



17
2

Marek Kopelent

Brno? For Opera? For Sure!

The Janáček Academy

Antonín Reichenauer

Michal Nejtek

Rules for Good Manners in the Modern World

Conductor: Pavel Šnajdr
Stage Director: Jiří Adámek

Premiere: September 15, 2017
at Reduta Theatre

Based on a play
by Jean-Luc Lagarce

Dear readers,

two articles in the current issue pertain to Brno, the Czech Republic's second-largest city, a city that today is the seat of renowned universities and numerous technology companies, a city that can pride itself in a remarkable cultural past and present. The text about the Brno Opera, written by Helena Havlíková, in particular shows that the Czech Republic does not begin and end with Prague, an impression that often arises as a result of mass tourism. Furthermore, the issue contains the second and final part of the article about Miloslav Kabeláč's symphonies, and, most significantly, an interview with the composer Marek Kopelent, who this year is celebrating his 85th birthday. Based in Prague, he continues to have a bold impact on Czech music, as a composer and influential teacher alike.

Wishing you a beautiful summer
Petr Bakla

Contents:

Cleaning the Score **An interview with Marek Kopelent**

by Matěj Kratochvíl
page 2

Brno? For Opera? For Sure!

by Helena Havlíková
page 9

70th anniversary of the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno

by Monika Holá
page 18

Czech music Every day – Events at home and abroad in the spring of 2017

by Barbora Vacková
page 22

First edition of Antonín Reichenauer's Concerto in G major

by Lukáš M. Vytlačil
page 24

Miloslav Kabeláč – Symphonist (Part 2)

by Jaromír Havlík
page 27

Reviews

page 34

cover: Marko Ivanović – Čarokraj (Enchantia)
photo © National Theatre Brno



MINISTRY OF CULTURE
CZECH REPUBLIC



Czech music information centre

Czech Music Information Centre
Besední 3, 118 00 Praha 1, Czech Republic
fax: +420 257 317 424, phone: +420 257 312 422
e-mail: info@czech-music.net
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: Monika Havlová
Translation: Hilda Hearne (pp. 18–26, 34–37),
Ian Mikyska (pp. 2–17, 27–33)
Graphic design: Ditta Jiříčková
DTP: HD EDIT. Print: Nová tiskárna Pelhřimov.

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 320
Europe: one issue € 7, subscription (4 issues) € 40
Overseas countries: one issue \$ 10, subscription
(4 issues) \$ 50, or respective equivalents.
Electronic subscription: \$ 18 (see www.czech-music.net)

CLEANING THE SCORE

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAREK KOPELENT

Since the early 1960s, composer **Marek Kopelent** (*1932) has greatly influenced the development of Czech music. At that time, together with several other composers, he started creating his own trajectory through the trends of modern music, and creating a place for his work within socialist state-controlled culture. After his music made its way to contemporary music festivals both at home and abroad came the so-called normalisation¹ and a stale atmosphere in the country, which, for Kopelent, signified an unwilling seclusion. After 1989, he returned to the musical world as an author, pedagogue and organiser, but also as a writer for whom music does not exist in isolation from society.

Let's start with the part of composing that remains hidden to the listener. Has your work process – that is, the journey from the original idea to the final score – changed over the years?

There were several transformations. If we start at the beginning of the 60s, then we can say that the changes weren't forceful, expansive, but instead gradually passed into somewhat changed relationships between the parameters I worked with. In the basic journey from a thought, a concept – the word 'idea' is too close to thematic music for me – to finishing the piece, not much has changed for me.

1) "Normalizace" – normalisation, the period following the Prague Spring in 1968 and ending in the Velvet Revolution in 1989, normalisation was a time in which the progressive reforms of the Prague Spring were reverted, and is generally seen as a period of cultural greyness and civic attenuation.



PHOTO: VOJTECH HAVLIK

Throughout, it's been true that the backbone of the piece is its form, which relies either on a temporal "budget" or on an intuitively felt temporal dimension – because intuition, as a totality of experience, is the foundation. Apart from that, the transformation of my personal style is almost exactly divided into decades: the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. They had much to do with my social position at that time.

Is this “temporal budget” a more important aspect than the sonic component, the timbral qualities of the sound? Can these two even be divided?

The temporal budget forms the basis of the structure and also ensures the piece will be of bearable proportions, as these can be considered in advance. It participates in thinking through the structure of the work, which is a kind of pergola in which the musical action takes place. The temporal budget also has its place between the original idea of the work and its musical (sonic, i.e. also timbral) primary notion. It seems natural to me to connect these three “godmothers”.

Is style an important question for you? That is, a combination of aesthetic preferences and techniques; something personal and identifiable?

Of course, it was and still is an important question. Style is, after all, a collection of rules (both aesthetic and technical) which the artists of a given time agree on through the combination of their personal endeavours. A language or dialect of the time is thus created, within which an experienced listener can recognise a breach of the rules. The personal style of the composer grows out of the musical language of the period. He then respects these rules to the extent that is natural to him. Unless a momentary step outside of the style is the intention (e.g. genre), in which it should be surprising and clearly articulated.

How do you view your earlier pieces? Do you ever feel you might treat some ideas again and differently?

Sometimes I do, certainly. But sometimes I'm satisfied with their value. It's a strange feeling, especially as one gets older, to look at one's work as though someone else had made it. My admiration also extends to my creative powers when conceptualising and realising larger works, such as the never performed oratorium on Vladimír Holan's poetry *Ona skutečně jest...* (*She Truly Is...*) or the vocal-orchestral *Legend "De passione St. Adalberti Martyris"* or even the almost-two-hour spatial oratorium *Lux mirandae sanctitatis*, all this with a four-day full-time position as piano accompanist at the dance department of the elementary music school in Radotín.

What have you been working on recently?

Recently I've been focusing on smaller forms of chamber music. Partly because there's less and less strength with the years, partly because the Czech music scene has expressed no interest in larger pieces. For the last few years, I've been returning to work on my memoirs, which are more a testimony on the times in which I spent most of my life and in which I also engaged myself publicly.

Do you see a difference in the level of contemporary music performers? I mean technique, but also in terms of outlook and motivation.

