press, which was founded in 1992 and focuses on Bohemian and Moravian church music of the 18th century. The first numbered title in its production was the Czech Christmas Mass by Eduard Marhula, which was followed up by other pieces by little-known composers. Among better known names its list includes František Václav Míča and Jakub Jan Ryba. Its most recent title is Moravian Folk Pastorals.

In Prague the composer Jan Blabla has run the **Spectrum** publishing house since 1999. This has now published more than a hundred and fifty mainly vocal and organ pieces. Among earlier authors Jan Zach, František Xaver Brixl and Vincenc Mašek predominate, and among contemporary composers Jan Hanuš, František Xaver Thuri and Václav Hálek.

The printing of sheet music for those with impaired sight in Braille relief script is a special branch that has a century of tradition behind it in the Czech Republic. In this context the founding father was the composer Karel Emanuel Macan, who taught at the Klárov Institute for the Blind and kept the library there, which has since developed into the present **Karel Emanuel Macan Library and Press for the Blind**. Its music section contains more than 3000 titles

Schott Music Panton

re-publication and publication of new pieces by Czech composers from the mid-20th century, lending library of performance materials

Radlická 99, 150 00, Praha 5
tel.: +420 251 554 511
e-mail: marie.karlicka@panton.cz
www.panton.cz

Spectrum

sacred music by Czech and foreign composers

Slezská 1833/97,
130 00 Praha 3
Tel: +420 267 317 225
e-mail: musacra@volny.cz
www.volny.cz/musacra

Talacko Sheet Music

publishing house and shop selling sheet music of various kinds

Rybná 29, 11000, Praha 1
tel.: 224 813 039
E-mail: talacko@talacko.cz
www.talacko.cz

of compositions, almost half of them for piano, 400 for accordion and 365 for solo voice. There are more than a hundred titles of literature for violin, guitar, recorder and flute. This includes Czech and foreign music, mainly the most popular classical composers. The titles, produced in multiple copies, can be bought from the publishers. Copies of others can be made for customers and the firm also offers the possibility of producing new titles from digital copy.

Libraries and Archives

The National Library in Prague has the most complete list of the output of Czech publishers including an address list – now accessible in full on its internet page. Since the 1990s, the materials sent to the library on the basis of the obligations of the publishers to send one copy to the national copyright library had been recorded directly and only into the electronic catalogue of the National Library and at the same time to the likewise electronic Comprehensive Catalogue of the Czech Republic, which will in the future include the electronic lists of the funds of all important Czech libraries. Older lists, kept until the beginning of the 1990s on card indexes, have been scanned and recorded in that form in a special database. Currently, researchers can use the internet to access a likewise scanned complete incipit catalogue of all known printed and manuscript music materials on the territory of the Czech Republic up to roughly the end of the 18th century. This catalogue is part of the RISM (world catalogue of music sources).

Today, when computer technology using high quality printed outputs is diffused throughout the world and accessible, many composers for various reasons do not even make much effort to ensure that the scores of all their pieces come out in print. Many Czech composers have therefore already given a number of their scores either on paper or in electronic form to the archive of the **Czech Music Information Centre** on condition that these can be copied for anyone who is interested. You can find out which materials the Music Information Centre owns in the database at www.musicbase.cz, where there is also a complete list of performance materials that can be borrowed from the Czech Music Fund loan library. On behalf of clients the Czech Music Information Centre can request directly from composers or their heirs scores of pieces by living or recently deceased composers even where these are not listed in the database, since the Centre is in contact with almost all Czech composers of classical music.

MUSICA NOVA 2009

“A composition should be not only authentic but also comprehensible to the ear...”

The 18th year of the international competition in electro-acoustic (EA) music, MUSICA NOVA 2009, attracted 58 entries from 25 countries. The international jury chaired by the composer R. Růžicka made its decisions on the 13th–15th of November 2009. Most of the composers in the competition came from countries with a tradition in this field of music (Great Britain, Germany, Italy, the USA and Japan) but there were also entrants from Belarus and Iran, for example, and quite a large group from Argentina.

In the pure EA music category the winner, as last year, was the Japanese composer **Yota Kobayashi** (born 1980) living in Canada (born 1980). This year he won with his piece *Kakusei* (Awakening), with honourable mentions for the German composer **Clemens von Reusner** (born 1957) for his piece *Ho* and **You Chung Tseng** (born 1960) from Taiwan, for his piece *Metascape*. Other finalists were Michael Clarke from Great Britain, the French composer living in Canada Georges Forget, the French composer Charles Platel, the Argentinian Guillermo

Pozzatti and the Czech Michal Rataj. In the category for a composition combining electronic music with an acoustic element the winner was the Italian composer **Nicoletta Andreuccetti** with her piece for live processed voice *S'il fosse foco*, and an honourable mention went to the Korean composer living in the USA **Kyong Mee Choi** for her piece for piano, percussion and electronics *Tō Unformed*. The other finalists in this category were Joao Pedro Oliveira from Portugal and Jorge Levi Sad from Argentina. The award for a Czech composer went to **Michal Rataj** for his composition *I nad vitr jsem marnější* [I am Vainer even than the Wind], which he also presented at the Ostrava Days festival this year.

The winners' concert was held on the 4th of December 2009 in the Inspirace Theatre (Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts) in the presence of the laureates von Reusner and Andreuccetti. The project was supported by the Czech Ministry of Culture and the City of Prague. As is traditional it was organised in collaboration with the Czech Music Information Centre, the Academy of Performing Arts, and Slovak Radio under the aegis of the Czech Musical Council.

The Prague Competition has a broad appeal to composers because it makes clear that it does not give priority to any particular style, fashionable trend or technological component. The assessment is purely of the creative artistic



Nicoletta Andreuccetti

Clemens von Reusner

results. The only condition is that EA music must form an important element in the composition. An essential criterion in judging is the extent to which the composer has gone beyond software resources that simply produce the illusion of complex individual composing by layering and special effects, and how far he or she has gone beyond mere fashionable trends, eclecticism or (among older and successful composers) avoids getting stuck in a rut. The competition also deliberately remains concerned only with music, i.e. there is no multimedia category, since in this area there is a huge and heterogeneous amount of production and it is hard to compare the results. Personally I also think that an important criterion is physiological effect which EA music also explores, since for example contemporary conceptual sound creations – what is known as the creation of “sound walls”, sharp breaks in dynamics and so on –, produce unusual stress on the organism. They can be regarded as a unique appeal in the sense of socially critical expressionism because they are often made in industrial areas, or as an expression of sexually motivated dynamism. Only time will tell whether this approach will become the basis of an art that will survive its period.

The prize winner in the pure EA category, Yota Kobayashi, won first prize in the preceding year too. He studied composition with two of the top teachers in EA music, B. Truax and O. Underhill. His Japanese background shows itself in his choice of theme and his treatment of time and colour. Like many composers living in Canada

he inclines to what is known as acousmatic music – this is a music that is also called “cinema for the ear”. He places the emphasis on spatial “spells” and a kind of story in sound – in this case a metaphor of human wakefulness and sleep, whether physical or metaphysical. His experience with music for theatre, film and dance is evident in his work. Musical gestures that sound natural and unaffected and a capacity for sound individualisation are among the reasons for his success.

Clemens von Reusner thinks of EA as a specific kind of music. As he said – this music, however internally refined, must be comprehensible to the ear, and the listener must have enough time to register and realise what is happening. His piece *Ho* (the title refers to a quiet place in Western Denmark) is a musical poem using tranquil gestures in which silence plays an important role. For Reusner even artificially created sounds must be symbolically comprehensible, and not in the sense of iconic imitation.

Nicoletta Andreuccetti is another composer who judges her music above all by ear, which today is not as automatic as it might seem. Perhaps one reason is that she is involved in educational theory as well. The extent to which Italian composition continues to be anchored in the tradition of combining poetry and music is interesting. For Andreuccetti electronics and computers are a way of multiplying the techniques of music, and unlike von Reusner she does not think of EA as its own separate distinctive world. In her winning composition she exploited the text of a later 13th-century



Yota Kobayashi

Italian poet, C. Angiolieri, who caricatured fashionable poetic conventions of the time. Andreuccetti is also sensitive to modern fashionable conventions. One of her intentions in the piece was to show how easily, even in art, drama can turn into farce, and how chaotic elements are integral parts of it. For some years now, Kyong Mee Choi, a Korean teaching EA at the University of Chicago, has been among the finalists in various competitions. She is distinctive for her wider artistic vision, and also studied fine art. As an immigrant she has a strong sense of the crucial role of changes of contexts. As she herself says, after moving to the USA she became more perceptive about her own culture, just as after studying EA she had a better appreciation of acoustic instruments and voice. This is why she likes to combine and confront them with EA. Her composition *To Unformed* for piano, percussion and electronics is concerned precisely with the role of contexts for the meaning of any kind of entity including the musical. Michal Rataj is another composer who regularly wins awards in the Czech round of the Musica Nova competition. From his work to date we can sense that he is interested by individualised vocal expression, breath, and personal sound gestures that as it were increase the chance of penetrating behind the prefabricates of contemporary culture and our own learned prejudices.

<http://musicanova.nipax.cz>

BN music materials

1883
notes from around the world

We offer:

- sheet music of all genres from Czech and foreign publishers
-
- composers' monographs, academic music publications
-
- several thousand titles available in our shop
-
- our own brand of music paper, copy books and pads
-
- specialized music journals
-
- Internet store with over 300 000 titles
-
- mail-order and delivery services
-
- complete services for music orders for organizations and individuals

Contact:

Barvič a Novotný bookshop
Česká 13, 602 00 Brno, Czech republic

•

Open daily
Mon-Sat 8.00 – 19.00, Sun 10.00 – 19.00

•

Tel. + fax:
(+420) 542 215 040, (+420) 542 213 611

•

e-mail: hudebniny@barvic-novotny.cz

•

www.hudebniny.com

We are looking forward to your visit to our shop or our on-line store.

BARVIČ a NOVOTNÝ

KNIHKUPECTVÍ • 1883 • SPOL. S R.O. BRNO

BECOMING A GOOD CHOIR CONDUCTOR IN BOHEMIA IS NO EASY RIDE

The most important Czech choir, which works with leading international musicians, has been directed now for three years by the surprisingly young choir-master and conductor LUKÁŠ VASILEK. In this interview he talks about what is fundamental for him, what he wants and what he has to struggle with. The interview comes from Tel Aviv, where he is currently appearing with the Prague Philharmonic Choir in Bach oratorios and Mozart's Coronation Mass.