It is difficult to give a universal answer. My personal experience has to do with getting to know the repertoires of Prague-based ensembles such as Konvergence, MoEns, fama quartet, Orchestr Berg – perhaps there are other I don't even know. I also carry with me the thirteen years of Musica viva Pragensis in the 60s. Experienced players were confronted with the task of performing music written in a new style, demanding a plunge into the world of different notation, different structures, sonic phenomena and other particularities. They did so with absorption, partly just because they needed a different path to occasionally escape from their responsibilities in the National Theatre opera or the Czechoslovak Radio Symphony.

Since then, however, much has changed, including the technical demands placed on the instruments. On the other hand, it is now a well-trodden path, one just needs to want to go on it. Fortunately, there are musicians among us that put themselves



PHOTO: KAREL ŠUSTER

at the service of New Music (that is of us composers as well), who work towards the new modes of thought themselves. I call them the 'labourers of contemporary music'. Nobody invites them into the media world of the elites, of whom we read that they can do everything – except that their art stands only “on one leg”, without engagement in the interpretation of living, contemporary art.

Those committed to New Music are few and far between, but how could there be more, since musicians are unprepared for performing New Music when they leave the institutions of musical education? Look at the posters for school concerts at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (HAMU) and you'll notice that there are departments that seem to actively avoid modern music: keyboard instruments or voice are good examples.

The 60s, when you were artistic director of the Musica viva Pragensis ensemble, seem to the generations that did not experience this time as an extraordinary period, when people could begin to express themselves artistically with some freedom, establish connections with the world outside the socialist countries, experiment. To what extent is this notion true? And what did this relaxation look like in the art music world?

The 60s! Well, it's good when younger generations measure their inspirational sources and conditions against the use of these in some period in the past. But why should the 60s seem amazing to the artists of today – most of all perhaps because today seems lacking in inspiration, or is it due to the omnipresent availability of knowledge?

If it only became possibly to express oneself freely in the mid-60s, that is nothing to celebrate. The free world had taken on new thought in art for years and we were trying to catch up. The connections to the world were developed in a standard manner, but it was still under the watchful eye of the regime.

It must be said that a slow ideological breakthrough took place as a result of the consistent pressure from enlightened communist artists. As for music, the situation could be compared negatively to the rising unrest in the other arts. In part, the transition from the existing post-war modernism to the avant-garde was too demanding, but especially due to a musical mammoth – the League of Composers. That was something like the ministry of music. Yes, there was some hidden force among us too, but it was mostly individuals connected through the new style that had this gift.

What was the role of music critics and musicologists back then? Did their relationship to composers differ to what it is today?

I think the relationship was in fact different. Critics, journalists – they were here, and composers could see their work despite the regime. Important dailies had their own music critics – today's newspapers can only dream of that. There's no money, apparently. Only grudgingly do I accept that the situation was simply better before November 1989.

Do we even have any competent critics today? If there are any reviews, where are they? If they are on the internet, how long do they stay there? Music criticism and journalism should reflect the current developments on the scene – what will academics in, say, fifty years base their research on? What is the musicology department at the philosophy faculty of Charles' University doing to improve the situation? Is it better in Brno? Who else should prepare the new generations of music critics and journalists? The state of criticism does not seem so important, because it is eclipsed by the worry for the survival not only of new works, but of art music in general.

Certain composers, of the generation that started at the end of the 80s, described in interviews how they were interested in any new information from the Western musical world, regardless of style, so they “omnivourously” consumed recordings and texts very distant in style. Was there a similar thirst for information during your student years?

Essentially, I dislike reminiscing about my years at HAMU. I experienced an ideologically very strict period there – Stravinsky, Heidegger, Janáček, Martinů and others, that was forbidden music. The individual students would tend to find information through people from older generations. But in Europe, the new avant-garde was budding and developing, and we mostly knew nothing about it until the end of the 50s. Of course, we did not have the barely controllable medium of the internet, which would have been a massive crack in the notional regime wall. After all, a thirst for information should be natural to any art student. But it depends on the conditions in any given period.

1996 saw the premiere of Requiem of Reconciliation, written for the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. It was a collective work by 14 composers, including – in addition to yourself – Luciano Berio, Krzysztof Penderecki and Wolfgang Rihm, among others. Where did this idea come from? How did the composing take place? Did you communicate amongst each other, or did each of you work in isolation?

The idea of creating a collective vocal-orchestral work with 14 mostly European authors is something I cannot forget. The same goes for the event itself. I don't know who was responsible for the genesis of the project. It is generally connected to Helmut Rilling and his diligence in putting together and, in fact, organising a feat like this deserve not to be forgotten. The event got minimal publicity here in the Czech Republic.

Each composer had one section of an expansive prayer for the dead assigned to them. Then, they chose what part of the orchestra, choir and soloists on offer they would use. Surprisingly, the resultant work was in the boundaries of the current style, expansive and interesting. And the audience! In August, the middle of summer, people are usually on holiday, the universities out of term, and despite that, the Liederhalle was full with an audience of 2000, both times.

The selection of composers and performers (the orchestra was Israeli and both East and West Germany were represented among the composers) and the performance were of a very high standard. Bravo, Mister Rilling!

*How do you see this work in comparison to your previous collective composition, *Laudatio pacis*, which you created with Sofia Gubaidulina and Paul-Heinz Dittrich?*

Comparing *Laudation pacis* with the *Requiem of Reconciliation* is perhaps a little misleading. They are different in their concept, manner of creation and realisation. They have one thing in common: they are engaged on the one hand in a symbolic effort to overcome the military division of humanity, on the other as an appeal to people for life in peace and freedom.

I invited two colleagues from countries in which life was not free to create a collective work on a text by the great 17th century humanist Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius). I proposed a libretto version of the text and asked them to choose three parts to set to music. One crucial movement was repeated three times throughout the piece.

We met in Prague to unify the notation. When each of us had graphically expressed their parts, I connected it into one whole and sent it to them, so they could start writing their parts. The result was a work that is divided into sections, but these take place almost without interruption, and they are connected by a unified style.

Only a look into the autograph score will reveal which of us wrote what. I see it as a perhaps a unique phenomenon in the history of music.

Finally it was me and my silencing which stopped Dittrich getting the work performed in East Germany. Only eighteen years later, in free times, did the work get a performance at the Berliner Festwochen festival.

The role of art music was always seen differently in different periods – as a representation of order, an expression of the unique emotions of the author, a search for new sounds and forms. What do you think the main goal of the composer should be today?

I think the characteristics you named also apply to contemporary music. That's why a contemporary composer's goal today can also be a certain synthesis in the limit of so-called modernity. What a turbulent development modern music has had in the last hundred years, and how educated we are by history in general!

Allow me a little personal metaphor: to clean the score... What I consider most important, however, is the destiny and task of each artist to be truthful and authentic in their work. To observe and attempt to identify with the current streams of work around the world, but all the while remaining true to oneself.

Funding of the arts, art music included, is the subject of many disputes. According to some, the state should not subsidise the arts and this function should revert to private benefactors. That money, however, is often from shady sources. Should composers think about where the money for their works is coming from?

Similar opinions appeared after November 1989 and I see them as a reaction to the totalitarian regime, in which art's existence or otherwise was fully in the hands of the state. The expectation that benefactors would come in to help the state in supporting the arts turned out to be naive. They only give funds to charitable causes and sports.

As for the question of state subsidy of the arts, we need to ask ourselves this: is art created for itself? If not, then it is necessary for the other side, that is the consumers (who form the state) to also pay for the art. If they do not want to, then let Czech society proclaim they don't need art, or art music in our case, and the repeated tension between the state and the artist will end. Is it normal for a composer's work to be considered an amateur activity? Where can we find at least a minimal and regular source for the support of works created today?

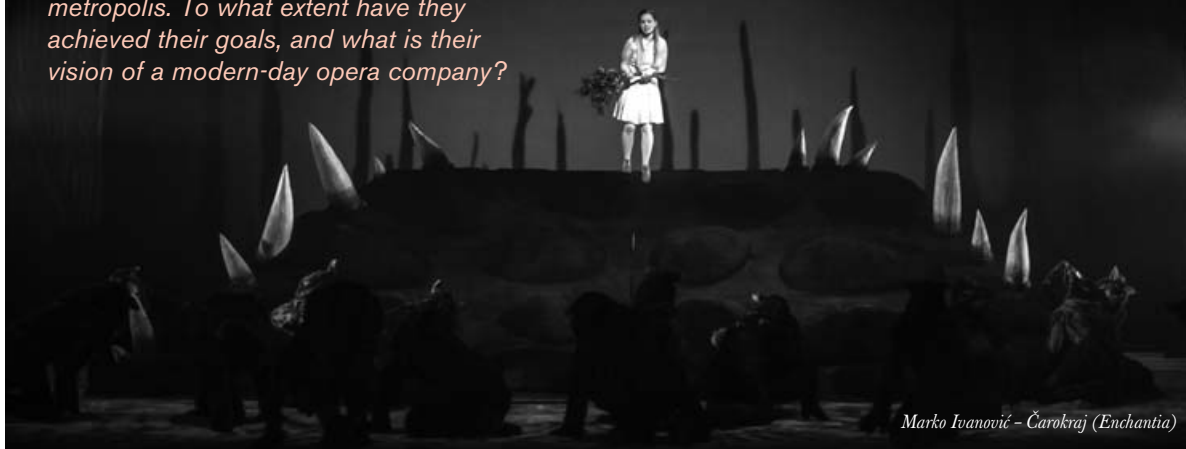
The state subsidies, even the communal ones, go through associations and organisations that put on concerts, straight to the performers – there's nothing left for the composers. Royalties from performances are a fraction of what the pay of the artist should be. If we estimate, soberly – and in fact never precisely – that a composer spends two months on a chamber work, then with an average wage of a thousand euros a month, they should get a commissioning fee of two thousand euros. Do they?

*Marek Kopelent (*1932)*

studied composition in Prague with Jaroslav Řídký. He became an important figure in the development of Czech music at the beginning of the 1960s. At that time, together with several other composers, he started creating his own trajectory through the trends of modern music, and creating a place for his work within socialist state-controlled culture. During the 60s, he brought attention to himself internationally. His pieces were played at festivals such as Warsaw Autumn, Donaueschingen, Witten and others. Between 1965-73, he was artistic director – together with Zbyněk Vostrák – of the Musica viva Pragensis ensemble, for which he wrote a number of chamber pieces. After his music made its way onto stages at festivals at home and abroad came the 1970s and 80s, which led to an involuntary seclusion for Kopelent. After 1989, he returned to musical life as an author, pedagogue and organiser, for a short time he also served as musical expert to the office of the President Václav Havel.

BRNO? FOR OPERA? FOR SURE!

The densely populated Czech operatic landscape, with its ten full time opera companies, has been dominated in the last three seasons by Brno. A team of kindred spirits in art and age – they are all in their forties – took over with some verve three years ago, under the leadership of Martin Glaser. Their objective was clear: making the National Theatre Brno (NTB), with its three buildings, the Janáček Theatre, the Mahen Theatre and the Reduta, a key representative institution of the Moravian metropolis. To what extent have they achieved their goals, and what is their vision of a modern-day opera company?



Marko Ivanović – Čarokraj (Enchantia)

Director Martin Glaser (1974) took over as director at NTB in November 2013. He surrounded himself with a strong team, with director Jiří Heřman (1975, see CMQ 2013/2) acting as director of the Janáček Opera Company, and conductor and composer Marko Ivanović (1976, see CMQ 2012/3) as chief conductor. The ballet is led by choreographer and dancer Mário Radačovský (1971), the director of the drama company in the Mahen Theatre is playwright and director Martin Františák (1974).

This team, with experiences from other Czech theatres – or, in the case of Ivanović, orchestras – took the wheel after more than a year of provisional measures. These brought an unbalanced level of quality, a weakened reputation, and financial problems, wherein the City of Brno struggled to find suitable candidates in repeated selection procedures.

The new management had a flying start and the opera improved surprisingly fast. In the 2014/15 season, the new management brought two productions from its time in Prague: *Čarokraj* (*Echantia*), a family-friendly, fairy tale “operatic expedition” by Marko Ivanović, based on Durrell’s *The Talking Parcell*, which it sets in a variety of musical styles, and Martinů’s *The Miracles of Mary* directed by Jiří Heřman.