You are working with the best Czech choir, which is capable of coping quickly with the highest demands on sound desired. How far has your way of working affected that capacity and sound? And has there been any shift in your own sound ideal, which you summed up more than a year ago in the phrase, “colourful discipline”?

In that respect there has been no major shift in my attitude. Of course, the longer you work with one ensemble, the better you know that ensemble and the easier it is to identify the most effective way to achieve your goal. And in forming a compact colour sound this is doubly true. A choir made up of professional singers, and soloists, is always more colourful in sound than an amateur choir. But the problem is often how to unify the various differently trained singers into one whole, so that the sound is balanced and integrated. Hence my phrase “colourful discipline” In my view this “motto” is the one that comes closest to my sound ideal:

a choir composed of trained singers who are able to subordinate themselves to the whole, to connect fully with the others.

The repertoire of the Prague Philharmonic Choir consists mainly of major works, and so it may be difficult for you to answer this question. But still – could you tell us which of the pieces that you have performed with the PPC so far you regard as the most interesting – for yourself, the choir and the audience?

That's an extremely difficult question. So difficult that it can't be answered. There have already been countless pieces and each one was interesting in its own way. And when we have done some of them more than once, each time the piece was different in a different way – it always depends on the conductor, the soloists, the public, the concert hall and many other circumstances. To sum up, I can't name one piece that has some special status for me compared to the others. But I can mention two Czech pieces that have won a particular place in my heart. The first is Dvořák's *Requiem*. I have done it with the choir many times now, and each time discovered something new in it. It is deep, original music, which never grows stale. One of my greatest experiences was when we sang the *Requiem* with the Berlin Philharmonic. Their perfect play and exquisite tone, different from what we hear on Czech recordings... The second piece is Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*. Probably no choir on earth can boast as many and as various performances and recordings of the *Glagolitic Mass* as the PPC. But the paradox is that over the whole three years of my work with the choir I still haven't done the piece once. In September, though, we will finally be singing the *Glagolitic Mass* after a long gap, this time at the opening concert of the new season of the Czech Philharmonic, and so my dream should be fulfilled soon.

After three years you must know the choir well. Can you think of a piece that would suit it but that you haven't yet had a chance to perform?

There are plenty of pieces like that, so it would be hard to name them all. Often I have the feeling that on Czech podiums the same tried and tested pieces are just played again and again. Few people have the courage to try something new and unknown. Yet it's not true that the Czech public is resistant to a bolder repertoire! It just needs a helping hand: concerts of this kind need to be well publicised and there has

to be a terrific line-up of performers to attract people to the concert. Then the mere fact that the piece is less well known won't play a role. Another problem is money. The budgets of Czech orchestras and festivals only rarely stretch to some pieces – for example Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* or the Berlioz's *Requiem*. And even when sponsors can be found, we hit another problem. In the CR there simply isn't a single concert hall in which such works can be presented without problems.

A choir like the PPC doesn't have to pander to its audience by keeping to established popular classics. Do you take on any particularly risky projects? What is the rationale behind them?

The repertoire we sing is determined in most cases by the organisers, i.e. most often the orchestras and festivals which engage us for their projects. Of course we always think very hard about which projects to accept or reject. The key factor here is the quality of the music, its suitability for the character of our choir, the other musicians involved and so on. It's always in a way risky to do contemporary music. It's rarely possible to judge its quality sufficiently well in advance. At the point when you accept an offer, sometimes the piece hasn't even been written, and so often you have no idea what you are getting into. But the risk is worth it. Every performer should engage with contemporary music and not be afraid of it. Obviously not every new piece is something that will live forever, or even change the direction of world music. I think it's our duty to sing this music despite the possibility that the premiere will be the *derniere* too and that the hall may not even be half full. Where else are contemporary composers supposed to get some feedback if not from performers and the public? It is thanks to this that composers can develop. Otherwise no new music would be written. I like doing contemporary music. I enjoy finding new possibilities, uncovering something that no one has yet heard.

At your young age, how do you cope with the human dimension of directing a leading choir?

That's for others to judge, primarily the members of the choir. But it's definitely the hardest aspect. In communicating with the choir I try to be myself, I try to behave decently and fairly. Over these three years we have got used to one another and we know what we can expect of each other. I think we like each other and that maybe this is evident in our work

together. Not long ago a German choirmaster asked me, “Do you feel comfortable with your choir?” For a moment I didn’t understand what he meant – the formulation sounded comic. But then I said resolutely, and I would say now, “Yes, I do!” I feel good with the PPC and don’t have the feeling that my age is any kind of handicap for me in directing the choir.

Apart from concerts, you have recorded with the choir for Deutsche Grammophon, for example, and for Czech Radio you are starting to record the complete choral works of Leoš Janáček. This is a terrific chance to express your conception of Janáček. What are you most looking forward to about this project?

I love Janáček, and so I’m looking forward to him the most. The nicest part of it all is the moment when you open the empty score and start to submerge yourself in his brilliant ideas at home, in isolation from the world around you. You create your own ideal form of the piece in your head. It’s a form that you will never hear, but you will try to get as close as possible to it in rehearsals. For me this part of preparation is the most important, but also the hardest. Immense concentration, intense thought, imagination... It has to be said that I’m always reluctant to start on it, but still, when I get over the stage of having to persuade myself to get down to it, it’s beautiful.

As a choirmaster of a top choir you work with the world’s leading conductors. Has any of them ever surprised you by an unexpected way of working?

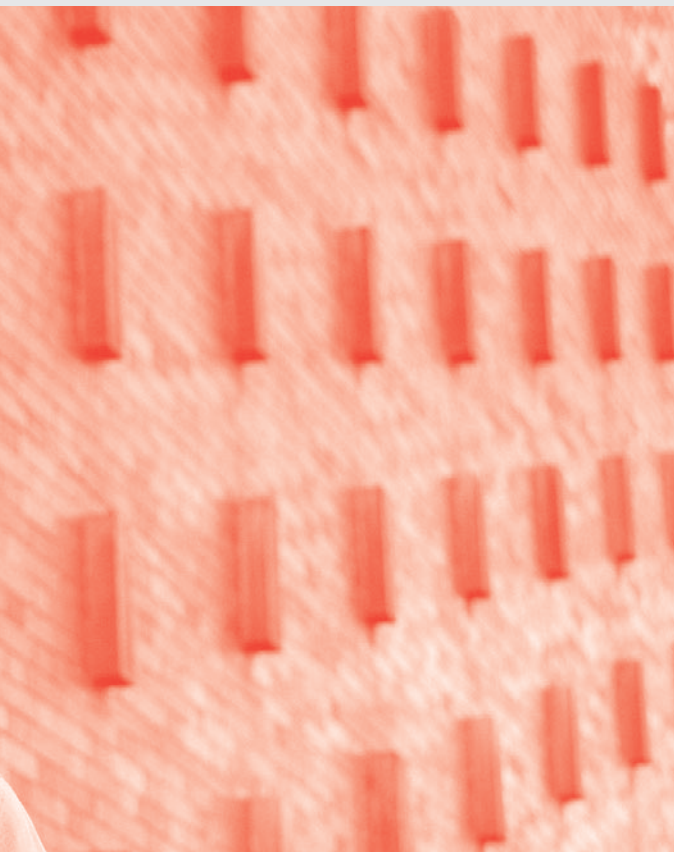
I don’t know if surprise is the right word. Captivated me would be a better way of putting it. Most recently, definitely Daniel Barenboim. In October we were singing Shostakovich’s *Thirteenth Symphony* under his baton. The concerts were in Berlin, the orchestra was the Staatskapelle Berlin. Barenboim has been principal conductor there for years. The orchestra plays perfectly, all the players at an incredible level, the sound is superb, soft, smooth, just perfect. The atmosphere at rehearsals is indescribable. Everybody is completely focused on his playing, on the conductor, and mistakes don’t happen. Barenboim just gives a look, and everyone knows what changes they have to make. He is a huge authority for them, he has extraordinary charisma. He scarcely even has to conduct and the orchestra plays as if their lives depended on it. He is very creative even during concerts, directly on the podium. His music is alive,

and the effect of the concert is ravishing. It’s an experience I would wish everyone to have!

Does your ideal of a piece always correspond to the conductor’s ideal? In such moments does your own experience of orchestral conducting help?

I think I mostly agree with conductors in fundamental things. But on the details naturally every artist has a different idea. Of course it’s true that for the most part conductors accept the interpretation of the choirmaster – given the time pressure, they don’t have enough rehearsal time for very detailed work. If there is the remotest possibility, I try to be in contact with the conductor in advance, to get an idea of his own plans for the piece so that I can rehearse with his requirements in mind. My experience with orchestral conducting is very important for me. It’s another world, very inspiring. Every choirmaster should occasionally get up in front of an orchestra. It helps to “purify” his conducting gestures, which with choirmasters often tend to a kind of strange confused floweriness. When a choirmaster has rehearsed a piece





with orchestral accompaniment, the kind of idea he has of it should be as if he were conducting it himself. Without experience of orchestral conducting I wouldn't be able to work with the PPC at all, I wouldn't know how. And I must add, that I love conducting an orchestra! You sometimes need a change!

You studied conducting at the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. How far do you keep to the values of your teachers there in your work today, and how far have you adopted new ones? What are the sources of your musical values?

I've never thought about it in that way. Studying conducting at the Music Faculty in Prague already assumes a certain experience as conductor. It doesn't so much impose any unified system of artistic values on students as lead them to create their own for themselves. In this respect every teacher is a little different, obviously, but generally I think the principle operates. At least that was how it was with me. I drew a lot from different professors, but I didn't take

everything from any of them. You have to know how to choose what you can apply to your own nature and temperament, and in terms of technique to choose what suits your physiognomy. And also to use common sense to work out what is good and what isn't, although of course when you have minimal experience this is quite hard. And then after school comes work with new impulses and experience, and this goes on forming you. Everyone immediately discovers that he has overvalued masses of things at school, and has undervalued much more. The craft side has to be made automatic somewhere, and the artistic views have to be refined somewhere. Only practice can do that!

You have also worked as a choir conductor at the Prague National Theater's opera. Is your tendency to universality or to specialisation, and if so, what kind?

As a choir conductor I am sure that universality is necessary. Every choirmaster has to know how to rehearse an a capella programme, just like an oratorio and a cantata, or even an opera. And to do that in various different styles. Each choral "genre-style" requires a slightly different method of work. As time goes by every artist specialises. You can hardly keep up universality throughout your life in all areas at the highest level. But everyone should have the same high-quality basis. In my view there should be a certain universality in the profession of conductor in general. Every orchestral conductor ought to be able to work with a choir, or the human voice, at least to some extent, and vice versa.