Despite the well-documented Brnoese distaste for anything Prague-related, both productions were a success in Brno. Martinů’s four-part cycle of parables, miracles and folk ballads, with its folk-tale wisdom and biblical themes, came off more authentically in the Janáček Theatre than in Prague. Janáček himself was represented by *The Makropulos Affair*, directed by David Radok. In his rendition, this “conversational” opera about a 337-year-old woman of many identities was worked out to the smallest cinematic detail.

The season’s dramaturgy was “balanced” in terms of audience popularity by Puccini’s *Tosca*. Jiří Heřman connected the story of *Tosca*, the singer – sung by the excellent Maria Hundling – with her most famous exponent, Maria Callas. Tereza Merkelová played Callas in a mute-role alter ego, strengthening the fates of both artists – women obsessed with love in a time of political turmoil which ultimately destroys them.

The next season, which brought five opera premieres, lacked this energy. Though the thought-out dramaturgy had both a Czech classic in Smetana’s *The Kiss*, care for the Janáček canon in *Jenůfa* and a popular hit in Bizet’s *Carmen*, the productions were unconvincing.

The 2015/16 season was then dominated by projects led by the director and chief conductor. Marko Ivanović conducted the Czech premiere of *Powder Her Face* by Thomas Adès, with its “tabloid” story of the escapades of Duchess of Argyll, Margaret Campbell. With Martinů’s oratorium *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, paired with Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas*, Heřman began fulfilling his vision of opening genres outside of opera to theatrical adaptations, as well as giving the excellent choir of the Janáček Opera its time to shine. In this combination of Sumerian and classical myth, whose musics were composed 270 years apart, Heřman used his typical focus on ritual to express a common topic – loneliness – in a lyrical scenic “poem”.

The third season then brought the Brno opera to the fore of the Czech operatic world. Heřman gave new directorial accents and a playful flow

to Dvořák’s fairy-tale opera *The Devil and Kate*. He framed the story as a school trip, so an entire “class”, in the form of the Brno children’s choir, was involved in the story of the talkative Kate who the Devil takes to hell but cannot then get rid of her. A combination of Béla Bartók’s *Bluebeard’s Castle* and Arnold Schönberg’s *Erwartung* was an excellent dramaturgical counterpoint to Janáček’s operas at the Janáček’s Brno festival. Director David Radok based this pairing on the common theme of uncovered layers of the unconscious, together with the eternal motif of the antagonism of man and woman and the morbid mystery of the environment, taken to extremes in both operas. Marko Ivanović handled the difficult music with certainty in the ensemble, adding a particular suggestiveness to Bartók’s rich, expressive music.

The festival dramaturgy was also broadened by the Czech premiere of *The Cave*, a video-opera by Steve Reich and Beryl Korot. The Brno Contemporary Orchestra, led by its founder, Pavel Šnajdr, captured Reich’s version of Janáček’s tunelets of speech¹ with full concentration.

The highlight of the season, however, was Janáček’s *Katya Kabanova*, in which the Brno cast played excellently the part given to it in director Robert Carson’s well-tested staging, based on a large body of water on the stage. Pavla Vykopalová received a Thalia Award for her rendition of Katya, but excellent performances were also given by Eva Urbanová (Kabanicha), Magnus Vigilius (Boris) and Gianluca Zampieri (Tichon).

Another high point was the Czech premiere of *L’Amour de loin* by Kaija Saariaho, in which the entire team, that is conductor Marko Ivanović, director Jiří Heřman and the trio of soloists Markéta Cukrová (The Pilgrim), Pavla Vykopalová (Clémence) and Roman Hoza (Jaufré) gave the vast stage of the Janáček Opera the intimacy and fantasy of a medieval troubadour’s dream, while at the same time expressing the grand ideal of absolute love. The first three seasons of the opera at NTB fulfil the vision of director Martin Glaser, who sees his role as the inspirational curator of a creative environment, with a vision of a confident theatre “which isn’t a museum, but which also shies away from mindlessly copying the latest trends. Quite the opposite, it has ambitions to stand at the birth of the new – and yet it remains proud of the roots it grows out of.”

1) “Nápěvky mluvy” in Czech, these were Janáček’s musical transcriptions of spoken word, which he used as the basis for his sung operatic material.

Not Just Three Gold Keys

According to Glaser, NTB has enormous potential particularly thanks to its three golden keys to the cultural world: “1. We’re the theatre that premiered Janáček’s operas. On that, we can, or rather must, build a living theatrical present. 2. We have three charismatic buildings, of which the Janáček Theatre’s technical possibilities, size and setup makes it the best equipped theatre for opera and ballet in the Czech Republic. 3. We produce two large festivals – the Janáček Brno opera biennale and the yearly Theatre World Brno, which focuses on drama and all manner of physical theatre.”

Glaser and the opera management agree on the focus on Janáček. According to the managing director of the opera, Jiří Herman, it is a foundation which every member of the ensemble cares for deeply: “Janáček’s fascinating oeuvre takes much of its inspiration from this region. Personally, I feel a certain liveliness and heartiness from the ensemble, which resonates fully with Janáček’s works. Seeing



Leoš Janáček – Katya Kabanova



and hearing a Janáček opera from this ensemble is a unique opportunity. We recently had an excellent response at the prestigious Hong Kong Arts Festival, where we did *The Makropulos Affair* and concert programmes of Janáček and Dvořák. I value highly our collaboration with artists that bring a new perspective on Janáček's oeuvre and enrich the ensemble, namely Robert Carsen and David Radok."

According to Marko Ivanović, Janáček grips us most of all with his immediate emotion and modern dramatic feeling. But he also sees a certain distance



Bohuslav Martinů – *The Miracles of Mary*

and some reservations from the Czech operatic audience: "Even an opera as melodic as *Jenůfa* is sometimes played to half-empty houses. I refuse to accept this situation – I and the ensemble are fully committed to the effort of championing Janáček and somewhat "re-educating" our audience. Realistically, however, it's a long-term goal."

In order to strengthen its Janáček branch, the current management has also taken over the Janáček Brno festival from Daniel Dvořák, who led NTB from 2007 to 2012. Dvořák established this autumn biennale with the ambitious goal of turning Brno, a city linked to the life of the Moravian maestro, into a reference point of Janáček interpretation, a flagship of the theatre, Brno, the South Moravian region and the entire Czech Republic.

"The weight of the festival always lies on opera productions – a new one from us and progressive interpretations from home and abroad. For 2018, the hundredth anniversary of the Czechoslovak state, which is an important moment of our national history, we are preparing a suitably festive and representative programme – we would like to stage all of Janáček's operas," says Martin Glaser.

Jiří Heřman considers the biennale a festivity of music and theatre: "For the Czech audience, it is a unique diversification of the opera season, for international guests, it is an added value to see and hear Janáček's works in the city in which he lived and worked, and in varied and excellent interpretations by the international artists of today. The festival helps our ensemble develop, but it also brings the city of Brno to international attention, inviting repeated visits to an event that can, in the near future, be equal to the festivals of Salzburg or Bayreuth."

With its budget of over 1 million euros, the festival is among the largest cultural undertakings in the Czech Republic. Though it will never be profitable for NTB and will always need public subsidy, its secondary contribution in terms of cultural tourism is substantial.

The management, however, also aims its focus at other Czech composers. According to Heřman, "we are still at the beginning of discovering not only the Smetana-Dvořák classics, but also pre-Smetana operas, as well as composers such as Karel Kovařovic, Zdeněk Fibich, Josef Bohuslav Foerster, Otakar Ostrčil, Vítězslav Novák, Otakar Jeremiáš... Just like Baroque opera awaited its rediscovery through very progressive productions, Czech operas have this potential too." Ivanović considers Kovařovic

or Jeremiáš unfairly neglected composers: “Their problem is that until recently, their music was too ‘new’ for the conservatives and too ‘old’ for lovers of the contemporary operatic aesthetic. I think the time is ripe for a ‘comeback’, and Jeremiáš’s *The Brothers Karamazov* is in our long-term plans. With Smetana, there is often a problem with the antiquated, national-revivalist libretti, but musically, his works are still of high quality and very distinctive.

The duo at the head of the opera also emphasises productions of contemporary operas. “In the next three seasons, we will see three world premieres of Czech operatic composers,” promises Heřman. According to Ivanović, many people wrongly assume that opera is a historically closed genre, which has nothing to offer apart from musicals:

“Good contemporary opera can speak to today’s problems in a contemporary language, thus giving a lot of space both to the authors of the staging and the audience, who wants a contemporary artistic statement. Last but not least, these are usually works which, in their difficulty and unusual demands, present a challenge and an ‘education’ for the soloists, orchestra, and the ensemble as a whole.” According to Heřman, however, the dramaturgical conception includes all periods from Baroque to contemporary opera: “We choose our titles so as to introduce our audience to lesser known operatic works of high quality, whilst also keeping classic operas in outstanding interpretations in the repertoire. Our ensemble has a relatively young but very able group of sixteen soloists with extraordinary voices, and to a large extent, we base our dramaturgy on the exceptional qualities of our soloists. Strauss’s *Der Rosenkavalier* is a good example, as it will be cast entirely from our ensemble.”

Furthermore, Heřman claims that in addition to a positive and creative atmosphere, another great advantage of the Brnoese ensemble is the choir, one of the best in the country: “This is the result of the meticulous long-term work of chief choirmaster Josef Pančík.” Ivanović concurs:

“The strongest aspect is certainly a will to work, which every guest performer notices immediately. The orchestra is also of a high standard, having recently undergone a relatively quick generational transformation. The financial side remains our weak point, as it doesn’t always allow us to adequately compensate the artists and widen our ensemble with truly first-rate personnel. Even here, however, recent

years have seen a certain improvement thanks to the favour of the municipality.”

For Heřman, it is important to maintain a balance between a stable ensemble and collaborations with inspirational guests artists. Ivanović agrees, saying that “a healthy ensemble is the soul of the theatre and allows us, conductors and directors, the opportunity to form and ‘educate’ it in the long term. A first-class guest, on the other hand, always brings a certain freshness to well established artistic processes. A combination of both systems is the most beneficial.”

The choice of productions, according to Heřman, also arises out of the character and layout of the individual buildings: “In the Reduta, we put on contemporary chamber operas and productions for children. We won’t just use the Mahen Theatre for classical numbers, I like the contrast of the classical operatic space with progressive works and interpretations, like Reich’s *The Cave*. The modern Janáček Theatre, which for me is the ‘Moravian Bayreuth,’ demands not only large operatic works, but also Baroque operas and oratorios.”

Though the Janáček Theatre will be closed for renovation in the 2017/18 season, Glaser sees this break to the “rhythm” of the theatre as a positive impulse: “We are doing some open air performances – at the Špilberk Castle, the Bishop’s Courtyard or the circus tent in Lužánky Park. Our activities also go past the borders of Brno and the Czech Republic. After a successful guest appearance in Hong Kong, we are getting ready for a festival in Shanghai in the autumn, we’ve also just confirmed a return to Tampere in Finland, trips to Maribor and Ljubljana, and we’re preparing a large international dance festival...”

Heřman has also said that Brno offers many a beautiful scenery for opera performances as well as concerts: “We have recently begun performing successful productions of the world repertoire in the beautiful courtyard of the Špilberk Castle, which is acoustically ideal for opera. This year, it was Ponchielli’s *Gioconda*, Puccini’s *Tosca*, Bizet’s *Carmen* and Verdi’s *La Traviata*. Traditionally, we open the season with a grand gala concert on the piazzeta of the Janáček Theatre. During the restoration of the theatre, we are moving this concert, which introduces the entire upcoming season, to Brno’s Cabbage Market, a location with a unique atmosphere. These activities present an

opportunity to meet new audiences, to enthuse them with the unrepeatable magic of operatic theatre.”

The aesthetic of the opera ensemble, according to Heřman, should not aim in only one direction: “Opera is a living art form, which should enrapture here and now. The most important thing for me is that the opera offers an extraordinary experience. The operatic season should provide the audience with varied interpretive paths to this experience, it should never limit itself to just one approach. We are all different, different values resonate with each of us.” For Heřman as a director, the greatest source of inspiration is music: “It gives rise to the spatial concept, which is often abstract and is quite close to an installation. I see opera as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* which has a spiritual dimension and resonates strongly with our lives. I enjoy working with space and light, movement and music – work which reveals our inner world.”