Do you have a favourite composer, style or piece of music?

I can only give you a general answer. I love good music – music that is not random, that has content, that has a message and uses adequate means to convey it. I can't stand false sentiment. I can't name one piece, one author, one style. I like change. When I've been doing 20th-century music for a long time I like going back to Bach, where there are many a capella programmes, and I like doing something with the accompaniment of a big orchestra. I almost always become emotionally absorbed in whatever piece I happen to be rehearsing, but when it's ready I like making an hundred and eighty-degree turn. But I can in fact mention two Czech composers who have a special



PHOTO © KAREL ŠUSTER 4x

appeal to me. They are Janáček and Martinů. Their music fulfils me and charges me up, it forces me to think... I feel a great kinship with it. I love doing their music, and listening to it.

Has your taste undergone any particular development? What has influenced you?

Every artist has to keep on developing and changing. When you stop it's the end of your career. All the same, your basic scale of artistic values ought to remain the same. Personally, I'm most influenced by getting to know new music. You constantly encounter new pieces, composers, and styles. You have to come to terms with them, you have to have an opinion on them, and you have to know how your colleagues approach them. The artist must also always follow things in the world surrounding him, know what is happening – in short do things that are completely different from just his art. Otherwise he will lose his professional judgment. If only it were always possible! The world doesn't make this easy, since everybody works very hard, acts as if creativity were a race, concentrates on making a career. But that's bad. There needs to be time for everything.

You studied musicology at Charles University and have also done a great deal of musicological work since. What is your attitude to the problem of faithfulness to the score in performance?

The score is sacred and binding. But you need to read between the lines too, and think it right through. This of course is the hardest part – finding a form of your own, one that is as comprehensive as possible, but at the same time staying faithful to the composer's intentions. The more experience you have, the better you can read between the lines, and the more creative you can be. The worst thing is when a performer justifies his conception of a piece by saying "That is how I feel it". That is the rankest amateurism! A professional has to know why he is doing something. When studying a piece he has to be constantly critical of his own idea, he has to justify everything so as not to run counter to the meaning of a piece, counter to its content and style. It's only on this firm basis that he can then start to feel something.

For a time you were a member of the ARTAMA Specialist Council for children's choirs, and you have worked with an amateur women's choir. How are choirs doing in the CR?

The Czech choral tradition is huge, and few other countries can boast so many choirs. Children's choirs especially are a Czech speciality and our best are definitely internationally first-rate. As far as adult choirs go, the position is not quite so good. There are plenty of these and many are outstanding and comparable with good choirs elsewhere in the world, but generally they are not achieving the same standard as similar ensembles for example in the Northern countries or the Baltic. The problems are mainly with male voices. Men are focused on careers and don't want to sing. They don't have the time and can't afford it. This problem afflicts mixed choirs, but of course above all male choirs. Once they were our domaine, but now only a few survive. And the average age of their members is very high. Another difficulty is that there are not enough qualified choirmasters. There is little opportunity for good studies in choir conducting in the Czech Republic and few teachers capable of training professional choirmasters. There is then little option for interested people but to study orchestral conducting and then to acquire all the skills for choir conducting by themselves, making their own way and learning just by practice. Becoming a good choir conductor in the Czech Republic is no easy ride. I would very much like to see choir conducting established as a separate subject at the Music Faculty of the Prague Academy. The lack is painfully evident.

Tell us about your other interests and how much time you have for them?

I would have plenty of interests, but with all my work I don't have time. I love nature and the mountains. That's the best place for cleaning out your head and forgetting all about the things that have been stressing it. I like relaxing by hiking, cycling and skiing. I've always read a lot but in recent years I've rarely had a chance to settle down with a book. Perhaps that will change with time. At the moment watching good films is my less energy-intensive substitute. There are lots of things I would like to do but can't for lack of time.

What is your as yet unfulfilled wish?

I don't think there's anything special about my wishes. I want the same as everyone else: to be young forever, beautiful, successful, loved by all and to have plenty of money. Well, that's a bit of an exaggeration, and even if it were not, those are impossible wishes... Of course I have a few more realistic ones. I'm

working hard to fulfill them, but because I'm a little superstitious I won't say what they are.

What are your plans for the future?

Big! But as with those fulfillable wishes. I'd rather keep them quiet than speak too soon.

Lukáš Vasilek (born 1980)

studied conducting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, and musicology at the Philosophical Faculty of Charles University in Prague. From 1998 to 2009 he was choirmaster of the Foerster Female Chamber Choir, with which he presented more than 150 concerts at home and abroad, and won prizes in several international competitions (e.g. absolute victory at the competitions in Klaipėda 2003 and in Vienna 2006) and recorded two CDs. For his successes with this choir he won the "Junior Choirmaster" (2005) award from the Czech Choirs Association. From 2005 to 2007 he was also second choirmaster of the opera choir of the National Theatre in Prague. In 2007 Lukáš Vasilek was appointed principal choir conductor of the Prague Philharmonic Choir. Apart from rehearsing and performing separate choir concerts of music from all stylistic periods, he is also involved in major oratorio, cantata and opera projects in which the choir appears with leading orchestras (e.g. the Berlin Philharmonic, the Czech Philharmonic, the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Staatskapelle Berlin) and conductors (e.g. Barenboim, Bělohlávek, Honeck, Kout, Luisotti, Metzmacher, Polyansky, Schreier, Zanetti). Recording also represents a major part of his work with the choir. In this area we can mention the appearance of the PPC on Anna Netrebko's new album for the Deutsche Grammophon label and ongoing recording of the complete choral works of Leoš Janáček for Czech Radio.

In addition to choirs, Lukáš Vasilek also conducts orchestras. In recent years he has conducted concerts with the Hradec Králové Philharmonic, the Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra of South Bohemia, the Pilsen Philharmonic and the North Czech Philharmonic Teplice.

ZDENĚK FIBICH: THE OPERA COMPOSER WHO RETURNED THE OPERA

Zdeněk Fibich is considered one of the most gifted composers of music drama to have entered Czech musical life after the “founder of Czech national music”, Bedřich Smetana. On the other hand, for most Czech composers of the 19th century, creating an artistically valuable and at the same time popular operatic work presented an almost insuperable problem. Fibich was only to succeed on the opera stage with compositions acceptable to both the serious critics and the broader public at a mature age, when he already had other important works behind him. This essay considers the composer’s complicated path to opera on the occasion of his double jubilee – the 160th anniversary of Zdeněk Fibich’s birth and the 110th anniversary of his death.

Zdeněk Fibich (21st December 1850 – 15th October 1900) was born into an affluent family, his father was an official who worked for a noble family. From his mother’s side he inherited a close link with the capital of the monarchy, Vienna (Fibich’s son Richard married in Vienna). Fibich studied (aside from the years spent with the teacher Zikmund Kolečovský) in Leipzig and Mannheim, and spent a short period in Paris. To give the reader some orientation, the extent of diffusion of Fibich’s work may be defined by the cities of Antwerp, Vienna, Zagreb, Halle, Frankfurt, Berlin, Paris and St. Petersburg. (It was in 1900 that thanks largely to Oskar Nedbal, Fibich’s music reached France and Russia, and found favourable responses there). In addition to operas, symphonic music (3 symphonies, symphonic poems), and piano works including most notably the large collection *Nálady, dojmy*



a upomínky [*Moods, Impressions and Reminiscences*], he wrote 6 concert melodramas, culminating in the musical arrangement of three dramas by Jaroslav Vrchlický: *Námluvy Pelopovy* [*The Courtship of Pelops*], *Smír Tantalův* [*The Atonement of Tantalus*] and *Smrt Hippodamie* [*Hippodamia's Death*].

A Born Dramatist

Zdeněk Fibich was interested in dramatic forms from his youth. There are no surviving records of his experiments with the ancient drama *Medea* (1863) or his operetta *Gutta von Gutfensfels* (1867), but the fact that the composition of his first “mature” opera, on a text by the well-known Smetana librettist Karel Sabina entitled *Bukovín* falls into the years 1865–1871, clearly suggests his remarkable talent. After the opera *Blaník* (1877), for which another Smetana author Eliška Krásnohorská wrote the libretto,

it seemed as though the crowning moment of Fibich’s career was imminent. The acclaimed aesthetic theorist Otakar Hostinský adapted Schiller’s play *The Bride of Messina* and during the process of composition worked closely with Fibich to ensure that the result would be a stylistically pure and exemplary musical tragedy which would respect the declamatory cadence of Czech – the kind of work that Czech opera repertoire lacked. In 1884, the premiere of the “Brass Bride” – as the public jeeringly nicknamed the work (from the German word *das Messing*, brass) – was a complete flop. The disillusioned Fibich was to be paralysed by the failure for almost 10 years. As a Wagnerian with a bad reputation he would only return to opera after he had written the trilogy of stage melodramas *Hippodamia* (premiere of the whole cycle took place in 1893). To give an idea of the atmosphere of the time let us just say that

Obrázková
část.

ILLUSTROVANÝ

KURÝR.

Obrázková
část.

Několik výjevů z nové Fibichovy opery „Bouře“.

(Kresleno dle skutečnosti od zvláštního našeho malíře a reprodukováno dle fotografie p. Fiedlerovy.) -- (Text viz na druhé straně.)

Skladatel Zdeněk Fibich.



because of his detailed knowledge of Wagner's work, Fibich unlike Antonín Dvořák was not "allowed" into the Prague Conservatoire as a composition teacher.

Prospero and Fernando in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

The early 1890s brought Fibich greater success and happiness. In 1892 he broke through at the International Theatre and Music Exhibition in Vienna with his stage melodrama *The Courtship of Pelops*. It was a time when he was developing a relationship with Anežka Schulzová (1868–1905) that was to be a great creative inspiration for his music; Fibich was always notable for "fertility of ideas and abundance of imagination", and the young talented theatre critic Schulzová enhanced these gifts still further. As Romain Rolland remarked – love makes everyone a poet – and Fibich sang to the full, both in the increasing melodiousness of his music and in a preference for song or song-based forms.

The libretto of the opera *The Tempest* was written on the basis of Shakespeare's play by one of the most acclaimed and popular of Czech poets, Jaroslav Vrchlický, precisely according to Fibich's ideas. For example, for the chess scene, in which Miranda and Ferdinand are not allowed to kiss despite the sensuous whispering of the spirits, Fibich plays provocatively with musical material from his piano collection *Moods, Impressions and Reminiscences*, where we find a musical "description" of Anežka's body and clothes. Given that the composer and the poet had been in close contact when working on *Hippodamia* and *The Tempest* Vrchlický knew about Fibich's girlfriend, but the intimacy of the two characters (Z. Fibich – Fernando, A. Schulzová – Miranda) was not the only source of inspiration. The choice of subject may perhaps be illuminated by the composer Josef Bohuslav Foerster's description of Vrchlický's favourite joke, "He used to engage in various jests, accompanying them with witty, sometimes even daring remarks, and the poet's



Anežka Schulzová

magic wand proved itself a supple instrument for all kinds of metamorphoses and surprising manoeuvres. The master with his long beard, wrapped in a broad, coloured robe, on his head a tall hat adorned with mysterious runes, looked like Prospero behind the covered table." Foerster also related that at this period Fibich was spending money on "magician's potions" and gave a longer account of Vrchlický's high-jinks, describing how at the salon of his publisher František Augustin Urbánek the poet appeared after supper as a magician, a strange mitre painted with mysterious runes on his head, and with the help of all sorts of instruments started performing all kinds of unexpected transformations and strange "charms". The authors of *The Tempest* were dreaming up a work full of stage machinery and stunning effects.

To the personal themes and interests that led Vrchlický and Fibich to create an opera based on Shakespeare's famous play, we might add a further dimension. Both Germans and Czechs

had shared in the celebrations of the centenary of the birth of Friedrich Schiller in 1859, but the Shakespeare festival of 1864 involved a clear attempt to demonstrate the potential of Czech art as compared to German art. With a Czech opera on *The Tempest* the authors were appealing for the favour of the Czech public. Fibich was perhaps making a play for the position of Smetana's successor, because Fibich's *The Tempest* even starts with a scene similar to that of Smetana's unfinished comic opera *Viola* (a shipwreck with the involvement of the chorus). Attention was drawn to the Czech aspects of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* by articles claiming that the model for Shakespeare's Prospero had been the art-loving enthusiast for alchemy and astronomy Emperor Rudolf II. And if W.A. Mozart had considered creating his own version of *The Tempest* too, then Fibich could deliberately make a bow to *The Magic Flute* and at the same time support the Prague Mozart cult in his opera (Caliban/Monostatos molests Miranda/Pamina, Caliban/Papageno longs for children, Prospero/Sarastro sets tests for Fernando/Tamino, the spirits/genii crown the victory of virtue).

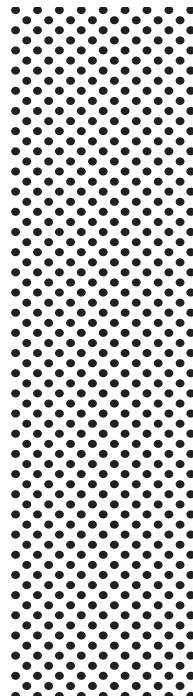
The premiere of *The Tempest* was an unambiguous success, and as early as the mid 1890s fertilised the ground for the rivalry between the supporters of the legacy of Smetana, or Fibich, and the supporters of Dvořák – a situation that was to culminate around 1910 in the “battles over Dvořák”. The second conductor at the National Theatre Mořic Anger promptly informed Dvořák that “...Fibich was angry with you over the appointment to your position at the conservatory, as you can imagine, yet now he's got an oven full of operas – one unfinished he has already have put on the programme – and another already cooking – with two acts already completed – and he is starting on the instrumentation. – I'm enormously curious about the ‘Tempest’, the membership isn't expecting anything, I mean any success. It's to be premiered on 1st March, the director

[František Adolf Šubert, director of the National Theatre] is directing the opera.” (letter from Prague to New York, February 1895).

The “Czech Tristan” and W.A. Mozart

The reworking of the legacy of the 18th century is a neglected side of the opera *The Tempest*. Fibich was not trying to re-install a classical or early romantic style but was reconstructing a “second nature” in the same sense as Wagner did with the “second diatonics” in his most artful (in terms of preciousity) opera, *Die Meistersinger*. Wagner's intention was not to renew the modal system of strict rules of counterpoint (i.e. restoration) but to produce an artistically coloured re-construction that corresponded to the chosen subject. The National Theatre presented Wagner's only comic stage work in 1894. Fibich's Prospero and Caliban lie on the imagined line between Wagner's Hans Sachs and Strauss's Baron Ochs. As an example we might take the reworking of the scene in which in the original Shakespeare play Prospero only comments on the declaration of love from the side (Act III, Scene 3); Vrchlický tackles the scene in pantomime fashion (Prospero intervenes to end the declaration of love in Act II) and this is more adequate to the needs of opera. Furthermore, the sober length of the regular opera number suggests an awareness of distance from the tradition in the same way as the interruption of the conventional “non-modern” bel canto aria by the “contemporary” Baron Ochs in Richard Strauss's *Rosenkavalier*.

Immediately after *The Tempest* Fibich wrote another opera – *Hedy* (finished in November 1895). The libretto, based on Byron's *Don Juan*, was the work of A. Schulzová and the author's lack of experience was reflected in abundant use of very conventional opera features. There was even a grand opera wedding feast with ballet. But Schulzová above all embraced the concept of a “Czech Tristan” for Fibich's new



opera. There were a considerable number of other sources of inspiration. The monologue of Hedy's father, the pirate chief Lambra in the 3rd act was modelled – according to Schulzová – on Lysiart's scene from Weber's *Euryanta*. The octet with two choruses involves a citation of an ensemble from *Tannhäuser*. Fibich was aware – like Richard Strauss, when he asked Hugo von Hofmannstahl for a contemplative ensemble for the *Rosenkavalier* – that at the moment when “eine dramatische Bombe” might be expected, a crushing “Ruhepunkt” had its inalienable place. Lambra's four-bar phrase from the octet mentioned was supposed to recall the time of the flowering of classical Italian opera. Mozart's finale concertato from *The Marriage of Figaro* had made a powerful impression on Fibich and the observant listener cannot miss the quotation from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, when the unknown stranger and castaway introduces himself to Hedy. *Hedy* reliably filled the auditorium of the National Theatre, but a masterpiece was yet to come.

A Strange Legend without Irony – Šárka

Just by choosing the subject of the Women's War, when according to Czech legend after the death of the mythical princess Libuše a war broke out between women and men, the librettist Schulzová and the composer stepped into supranational and timeless contexts and also into the “risky” field of a subject often trivialised in earlier treatments. Homer had told of the proud Amazons. In Virgil we find Camilla, and apart from the model of biblical Deborah a woman warrior appeared in Ariosto's *Bradamante*, while Edmund Spencer's *The Faerie Queen* comes from the 16th century. The origins of legend of Šárka can be traced back to the 10th/11th century, when travelling singers journeyed the length and breadth of Europe. Fibich also drew on the same source as Wagner, for the medieval chronicle of Cosmas included retold tales of the medieval singers and the story in *The Chronicle of Dalimil* written at the beginning of the 14th century is comparable

with the Old German epic (*Lied aus der Edda*, the bound *Sigrdrifa* found by Sigurd). The main source for later versions was in fact the *Chronicle of Hájek* from the second half of the 16th century, a work by a wonderful story-teller but a dubious historian. The legend of the women's war survived into the 19th century in minor, lower genres, but at this point the figures of Vlasta, Šárka and Ctirad were naturally associated with the founding stories of Czech national mythology. For example the popular dramatist Václav Kliment Klicpera wrote the comedy *Ženský boj* [*The Woman's Fight*] (1827), which was not itself particularly successful, but provided the basis for another play by the extremely influential national revivalist Josef Kajetán Tyl *Nové Amazonky aneb ženská vojna* [*The New Amazons or the Women's War*] (1843). The second model behind Tyl's play “in the spirit of the most conventional biedermeier of the time” was a work by the Viennese author F.X. Tolda entitled *Wastl oder Die böhmische Amazonen*. Tolda's farce was one of the most popular plays in Vienna and in Prague (the audience enjoyed the manoeuvres in military dresses and suchlike), and Tyl had no easy task reworking Tolda's text, which at a Vienna staging in 1841 had outraged the Czech public so much that the police had to intervene. The story of the rebellious Amazons had been used numerous times in German literature and it is no surprise that there it had been associated with attacks on Czech culture. In the popular novel by Franz van der Veld *Der böhmische Mädekrieg* (1823) the women warriors of Děvín are motivated to fight not for the restoration of their earlier privileges at the princely court, but by the desire not to become “slaves of squalid, rough Czechs, still on the level of beasts.” It is no wonder that the grand old man of Czech historiography František Palacký in his *History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia* of 1848 should have rather sceptically described the story of the women warriors of Děvín as “the most peculiar old Czech legend.” This is because in many versions of the story Vlasta and Šárka are presented as thirsting for the death of men in



Růžena Maturová as Šárka (costume by Mikoláš Aleš)

a perverse way that foists erotic motives on the original tale. In more dignified Czech versions, the poets Vrchlický and Julius Zeyer in part succeeded in restoring a divine grandeur to these characters, but it is only with Schulzová's libretto that the leader Vlasta comes to represent justice and right. Alexandr Stich wrote that Šárka became "the embodiment of the high ethical nature of the Czech political struggle". Translation was supposed not only to open the way to the German stage for Fibich's opera but also to present an effective negation of the old tradition of the monstrous Vlasta in German literature.

It is doubtful whether as an author with a broad cultural outlook Fibich would have decided to choose this subject had the administrative committee of the National Theatre Association not announced, in 1895, a competition for comedies, libretti and operas with the following condition: "The materials

for these works must be taken without exception from Czech life, present or historical. The deadline for the submission of work is the end of April 1897". The conditions were soon repeated, and no entrant could miss the prized values of the day – a narrowly conceived nationalism (ethnic identity defined by blood) and success: "Works originally written in the Czech language or composed by Czech operatic composers may compete for these prizes. The prizes will be awarded to works that will also have substantial theatrical success when staged." Schulzová and Fibich did not hesitate, and immediately after completing *Hedy* they embarked on hectic work on another opera; on the 21st of January 1896 (Schulzová's name day) Fibich started on *Šárka*, i.e. even before the premiere of *Hedy*.