Since the 2016/17 season, the company has abandoned the repertoire system, well established in the Czech Republic, and started playing in blocks. Ivanović claims our theatres are needlessly scared of this system: “Playing in blocks is indisputably an advantage for the artists and a little uncomfortable for the audience. In effect, we built this entire season on the block principle, and we were pleasantly surprised that this had almost no negative effect on our attendance. I think our audience can sense that this system raises the quality of the given production. And the fact that you can only see it for a limited time period gives it a certain feeling of exclusivity.”

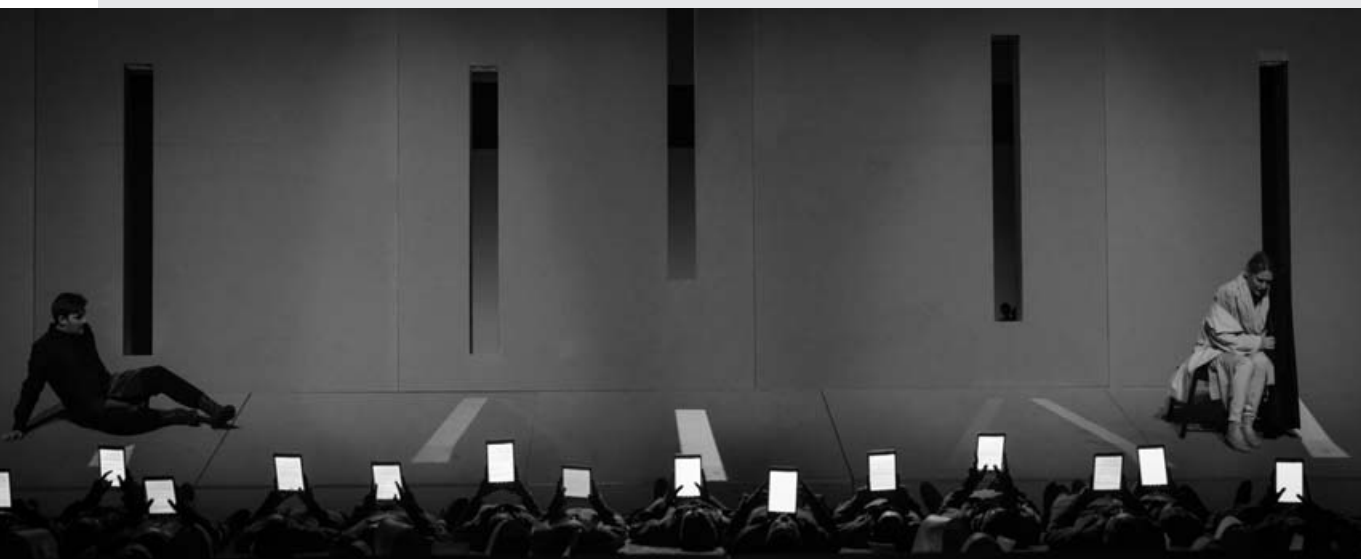
Heřman sees the advantages too: “It allows us to maintain and improve the artistic quality of the individual productions. As to ticket sales, there were certain doubts at the start, but they soon vanished. The audience in Brno is flexible. Everything depends on the promotion and the communication with the audience, and of course the quality of the production. If the production is excellent, the audience does not look at whether we employ a repertoire or block system.”

Brno is among the cities with a strong operatic tradition, says Heřman: “Before I started here, I was confronted with the opinion that it’s very conservative. After almost three seasons I can say that this is an audience that is, to a large extent, open-minded. Brno is a university city, which gives us the unique opportunity to bring younger generations to the opera house.”

NTB in Numbers

The legal status of NTB is a public-benefit corporation with annual allocation of funds through a subsidy from its establisher, without long-term security, which, according to Glaser, is an outdated and inflexible model: “It is a disgrace for several generations of politicians that in over twenty five years, they have been unable to create a legal framework for the transformation of live culture funding. It is not only low, but more importantly unstable and unpredictable, which complicates planning. Another great risk is the unskilled and uncoordinated intervention of politicians into the management of cultural organisations.”

In the blunt language of numbers: the three-ensemble NTB has 600, of which the opera has 180 artistic employees. It has 17 premieres per season (of which 5 are operas) and 70 productions in each repertoire. In 2016, it administered a budget of 17.5 million euros. It is subsidised mostly by the City of Brno, as establisher, while the state (represented by the Ministry of Culture) and the South Moravian Region participate in the budget only fractionally. Self-sufficiency is around 21%. The costs of production and the realisation of reprise performances (without the costs of running the theatres, marketing, and touring) went up from 3 million euro in 2014 to 3.9 million euro last year, while income from ticket sales excluding tours rose from 0.6 million to 0.7 million. The average wage of artistic employees is just under a thousand euros. “Our budget, unfortunately, does not correspond to the size and importance of our theatre. We produce operas for a few million [Czech crowns], which is about a third of what the National Theatre in Prague can afford. Despite these setbacks, the talent of our artists allows us to put on new productions without having them look like a ‘poor relative’,” says Glaser. The productions created for the Janáček Brno biennale are an exception: “Thanks to the 130% increase in the subsidy from the City of Brno, we can create productions whose budget is of a European standard.” The financial politics of NTB tickets is dynamic and changes based on the success of the opera and the audience’s interest – the sooner you buy a ticket, the cheaper it is. The theatre offers cheaper performances for schools, families with children, and of course, subscribers – NTB is the only theatre in the Czech Republic to offer the so-called FlexiAbo (Flexible Subscription), which allows the subscriber to compose their own subscription, choosing from the theatre’s repertoire. Attendance



Kaaja Saariaho – L'amour de loin

is rising and it seems that the audience has grown to like Heřman's conception of the opera ensemble. According to Glaser, one can only gain a new audience and keep the old one through quality: "Of course stupidity, superficiality and half-baked ideas are easier to hide in conservative or traditional productions. Strong productions that have something to say have so far reliably attracted an audience."

New Forms of Marketing

The entire management considers marketing a key activity, which has been moved forward substantially not only as a tool of tickets sales, but as a way of opening the theatre's doors. As Glaser summarises, "we are looking for all available paths to get a message to our potential audience: that we have a great show for them. And to convince them to choose NTB out of the truly wide range of cultural events happening in Brno. We try to present ourselves as a large, strong theatre, so all our ensembles have a unified design for their main outlets. This is no restriction, however, if you're employing the cutting edge of the field – photographer Ivan Pinkava and graphic designer Robert V. Novák. The individual profiles then come out mostly on social media. Every ensemble then also organises a number of off-programme activities with the goal of improving communication with the audience."

Chief conductor Marko Ivanović and dramaturg Patricie Částková created an excellent interactive "performance" *A Step Behind the Curtain*, a guided hour-long "tour" of an opera production. The audience find themselves with the singers and orchestra, right on the stage. Their guides are the director, conductor and dramaturg of the production.

The conductor and the orchestra of the Janáček Opera then introduces the work with carefully selected extracts which also involve the audience – they can play an instrument or take a place in the choir to fortify the sound of the sea in Kaaja Saariaho's *L'amour de loin*.

Ivanović, who takes on the role of host with verve and intensity, sees it as another way of communicating with the audience. Heřman says that "since the visitor can experience opera at first hand, we can open this world up to new audiences, both children and adults." Audiences have also taken a liking to pre-performance introductions.

Jiří Heřman is delighted that the Janáček Opera ensemble became part of the Opera Platform project, a website through which the Opera Europa association, in collaboration with individual opera houses, offers free web streaming of selected productions in European theatres: "Thanks to this website, audiences from all over the world will be able to see selected Janáček productions by NTB. The first broadcast should take place as part of the Janáček Brno festival in 2018."



Martin Glaser (1974) studied drama directing and dramaturgy at the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. He founded the generational Divadlo na prahu (Theatre on the Doorstep), worked as director (from 1998) and artistic director of the drama ensemble (from 2006) in the South Bohemian Theatre in České Budějovice, which he profiled as a modern dramatic ensemble with an emphasis on contemporary drama. He was guest director in many Czech theatres, his productions received a number of theatre awards. In 2013, he was appointed managing director of the National Theatre Brno.



Jiří Heřman (1975) studied voice at the Pilsen Conservatory and opera directing at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. He first came to the public's attention with chamber projects in unusual spaces (Britten's *Curlow River*, a staged adaptation of Schubert's *Winterreise*) and operatic productions in Pilsen. Between 2007 and 2014, he was Director of the Opera of the National Theatre in Prague, where he directed, among others, Dvořák's *Rusalka*, Wagner's *Parsifal* or Fibich's *The Fall of Arkun*, as well as directing Martinů's *Greek Passion* in Essen to name a few. Since January 2015, he is Director of the Janáček Opera Company at the National Theatre Brno.



Marko Ivanović (1976) studied conducting and composition at AMU in Prague. He works with leading Czech orchestras such as the Prague Symphony Orchestra, Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, Prague Philharmonia, Brno Philharmonic, and others. Since 2006 he has conducted at the Opera of the National Theatre in Prague. In 2009–14, he was chief conductor of the Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice. He conducted Janáček's *Jenůfa* in Malmö (2011) and *The Makropulos Affair* in Göteborg (2015). He performs at important festivals including Prague Spring, and has conducted in Germany, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Japan or the US. He is a champion of the music of the 20th and 21st centuries. He has composed, among others, the opera *Čarokraj (Enchantia)*, instrumental compositions and music for film and theatre. He is also active as an author of educational programmes, especially for children and young people. Since January 2015, he is chief conductor of the Janáček Opera Company of the National Theatre Brno.

The National Theatre Brno is a public-benefit corporation established by the Statutory City of Brno. It is composed of the opera, ballet and drama ensembles, all of which perform in three buildings – the Mahen Theatre, the Janáček Theatre and the Reduta. Founded in 1881 by the Czech Cooperative Theatre in Brno (the operatic component began in 1884), it was later called the Municipal Theatre Brno and the State Theatre in Brno. It was the site of the premieres of most of Janáček's operas.

Brno is the second largest city in the Czech Republic, with 600,000 inhabitants. Located in the south east of the country, it is the centre of Moravia, 135 km from Vienna and 207 km from Prague. The city



The Janáček Theatre



The Mahen Theatre



The Reduta

panorama is dominated by the Špilberk Castle and its fortifications and the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul on Petrov Hill. It boasts such sights as the functionalist Villa Tugendhat, a UNESCO heritage site. The historical core of the city was declared a cultural reservation. In addition to the National Theatre Brno, there are a number of dramatic or musical theatres as well as festivals (Janáček Brno biennale, Brno International Music Festival, Moravian Autumn, Špilberk International Music Festival, Exposition of Music and others).

The Janáček Theatre was built after years of repeated architectural competitions by tender from 1910 to 1965, when the proposal by architect Jan Víšek and his team was accepted: a terraced amphitheatre with lateral boxes and a spacious central balcony, all in a monumental reinforced concrete building with a capacity of 1,050. It is also the home of the Brno Philharmonic. Refurbishments have taken place gradually since 2007, and in the 2017/18 the theatre will be closed for renovation.

The Mahen Theatre was finished in 1882 based on designs by the renowned Viennese architecture firm of Ferdinand Fellner Jr. and Hermann Helmer, who built 48 theatres in Europe. Its exterior is in the so-called strict historicist style inspired by late Renaissance architecture, while the interior is neo-Baroque. It was the first theatre in Europe with fully electrical lighting. It went through a number of names: Deutsches Stadttheater, the Na hradbách Theatre or the Janáček Theatre. Its current name is after the Czech poet, journalist, dramaturg, director and theatre critic Jiří Mahen, who worked in Brno for most of his life. The horseshoe-shaped auditorium seats 547 people.