The premiere of *Šárka* was a brilliant success, and Fibich could justifiably expect the first prize, but his pupil Karel Kovařovic had also entered the competition with his opera *Psohlavci* and "vox populi" decided in favour of the younger composer, who would soon become head of the National Theatre opera company. With hindsight we can sense in the reviews of the time relief rather than sheer enthusiasm for Fibich's mature work. In 1897 Václav Juda Novotný wrote, "And today after those laborious detours through Messina, the trilogy, *The Tempest* and *Hedda*, how remarkably Fibich's musical creativity flowers in the Czech sense in the atmosphere of a domestic myth of *Sarka* and *Ctirad*. What energy in expression, what power in the stressing of the dramatic element and what delight in the melodious freeing of the voices!" Jaromír Borecký proclaimed Fibich the leading composer of new Czech opera. Karel Knittl enthusiastically shouted, "Fibich is ours!" and made notes of motifs and themes to show that Šárka could not be denied a "Czech costume", but it is also telling that in 1899 at an Academic Reading Room gathering he expressed opinions that could hardly be taken as anything but a swipe at Fibich: "What we know of national character is that it may be coloured à la Smetana or à la Dvořák. For the time being: tertium non datur. Wagnerism

brings benefits to opera only insofar as it does not mean that individuality is suffocated and a stereotype of external treatment hung on it. Hence the victory of Smetana and the failure of all those who have a mistaken understanding of what the great reformer sought to do. In the new Czech operas of recent years one cannot always speak of composing, but of a sticking together of at best interesting harmonic combinations, a hammering out in every shade of a so-called leitmotif of indistinct aspect; at the words "horror, fear, plague, hunger, death" we hear the high sounds of piccolos, the deep tones of violas and clarinets, at the mention of love the harp tinkles and the violins twitter, a pub brawl, an earthquake, a battle and hell are represented by drums and trombones, and the music-drama palette is ready-made. A kingdom for a melody! – you cry, sinking onto your couch after the operatic experience."

Vexed, Fibich resolved to realise another opera plan – the two-part opera *Pád Arkuna* [*The Fall of Arkun*] consisted of the one-act *Helga* and the three-act *Dargun*. The historical subject, concerning the fate of the Baltic Slavs, was however a failure on the Prague stage. The composer himself died a few days before the premiere.

Fibich – Dvořák – Janáček

Although he lived only 50 years, Zdeněk Fibich left a relatively rounded off oeuvre behind him. Having started out as the author of songs and song forms it was with these that he also said farewell. In his last years Fibich lived in a concentrated atmosphere of contradiction and conflict (including family disputes). This situation has given rise to the idea that Fibich was out of synch with his time; some have shifted him back to the past (the musicologist Vladimír Helfert), some to the future (the school around the music historian Zdeněk Nejedlý). In fact paradoxically Fibich bears both interpretations. Artistically he had matured in the 1870s, adopting Smetanian ideals. Fibich not only had roots in the "classical" period of the flowering of Czech



music, but went even further back, to the period of the classical values of the 18th century (although this may lead to the idea of neo-styles). Fibich never abandoned the idea of progress, he risked incomprehension on the part of the public, and he developed some notable and distinctive avenues (abbreviation, impressions, an individualised approach to instrumental colour, etc.). His innovations remained, however, closely bound up with romantic expressiveness, and he did not found a new movement.

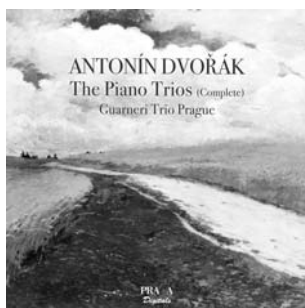
Although today Fibich's work is overshadowed by the music of Smetana, Dvořák or Janáček, the composer had a rare power and created his own individual style – Fibich's was a talent suited to balladic genres, spring themes, epic stories but also the subtle and symmetrical modelling of melodic motifs. Fibich suffered and evidently will continue to suffer from a lack of understanding and staging or production

problems. The Czech composer's openness to European culture can cause irritation on both sides. Eduard Hanslick for example wrote of Fibich's *Symphony no. 2 in E flat minor* that, "Unlike his Czech colleagues, the composer does not use any national overtones. The symphony has German characteristics." Yet the process of rediscovery of Fibich's work brings breath-taking shocks at its quality. The composer moved between the modern and the cosmopolitan sentimental production of salon pieces. Just like Smetana Fibich made major demands on performance and endowed his works with an aura of the uncommonness that is not compatible with everyday theatre (concert) practice.

Although Fibich did not avoid some concessions to social pressure and his last operas bear the marks of compromise (opera is generally a "sensitive" form, one that easily dates, and the history of opera is a history of waste), he did not lose the solid ground beneath his feet. Fibich's operatic work cannot be dissociated from the work of Richard Wagner, even though it shows both directions – "towards" and "away from" Wagner. Yet neither can Fibich be classified with the post-Wagnerian average (Engelbert Humperdinck, Wilhelm Kienzl, Felix Draeseke and others), for a sense of artistic responsibility cultivated especially with a view to the idealised image of Smetana as the founder of modern Czech music forced the composer to works ambitious in composition style and conception, and this is the basis for meaningful comparison of his music with that of the top representatives of the Tristan generation (above all with Richard Strauss). With Smetana, Fibich succeeded in becoming what was almost a "norm-creating" phenomenon, however his so-called Wagnerism was received. In his operas his contemporaries could test the possibilities of setting the Czech word in music. Perhaps it was in fact necessary that after Smetana's operatic masterpieces originally composed on a German text, an opera should be created using a Czech translation of a German play in a consistent "declamatory style" (*The Bride of Messina*), before an opera mastered in all aspects could

emerge – *Šárka*, where the requirements for the correct treatment of the Czech word and easily perceptible melody were perfectly met. In *Šárka* too we can see the beneficial impact of the National Theatre competition, which eliminated the power of the opera stereotype and confronted Fibich with obstacles that he had to get over (the demand for a Czech subject, development of the line established by Smetana's *Libuše*, fears of the excessive influence of Wagner's *Die Valkyrie*). Fibich constructed his works around the dramatic character. He respected its nature and its situation. He gave it contours in tempi, harmonies, leitmoifs and instrumentation, used large intervallic leaps to begin sung phrases, "dry" but markedly expressive recitations on a tone, and he combined the arioso and the regular binary song forms. The elaborate characterisation of protagonists and environments was, in any case, a basic requirement of the aesthetics of the 19th century.

Fibich presented a relevant alternative to Romance opera as well (Charles Gounod, Georges Bizet, Charles Camille Saint-Saëns, Jules Massenet and others), to Verism and to Russian opera. He was a force to be reckoned with by both Dvořák and Janáček who at the time of Fibich's opera successes were finding their own way with difficulty as they grappled with the problem of musical dramatic form. All three composers have in common the fact that following the opening of the National Theatre they created operas that brought them disappointments (Fibich's *The Bride of Messina*, Dvořák's *Dimitrij*, and Janáček's first opera *Šárka*), and only in the 1890s matured (or were maturing) to pieces with which they were almost completely satisfied, which brought them the lasting interest of the public and which bear the traces of their own biographies (Fibich's *Šárka*, Dvořák's *Rusalka*, and Janáček's *Jenůfa*). In this trio Fibich was chronologically the first, and also the first to leave the stage.



Antonín Dvořák

Piano Trios:
No. 1 in B major op. 21 B 51,
No. 2 in G minor op. 26 B 56,
No. 3 in F minor op. 65 B 130,
No. 4 in E minor op. 90 B 166
the "Dumkas"

The Guarneri Trio Prague
(Ivan Klánský - piano, Čeněk Pavlík -
violin, Marek Jerie - cello).

Production of the recording: Milan Slavický. Text: Eng., Fr., Ger. Recorded: Nov. 2008, Feb 2009, Martinů Hall of the Academy of Performing Arts, Prague.

Released: 2009. TT: 2:06:49. DDD.
 2 CD Praga Digitals PRD/DSD 250259.60
 (distribution Classic). Alternative: Suk Trio
 (Supraphon), Beaux Arts Trio (Philips).

To be honest, the suggested alternatives are merely mentions of what I consider the most interesting performances of the Dvořák after the **Guarneri Trio**. In fact the trio **Ivan Klánský - Čeněk Pavlík - Marek Jerie** are really only in competition with themselves – i.e. their own first complete set, made and released under rather difficult circumstances in 1997 and 1998 as part of the Supraphon Dvořák chamber project. It is gratifying to find that their second complete set improves on the first in all aspects. The director of both sets, Milan Slavický, has also progressed both in philosophy of recording and the clarity of the sound, as well as in my view in the positioning of the microphones (which seem to be placed closer for the second set) and the production of the final mastering. From the directing point of view everything is perfectly balanced. But the main thing, of course, is the development of the three musicians in front of the microphone. An obligatory assessment might be – it's more mature. But that all-embracing statement hides many layers of reality. The architecture more consistently follow the structuring of sections within the movements, but also reflect a developed concept of the bonds holding the entire works together; I hear a more solid order, fewer attempts to break new ground but for that reason greater logic. In 2009 the dynamic

amplitude is greater, and often interesting in terms of contrast, but always strictly controlled. I would not say that the complete set from the 1990s is now obsolescent, for it has its own distinctive qualities, but over ten years the trio has moved (in expression) onto a higher level. As far as sonority is concerned, I hear the most audible progress in the play of Čeněk Pavlík, whose tone is even more radiant and ardent than in the Supraphon era of the trio.

The *Dumkas* can serve as a small example of the difference in conception between the two sets. The differences are not so much in the length of tracks as in the content of the different parts. In 2009 the opening movement is lavishly layered, as it were wrinkled, and the musicians are not afraid of sharp contrasts of dynamics, tempi and expression. With a certain hyperbole I could say that in 1997 the *Allegro vivace* sounded youthful, whereas today one can feel greater breadth of horizon and equilibrium. The *Allegro molto* is then very supple and unbelievably delicious in tone. In the first Supraphon set the second movement starts with a very melancholy, veiled and even mysterious cello solo. Twelve years later Marie Jerie plays it in a more concrete way (certainly this is also thanks to the sound recording quality), and the vigorous transition to the *Vivace* is pithy and rhythmically sharper. Rarely in my life have I heard so perfect a combination of stringed instruments and piano. The piano was prepared for both the earlier and present set by the same tuner and technician – Ivan Sokol. I don't know how great was the effect of the change of hall (the Domovina studio vs. the Martinů Hall) and pianos (Petrof vs. Steinway), but certainly Ivan Klánský can take the main credit for the fabulous sound. When a chamber ensemble has the chance to record its interpretation of a work at different stages, this is a blessing not just for the ensemble but for listeners too. I hope that the Guarneri Trio Prague will have yet another opportunity ten years from now.

Luboš Stehlík

Bohuslav Martinů

Piano Trio No. 2
in D minor H.327,
No. 3 in C major H.332,
Cinq pieces breves
(Piano trio No. 1 H.193),
Bergerettes H.275

Kinsky Trio Prague (Lucie Sedláková
Hůlová - violin, Martin Sedlák - cello,
Jaroslava Pěchočová - piano).

Text: Eng., Fr., Ger., Recorded: 2008, 2009, Martinů Hall, Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts, Prague. Released: 2009. TT: 67:23. DDD.
 1 CD Praga Digitals PRD/DSD 250256
 (distribution Classic).

I am constantly pleased and astounded by the standard of our piano trios. The pleasure has been repeated over generations. For several years now the **Kinsky Trio Prague** has been one of the best of the young trios, but with the arrival of the pianist **Jaroslava Pěchočová**, who is well known for her remarkable qualities of touch, the trio's palette of sound has become even richer. I hear more colour in the play, the dynamics are more sensitive and I feel greater sensibility. I explain this not just in terms of the marvellous play of the pianist, but also her harmonious integration with the magically subtle play of **Lucie Sedláková**. I hope I shall not offend the feminists if I say that this pure femininity in counterpoint with the masculine play of **Martin Sedlák** is a great advantage of the trio. In any case there is no doubt Pěchočová is developing into an excellent chamber player and asset to Czech musical culture. This tribute to Martinů is a success in all respects. The choice of pieces needs no comment and will entice every admirer of the composer. The performance: you can feel in every movement that this was a project dear to the hearts of the players and so very well conceived and prepared. The standard of technique and interplay can be taken for granted, but so precise an achievement of the "martinů style" cannot. It requires a very open heart, and deep knowledge, both much in evidence here.



Just one comment on the publisher: at a time when the recording of chamber music is drying up, I am just amazed at how much chamber music (often Czech) is being published by this small French firm. This used to provoke a negative reactions from some of our musicians, and perhaps still does, but disparagement is not appropriate. In this case the French are doing more for the Czech classics than we are, unfortunately.

Luboš Stehlík

Martina Janková

Recollection

Joseph Haydn – Songs

Martina Janková – soprano, Gérard Wyss, Guntar Burgunder – violins, Gunta Abele – cello.

Production: Matouš Vlčinský. Text: Cz. Eng., Ger., Fr.: song texts in the original and Cz. Recorded: Jan. 2009, Radiostudio Zürich. Released: 2009. TT: 70:28. DDD.

1 CD Supraphon, a.s. SU 4005-2.

Alternative: Haydn Songs, Elly Ameling, Jörg Demus, 3 CD, 1980 Brilliant Classics 93768. Joseph Haydn: Complete Scottish & Welsh Folksong Arrangements, Lorna Anderson – soprano, Jamie MacDougall – tenor, Haydn Trio Eisenstadt, 18 CD, 2005, Brilliant Classics 93769.

Make sure you give yourself enough time and peace to listen properly to **Martina Janková's** latest CD of Haydn songs, so making sure that you can really savour the subtle colours with which the singer illuminates these small gems. As Janková herself says, "Haydn's music is full of depth, interior beauty, shades of colour and humour. It seems simple, but that is the catch. It has to be discovered, it doesn't just come to the listener of itself like Mozart. I feel an emotional mysterious profundity in this music, an old-fashioned quality that is not pushy." The singer made this selection from Haydn's songs herself. It consists of six *German Songs* (Hob. XXVIa) from the early 1780s, when the fifty-year-old Haydn responded to the Emperor

Josef's vigorous promotion of the German language not only with compositions, but with his own tenor performances. In contrast, the Scottish and Welsh efforts to refine their folk song tradition and cultivate their heritage are represented in the choice of nine Haydn arrangements from four hundred *Scots and Welsh folksongs* (Hob. XXXIa, b). The arrangements, also commissioned from other celebrities including Beethoven and Weber, were made on the basis of volumes published by Scottish Music Museum and extensive collections of Scots folk texts and melodies. They were ordered by the Society for the Encouragement of Art and Industry with a view to the needs of amateur musicians, but also in an (extremely successful) attempt to help the bankrupt impresario and publisher William Napier. Janková explains how she chose the nine arrangements from the four hundred: "While I discovered the Canzonets as a young girl, these songs were a revelation to me. Having grown up in our own folk dulcimer traditions, I wanted to have a violin and cello there because this kind of sound feels more folksy to me than if I did it with the harp or flute. The quartet combination narrowed the choice immediately, and then I chose according to texts that suited me but colour, mood and length were also important. I didn't restrict myself just to soprano songs, but chose tenor ones that I liked as well." She feels there are parallels with Lachian folk songs: "I grew up surrounded by dulcimer music, and while these Haydn arrangements are different in form, they are similar in content – they are never sentimental, they have an interior poetry without making a philosophy out of it. They present truth in a raw, simple way. They express the important things in the world with common sense, and in one line they convey everything from birth to death. This pours into you and has enormous impact. What I knew from Lachian songs I found in these Scottish and Welsh songs too." Finally Janková has included what are today Haydn's most famous *English Canzonets* (Hob. XXVIa), which were written in London and in Vienna from the mid-1790s on texts by the English poet Anne Hunter. Martina Janková already has a great deal of experience with the performance of songs; for Phillips she has recorded songs by Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Mussorgsky, Dvořák, Strauss and Schoeck. And it is clear

that thanks to her deep-rooted musicality and intelligence she knows how to choose the right repertoire for her tender, rather delicate lyrical soprano voice. The impulse behind her interest in Haydn's songs came from Roger Norrington, when he decided he wanted Janková in particular to complete the presentation of different facets of Haydn's music in the "Meetings" series at the Salzburg Festival by singing his songs. Haydn definitely suits her gifts and temperament, as she confirms: "I have more affinity for Haydn's music than for Mozart's – I don't know why – it is something intuitive, his music touches me subconsciously". The CD title, "Recollection", is also the title of one of the English canzonets, and Janková explains that she chose it to express how one can share in the revival of forgotten beauty. Like Haydn himself, Janková does not amaze by sheer vocal power, tempestuousness or technician virtuosity, but by heartfelt sincerity, tenderness and immediacy. Her singing is like a crystal clear stream that reflects the brightness of the sun. Janková succeeds in giving the songs depth of feeling, charm, elegance and wit. Her performance combines chirping gaiety with firm resolution (including sonorous low registers). Innocence and willfulness, tender caresses and impish flirtation, joyous merriment and delicate sorrow, coquetry and the mysteriously demonic. In comparison with the Dutch soprano Elly Ameling, who recorded three CDs of Haydn songs in the 1980s when already a mature "Queen of Song" (she was awarded a noble title and the highest Dutch honours) Janková's style is more youthful and more immediate, while Ameling gave the songs greater femininity, drama and a more romantic mood. It has to be said, too that the Amerlin recording provides greater comfort with the comprehensibility of the text.

Martina Janková is fortunate in her partners. **Gérard Wyss**, who also accompanies Edith Mathis, Cecilia Bartoli and Nicolai Gedde, is a chamber musician who succeeds in blending the sound of the piano with the human voice, and has a feeling for the structure of phrases and that mini-second fermatas so important in Haydn's songs.

Helena Havlíková



Ivan Moravec

Live in Brussels

(Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin)

Ivan Moravec - piano.

Production: not stated. Text: Cz., Eng., Fr. Recorded: live, Feb. and Nov. 1983, concert hall of the Royal Conservatoire, Brussels.

Released: 2009. TT: 72:14. AAD. 1 CD
Supraphon SU 4004-2.

Most of the recordings of our most respected pianist **Ivan Moravec** (born 1930) have been made abroad, mainly in the USA, and these were formerly not available on our market. It was not until 2001 that Supraphon released a boxed set of recordings by this outstanding pianist. Here, just released, we have an album of live recordings of recitals that Moravec gave in the hall of the Royal Conservatoire in Brussels in February and November 1983. They were recorded by the Belgian enthusiast Michel Devos: "I liked some of the pieces so much that I agreed to their release to prevent a repeat of that whole long-drawn out American saga," said the pianist in an interview. Since Ivan Moravec is famously obsessed with the quality of instrument and sound and because "his brother is the tape recorder", we can be sure that he chose with extreme care. It is hard to believe that these are live recordings and not a painstakingly refined studio recording. All that betrays it as live is the occasional discreet cough – and the scarcely describable tension that accompanies live performances and brings what is most important – inspiration.

Almost perfect in terms of sound quality (remastering by Stanislav Sýkora), the CD offers 19th-century music in various forms: from Ludwig van Beethoven to Frederic Chopin to Johannes Brahms. The CD opens with Beethoven's "Pastoral" Sonata, which in Ivan Moravec's interpretation is lapidary, pithy and curved into a single arch. The choice of shorter Brahms pieces, including the popular *Rhapsody in G minor* and *Intermezzo in A major*, presents this composer as a poet full of tenderness and humour. The plasticity of the musical stream, the free treatment of rhythm and yet firm pulse, the expansive



melody and full sonority – these are the reasons why under the hands of Ivan Moravec even such "well-worn" pieces as Schumann's *Dreaming* can never pall.

I believe that in the Chopin block, which contains a nocturne and mazurkas, each listener will find a detail – a trill, a fermata, piece of melody – that will astound him. The finale of the album is the *Scherzo in B minor* – a challenging work, but one that Ivan Moravec approaches with a cool head and never hastily, so that the virtuoso passages turn out very well. The superb melody of the central section in Moravec's interpretation feels like a confirmation of the theory of relativity: time is something that can be drawn out and stopped. When someone has the power to do it.

Dita Kopáčová Hradecká

Risonanza – Modern Czech Music for Oboe, Harp and Piano

(Hanuš, Eben, Haas)

Vilém Veverka - oboe,
Kateřina Englichová - harp,
Ivo Kahánek - piano.

Production: Matouš Vlčinský.

Text: Cz, Ger., Eng., Fr. Recorded: 2008 and 2009, Bohemia Music Studio, Prague.

Released: 2009. TT: 70:42. DDD. 1 CD
Supraphon SU 3993-2.

The young musicians have taken the overall title *Risonanza* from a piece by one of the three selected composers, P. Eben. Their album concept is directly expressed in the subtitle – Modern Czech Music for Oboe, Harp and Piano. Today we would be hard put to find a more refined trio of top soloists with such a wonderful approach to modern music. They show an extraordinary empathy and shared strong emotional charge entirely committed to precision of play. **Kateřina Englichová** is a harp player par excellence, who has been making such frequent and highly professional contributions to Czech contemporary music life. Since his remarkable graduation concert at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts, **Vilém Veverka** has been making his name

at a sprinter's pace, and not only in the Czech context. His bold decision to devote his attention mainly to modern music and often to the most recent pieces is rightly bringing him recognition above all on foreign podiums, while for the moment Czech podiums are still trying to get used to it. The pianist **Ivo Kahánek** might seem to have an easier road to success with his instrument, but the popularity and quantity of soloists on the instrument present musicians with the constant need to captivate, to break through, to come up with something sufficiently different and excellent to enable them to pursue a real solo career. All three musicians manage to be absolutely themselves while also forming a faultless team. The first piece, the *Hanuš Trio Concertante* of 1978, is an altered version of the original *Double Concerto* dedicated to L. Váchalová and F. Hanták and is therefore extremely challenging. But the Englichová – Veverka – Kahánek trio brilliantly grasp the dense texture of the piece with its lyrical passages, full of fresh rhythms and hidden allegories of modern musical language. Hanuš's *Sonata quasi una fantasia* was written in the excitement of the Prague Spring in 1968, but only published in New York in 1972. Eben's solo *Risonanza* is one of the best known and most performed pieces by any of the three composers on the CD. It was written in 1986, has a rococo Mozartian tinge and was played by Englichová in 1999 for the composer's seventieth birthday. The older Eben piece *Ordo modalis* of 1964 is based tonally on the inspiration of the ancient harp and shawm but in terms of rhythm draws on the early Baroque dance. The piece by Haas is essentially a memento; it is not a later 20th century piece but one whose author perished in a concentration camp in 1944. In his *Suite* of 1939, however, he anticipates all that not only destroyed him, but that was to be imprinted on postwar culture as a whole. The forced division of Europe in West and East separated artists, but could not divide art. Thanks to the excellent performances of three young talents we have a chance to appreciate and enjoy an extraordinary project both in standard of play and choice of music.

Marta Tužilová



Leoš Janáček

Sinfonietta, Glagolitic Mass, Concertino, Capriccio, The Diary of One who Disappeared, Sonata for Violin and Piano, A Memory, Piano Fragments: In memoriam, Andante, Moderato, I Wait for You, Christ the Lord is Born

Felicity Palmer – soprano, Ameral Gunson – mezzo soprano, John Mitchinson – tenor, Malcolm King – bass, Ian Bostridge – tenor, Diane Atherton – soprano, Susan Flannery – alto, Ruby Philogene, Denyn Edwards – altos, Pierre Amoyal – violin, Jane Parker-Smith – organ, Thomas Adès and Michail Rudy – pianos, Philharmonia Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, instrumental soloists of the Paris National Opera, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Charles Mackerras.

Production: Stephen Johns. Text: Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: 1982 to 2000, London, Birmingham, Paris, Bristol, Suffolk. Released: 2009. TT: 78:59, 79:27. DDD. 2 CD

EMI Records 50999 2 37606 2 2 (EMI).

A wider range of Janáček recordings began to appear relatively late. In the sixties they were still quite a rarity and where they were produced at all, they concentrated more on tried and tested titles such as the *Sinfonietta* or *Taras Bulba*. Not even the great past masters of the baton always managed to grasp the distinctive character of Janáček's world and many romanticising interpretations today sound somewhat comic (for example Otto Klemperer's 1956 recording of the *Sinfonietta*). Rafael Kubelík and Rudolf Firkušný, who recorded Janáček's core works for Deutsche Grammophon, did a great deal to further a proper understanding of the music. Their recordings included for example the *Concertino* and *Capriccio*, but also *The Diary of One who Disappeared* with Kubelík as pianist. The recordings made by **Sir Charles Mackerras**, who

even recorded a set of complete operas for Decca in Vienna, were of great importance. Nonetheless, the basic impulse was given by the Supraphon recordings that were exported with great success to Western Europe and overseas in the second half of the 20th century. This present album offers proof of the understanding that Janáček has found among leading conductors today – **Sir Simon Rattle** and Sir Charles Mackerras, and from the Russian-born pianist **Michael Rudy**, the English tenor **Ian Bostridge** and other musicians. These are by no means new recordings, although they are all digital. It is a compilation album, and so naturally comes with only a relatively modest booklet; EMI clearly wishes to use recordings from 1982 to 2000 to boast of its Janáček activities. The oldest recording on the album is the *Sinfonietta*. The **London Philharmonia Orchestra** is technically outstanding and perfect in sound. Its fanfares are "Ančerlesque", i.e. perfectly constructed with flawlessly conceived dynamics. Rattle has a better feeling for Janáček than his top international colleagues (including Claudio Abbado). He presents the lyrical passages very emotionally, sometimes even romantically (for example in the 3rd movement, but also the beginning of the 5th movement). He plays with sound colours (3rd movement), some wind passages are real exhibitions. The 4th movement is technically perfect, but refined rather than rousing in folklore style. In terms of expression he rather tones down the typical Janáčekian gags and gives them a disciplined logic. If we want to hear a less explosive, acoustically balanced, impressionistically rather than barbarically conceived Janáček, then this is an ideal example. In Rattle's interpretation of the *Glagolitic Mass*, the orchestral sound is refined and perfectly integrated (**City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus**). The choir has some difficulties with the pronunciation of the Old Slavonic. Some passages are exaggeratedly exalted, and smooth rather than rawly laconic in Janáčekian style. The end of the Gloria is nonetheless ravishing in sound (emphasised organ and kettle drums). Among the soloists **John Mitchinson** stands out for his throaty tone. The lyrical passages are superb (for example the middle section of the Credo). **Jane**

Parker-Smith offers the postludium in a very lively tempo – more virtuoso than Janáčekian – but her interpretation of the part is spectacular in both technique and sound.

In the *Concertino* and *Capriccio* the pianist Michael Rudy proves his deep affinity for the composer. Not that this is such a big surprise for Czechs when he earlier showed his mettle as a highly individual interpreter of Janáček in the piano cycle *On an Overgrown Path*.

The *Concertino* and *Capriccio* are conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras, who invited outstanding performers to join him – members of the **Paris National Opera** orchestra (a brilliant horn player and clarinetist in the *Concertino*, perfectly integrated brass in the *Capriccio*). In the *Sonata for violin and Piano* Michael Rudy accompanies the violinist **Pierre Amoyal** and they both particularly stress the lyricism of the piece. In the third movement the folk mood and elements are very successfully emphasised. The well-known piano answers in the principal theme in the 4th movement are not as explosive as usual, but sound like wavering impressions.

An important part of this double album is of course the *Diary of One who Disappeared*, which is a particularly tough nut for foreigners. The world famous lyric tenor **Ian Bostridge** sings it with admirable dynamism and emotional understanding. Linguistically it does not of course always come off quite as he intended, but in this respect he is more successful than Nicolai Gedda or Philip Langridge, for example. The mezzo soprano **Ruby Philogene** has even greater problems with diction, but definitely not beyond the limits of acceptability. The other female voices sing as it were offstage, and in terms of sound the result is very effective. The *Diary of One who Disappeared* is accompanied reliably and with understanding by the pianist **Thomas Adès**. He also offers Janáček's piano trifles and fragments, some of which have never been recorded even in the Czech Republic. And the album also contains Janáček's very last piece – the sketch *The Golden Ring*.

Bohuslav Vitek



Magdalena Kožená

Vivaldi

Magdalena Kožená – mezzo soprano,
The Venetian Baroque Orchestra,
Andrea Marcon.

Production: Arend Prohmann. Text: Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: Oct. 2008, Kulturzentrum Grand Hotel, Toblach/Dobbiacco. Released: 2009. TT: 77:19. DDD. 1 CD Archiv Produktion / Universal 00289 477 8096. Alternative: Bartoli – Vivaldi Album (Decca).

There is no doubt that **Magdalena Kožená** has a very strong position with the recording firm and so has a great deal of influence on the concept, choice and structure of her CDs. She has the freedom to get Czech composers into the catalogue to a reasonable extent, and evidently has been resisting purely commercial, or even just intergenre projects. For this new purely artistic title, a CD of Vivaldi arias (which is by the way the first in her discography if we leave aside her share in the complete recording of the oratorio *Juditha triumphans*), she has chosen with feeling and success. What remains a constant in Vivaldi's music both instrumental and vocal is the richness in contrast, simple melodiousness, striking emotionality, generally simple harmonies and often a certain earthiness. Thus for example the very first short aria on the album – from the opera *Tito Manlio* – conveys a quiet slow mood underscored with the harpsichord that is quite akin to the world of Vivaldi's *Winter*. And in other numbers we find techniques familiar to us from the solo concertos. But there is much more here too – the great dramatic imagination of the composer and his performer, who brings to its expression a unique atmosphere of urgency and emotional involvement. This sense of drama can be communicated by ravishing coloratura as in the aria from *Juditha triumphans*, or in the long-drawn-out wistfulness of the superb nine-minute scene from the opera *Farnace* (track 4 – *Gelido in ogni vena*). The numbers are all very different. Vivaldi surprises us with the prolific diversity of his imagination and Magdalena Kožená delights us again and

again with the colour of a voice that is cajoling in the lower registers (in the aria *Nel profondo cieco mondo* from the opera *Orlando furioso* – track 8 – reaching as far down as an admirable low g) and urgent in the upper registers. She captivates us with her precise and persuasive insight into the mood and nature of the operatic characters, her technique and the accurate grasp of the basic setting or direction of an aria. Comparison with Cecilia Bartoli, which seems natural given the latter's earlier Vivaldi album, is in fact misleading as well as unnecessary. Magdalena Kožená does not have Bartoli's glittering guttural tone, and creates coloraturas in a different way – but not a worse way. In the same way she does not achieve the unquenchable and animal energy of the famous Italian, which are of course inimitable. But there is no need for her to try to copy. The Czech singer's style is all her own: more lyrical, more restrained, often actually more interior, introverted, the sighs more meditative. The album in any case works more at this level than at the level of striking virtuosity. Particularly superb is the long aria from the opera *Orlando furioso* (track 6), where the solo voice alternates and combines with ornamental solos on the recorder.

The accompaniment, or to put it better, the congenial collaboration of **The Venetian Baroque Orchestra** is the other marvellous side of this recording. It gives the listener the sense of effortless and real partnership. And in the fast passages, massive unisons and sudden bursts of harsh chords, the orchestra of period instruments stuns with the vigour and fierce strength of accents that would equally suit the style of Cecilia Bartoli... In any case, on her most recent album Magdalena Kožená shows that she is at the height of her vocal powers. This allows her to move – with technical and expressive finesse – between many different fields of music. For example from chamber songs to classicist and romantic opera arias, and from Vivaldi opera heroes and heroines to Bohuslav Martinů's *Julietta*, which in form of vast symphonic fragments was given its concert premiere in Prague and recorded last year with Kožená in the title role.

Petr Veber



Baborák Ensemble

Serenade

(Martinů, Nielsen, Koechlin,
Berio)

Radek Baborák – french horn,
Wenzel Fuchs – clarinet, Raphael Haeger
– percussion, Dalibor Karvay, Vladimír
Klášný and Aida Shabuová – violins, Jiří
Zigmund and Jan Šimon – violas, Hana
Baboráková-Shabuová – cello, Pavel
Nejtek – double bass, Ondřej Roskovec
– bassoon, Jan Vobořil, Jan Musil and
Lukáš Korec – french horns.

Production: Dagmar Henžílková, Matouš Vlčinský. Text: Cz., Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: Nov. 2008, Studio Domovina, Prague. Released: 2009. TT: 59:34. DDD. 1 CD Supraphon a.s., Czech Radio SU 3998-2.

Despite his youth the horn player **Radek Baborák** is today a major name. In fact he is a very rare phenomenon in this country, and we have very few musicians like him. Talent, enthusiasm and huge energy have been propelling him forward ever since his rocket start when engaged by the Czech Philharmonic to play at the side of Z. Tylšar at the age of only eighteen. Today Baborák is an acclaimed musician both in solo performance (the Berlin Philharmonic) and in chamber music. The Baborák Ensemble was founded in 2001 and has been reaping successes on concert podiums at home and abroad. The core of the ensemble is the french horn and string quartet, but it has no qualms about trying unconventional instrumental combinations as well. Its repertoire is very wide, but this particular recording focuses on music of the first half of the 20th century and its title comes from the opening *Serenade No. 1* written by Martinů in 1932. The piece for clarinet, french horn, three violins and viola is infused with the fresh Mozartian charm that the composer gave it. Martinů's earlier opus from the first years of his residence in Paris (1924), a quartet for clarinet, french horn, cello and snare drum, shows the composer searching for new directions. The Danish composer C. Nielsen (1865-1931) has remained one of the most important



of Scandinavian composers to this day and his popular *Serenata in vano* of 1914 for clarinet, bassoon, french horn, cello and double base is among his most frequently performed works. By contrast, his *Canto serioso* of 1913 for French horn and piano is a demanding piece written for a competition for music for the Royal Danish Symphony Orchestra. Despite its trickiness and compositional finesse, Baborák masters it with pleasure and gusto. The French composer Ch. Koechlin (1867-1950) was one of the pioneers of film music and the samples selected here are from the composer's estate and written for the planned film "Confidences of a Clarinetist" of 1934, for which Koechlin also produced the screenplay. The instrumental combination varies according to individual piece, from clarinet and french horn with accompaniment to horn quartet. The album ends with the short and charming *Musica Leggera* by L. Berio of 1974 as a tender masterly conclusion. Both the main protagonists of the recording, Baborák and **Wenzel Fuchs**, together with the other instrumentalists show impressive feeling for the compositions, experience, virtuosity and delight in shared music making in all the pieces on the album.

Marta Tužilová

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Flute Quartets in D major KV 285, G major KV 285a, C major KV App. 171/285b, A major KV 298, Flute Concerto in G major KV 313 (285c)*

Yoshimi Oshima - flute, members of the Kocian Quartet: Pavel Hůla - violin, Zbyněk Paďourek - viola, Václav Bernášek - cello,* Praga Camerata, Pavel Hůla - conductor.

Production: Jaroslav Rybář. Text: Eng., Ger., Fr. Recorded: Oct. 2007 Studio Domovina, Prague, *Feb. 2008 Martin Hall, Prague. Released: 2008. TT: 78:47. DSD. 1 CD Praga Digital PRD/DSD 250 255 (distribution Classic).

Although Mozart very happily employed many wind instruments in his music, in his surviving correspondence he mentions that he was not enthusiastic about composing for solo

flute. Flautists owe Mozart's Flute Concerto and three flute quartets to the rich Dutchman De Jean, who in 1777 commissioned Mozart to write "three small, light and short little concertos and a few flute quartets". Mozart at this time – to the disgust of his father – never turned up his nose at the chance of well paid work. Instead of three concertos he eventually composed only one (but this was neither "light" nor "short") and instead of the planned six flute quartets he wrote only three – in D major, G major and C major. There are in fact a series of questions marks over the quartets in G major and C major, even including doubts as to their authenticity. The *Quartet in A major*, the fourth and last of Mozart's flute quartets, was written substantially later than the first three and was evidently no longer connected with De Jean's commission. Mozart did not attribute much importance to this work, as can be gathered from the joking tempo instruction above the final movement but also the fact that he "borrowed" many of the ideas in the piece from elsewhere: he quotes a song by F.A.Hoffmeister, an aria by Paisiello and the melody of an old French rondeau. This complete recording of all four Mozart flute quartets is definitely worthy of attention. The Japanese flautist **Yoshimi Oshima** has a very pleasant tone – softly glowing, rounded, and as if subtly coloured and warmed from the inside. The listener will also appreciate his light technique and rich dynamic range, as well as the fresh ideas with which he gives new life to the composer's score (the enchanting "bird" twittering instead of a long sustained note in the repetition of the development of the 1st movement of the Quartet in D major or the sprightly glissando before the end of the first variation in the Quartet in C major). The members of the **Kocian Quartet** and the **Praga Camerata** orchestra work very sensitively with Yoshimi Oshima and are really marvellous partners for him. The whole CD has an intoxicating "spring" atmosphere that we breath from the very first bars and that does not fade even with repeated listening.

Věroslav Němec

Anton Rubinstein

Sonatas for Cello and Piano No. 1 in D major, op. 18 and No. 2 in G major, op. 39

Jiří Barta - cello, Hamish Milne - piano. Production: Simon Perry, Michael Spring. Text: Eng., Fr., Ger. Recorded: Jan. 2008, Potton Hall, Suffolk, Great Britain. Released: 2009. TT: 70:55. DDD. 1 CD Hyperion CDA67660 (distribution Classic). Alternativa: Bülow, Ribera (EtCetera).

When I heard the cello sonatas of Anton Rubinstein, I wondered why cellists are not more interested in them. Recordings are rare as saffron and generally not made by the most prominent cellists. The reasons lie perhaps in the shifting taste of generations, a loose compositional affinity with the more distinctive Brahms sonatas, and perhaps the difficulty of the parts of both instruments and the challenge of music that it is hard to get under the skin and make attractive in every aspect. This is because while the music is pleasantly melodic, it is also very "wandering", and occasionally as it were overtalkative. Nonetheless, when the musical material is rightly understood it starts to shine, and you have exquisite jewels before you (this is particularly the case with opus 39). Rubinstein wrote both sonatas before he was thirty. A detailed analysis would certainly reveal the influences of both German and Russian music, but what is essential is the nature of the resulting form, which is distinctive and clearly legible. In his discography **Jiří Barta** has several more difficult and unconventional titles but with this album he compromises, combining what is appealing quite easily listening with a non-conformist content. He plays both sonatas with sovereign mastery of technique and his conception of the music is persuasive. In his performances I always value above all his pure musicianship and deep submergence in whatever music he is playing. I am glad that once again he has not disappointed me. Lovers of chamber music who enjoy having their horizons broadened will certainly appreciate this recording. For **Hamish Milne** this is his second project with Jiří Barta (Moscheles, Hummel – Cello Sonatas) for the same firm. Once again he shows himself to be an excellent pianist and chamber player. Their Rubinstein is a benchmark title.

Luboš Stehlík



about us	<input type="text"/>
documentation	publications and sale
event calendar	programs of festivals
<< january 2010 >>	concert venues
Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su	jazz clubs
4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
11 12 13 14 15 16 17	
18 19 20 21 22 23 24	
25 26 27 28 29 30 31	
database of	composers
contempuls festival	competitions and
music directory	Contact
music links	Czech Music Info. Centre Besední 3, 118 00 Praha 1 phone: +420 257 317 424 e-mail: his@vol.cz

Nearest concerts

18.1.2010 19:30 Komorní cyklus PKF / Salon Philharmonia, Prague

News

A new issue of Czech Music Quarterly

is just out. Among others it brings and in the Czech Republic, articles on Kar



CD samplers

Offer of promotion CDs with Czech co



Ivan Polednak, Musicologist and

We regret to announce that Monday, musicologist, publicist and teacher Ivan Polednak, who was a member of the Department of Musicology FF UP, Olomouc, and Charles University in Prague a.o., he also contributed significantly to the several volumes of the Encyclopedia of Jazz and Modern Popular Music. In 2004 he published a comprehensive biography on Czech contemporary composer Jan Klusak. Last farewell to be held on Wednesday 14 October 2009 (11.00) in the great ceremonial hall of the crematorium in Prague-Strašnice.

Bohuslav Martinů Revisited 2009

International anniversary project under the auspices of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic Mr. Karel Schwarzenberg. Honorary Board: Gabriela Beňáková, Zuzana Růžicková, Josef Suk. Further information here

visit our new website **www.musica.cz**

Czech Music Quarterly – Archive
Muzikontakt – Czech Music Directory
Anthology of Czech Music – texts, music samples, pictures
Documentation
Event calendar www.dokonzertu.cz
CD shop



23rd year

exposition of new music 2010

Brno International Music Festival

Promoted by the City of Brno under the auspices of the mayor Roman Onderka
in financial support by the Ministry of Culture Czech Republic

March 7. – 11. Brno, Czech Republic

HILARY JEFFERY (NL/UK)

ABSTRACT MONARCHY DUO (A/H)

NICOLAS COLLINS (USA)

MARCH 7, 2010, 18:00 / MUSIC CLUB FLEDA / ŠTEFÁNIKOVA 24 / BRNO

DAMA DAMA (CZ)

MARCH 8, 2010, 19:30 / REDUTA THEATRE / MOZART HALL / ZELNÝ TRH 4 / BRNO

DAVID TOOP (UK)

MARCH 9, 2010, 19:30 / MUSIC CLUB FLEDA / ŠTEFÁNIKOVA 24 / BRNO

VALENTIN SILVESTROV (UKR)

MARCH 10, 2010, 21:00 / VUT ASSEMBLY HALL IN BRNO / ANTONÍNSKÁ 1 / BRNO

FAMA Q_(CZ)

MARCH 11, 2010, 19:30 / VUT ASSEMBLY HALL IN BRNO / ANTONÍNSKÁ 1 / BRNO

ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE OF THE EXPOSITION OF NEW MUSIC

JANÁČKŮV AKADEMICKÝ ORCHESTR (CZ) IVES. VARÈSE. EÖTVÖS

MARCH 10, 2010, 18:00 / BESEDNÍ DŮM / KOMENSKÉHO NÁM. 8 / BRNO