The Reduta is the oldest theatre building in Central Europe. It is located on a square known as the Cabbage Market. In 1773, it replaced the Small Tavern, which had hosted theatrical productions since the 17th century. In 1767, the Reduta saw performances by eleven-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his sister Anna Maria. After a fire in 1870, the theatre was moved to the dance hall in the western part of the building. In 1993, the Reduta was closed for safety reasons, and the current architectonic conception, dating from 2002–5, connects modern elements with the preserved original architecture. The chamber theatre in the east wing seats 325, while the Mozart hall is of a variable disposition located in the north wing.

The Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno

70th anniversary

A year following the foundation of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, in 1947 a university with an identical focus – the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts – was opened in Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic (at the time part of Czechoslovakia). The school is named after the most distinguished composer who has ever lived and worked in Brno, Leoš Janáček (1854–1928), who yearned to establish in the city a highly professional educational arts institution. Although Janáček did not live to see the school's inauguration, his name has been linked with it since the very outset. This year, the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts (JAMU) is celebrating its 70th anniversary.

It goes without saying that over the decades the school has evolved, and its current status differs starkly from the initial one. Upon its opening, JAMU only had 23 students and its curriculum included the subjects of composition and conducting, opera dramaturgy, stage direction and acting, musicology, instrumental performance and dramatic art. On 1 October 1947, the Faculty of Music commenced its operation, and a year later the Faculty of Theatre was opened. At the beginning, the new university resided in three buildings, with the main one being the exquisite former Organ School in Kounicova street, which was set up and helmed by Leoš Janáček. Later on, in October 1949, JAMU was allocated half of the building of the erstwhile German grammar school on today's Komenský square, which has ever since been most frequently deemed the main seat of JAMU. One of Brno's greatest architectural gems, it was constructed for the needs of the German grammar school between 1860 and 1862 according to the design by the prominent Viennese architects Eduard van der Nüll and August Sicard von Sicardsburg, who are best known as the creators of the building housing the Staatsoper Wien. Appointed the first director of JAMU was Jan Kunc, the former director of the Brno Conservatory (in addition to being a teacher, he was also a musician and composer – among other things, he wrote the official arrangement of the Czech national anthem in 1935). A year later, during the gala opening of JAMU, at the time encompassing two independent Faculties, the post of the school's chancellor was assumed by the pianist



PHOTO © JAMU 4x



The Faculty of Theatre (upper left)

Students of the JAMU rehearsing Josef Berg's The European Tourism (lower left)

The Na Orli Theatre (upper right)

The Faculty of Music (lower right)

and musicologist Ludvík Kundera (the father of the globally renowned author Milan Kundera). Until the early 1990s, the axis of the tuition at JAMU was formed by “classical” disciplines, including solo instruments (string, keyboard, wind) playing, singing, composition, conducting, stage direction (of drama and opera) and acting. The political transformation in 1989 resulted in making it possible to introduce new specialised studies. Besides acting, the Faculty of Theatre began offering classes in puppet theatre, musical, drama stage direction, dramaturgy, set design and dance education. In 1991, the Faculty of Music launched harpsichord tuition, for which it managed to engage the superlative German artist Barbara Maria Willi, who has worked there up to the present day. Two years later, the curriculum was extended with the subject of sacred music, in 2004 guitar, in 2008 multimedia composition and piano education, in 2011 tuba was added. All these disciplines have altogether been perceived as “traditional” and taught in line with this conception. A new dimension was brought to JAMU by less traditional fields of study. The first of them was music management (currently

music production), whose department opened in 1993 and whose aim it is to nurture managers, trained in both general and specific music market skills. An even more autonomous domain is jazz performance, whose studies were opened in 2010, with JAMU being the first school in the Czech Republic to do so. And most recently, in 2014, the Academy launched historical performance tuition, within which the students learn how to play period instruments and try to master the historical vocal styles. The attractiveness of the historical performance discipline is expected to further rise in the future, since JAMU, in collaboration with the Faculty of Music of the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, is preparing a joint international educational (double degree) programme, within which students should attend some of the lessons in Brno and some in the Netherlands, before going on to obtain two diplomas.

Besides providing intriguing study opportunities, the newly opened departments highlighted the necessity of possessing appropriate premises. In 1992, JAMU acquired a building in the centre of Brno, where, following its renovation, the Faculty

of Theatre moved. In 1995, the seat of the Faculty of Music underwent a major refurbishment too, within which it was added the space of the garret third floor that has ever since served to house students' rehearsal rooms. Most recently, in 2013, the building's basement was converted into classrooms and rehearsal spaces, as well as a smaller hall, allocated for the percussion department (named the "Vault").

Since the two Faculties also pursue stage activities, over the years this gave rise to the need for JAMU to possess its own theatre background. In 1952, the Faculty of Theatre vigorously embarked upon structural modifications of the newly acquired space, which would later on be called Studio Marta. A helping hand was lent by then JAMU students and future famous actors, including Vladimír Menšík, Lubomír Kostecký, and others. Studio Marta has hosted drama performances up to the present day. When it comes to opera, it asserted itself at JAMU more slowly and later. The year 1954 saw the establishment of the Opera Studio, whose helm was assumed by the stage director Ota Zítek, an acclaimed artist, who had been instrumental in the formation of the cultural life in Brno since the middle of the 1920s. Zítek staged the majority of Leoš Janáček's new operas (and also directed productions of the maestro's older works), always consulting the composer about the working process, thus laying the foundations for Brno's authorised direction of all Janáček operas for decades to come. At the time, the JAMU Opera Studio worked on a semi-professional basis: performances took place at the non-theatre hall of what is today the Beseda House, the individual parts and direction were undertaken by the Academy students, yet the staging itself and conducting was in the hands of professionals – JAMU teachers and the established Brno theatre figures Vilibald Rubíněk and Břetislav Bakala. In all likelihood, back then Zítek had plans for a much more sophisticated system of the Opera Studio's functioning, yet, regrettably, he was not destined to materialise his ideas – in April 1955, he died during a road accident in Bratislava, Slovakia. Zítek's commenced yet unfinished work was soon overshadowed by the endeavours of another prominent figure, the stage director Miloš Wasserbauer. His conception rather differed from that of his predecessor, but would prove to be very successful. Wasserbauer built up an independent institution, within which, from 1957 for 13 years, he and the students staged attractive works. On the one hand, the Opera Studio performed titles that enriched the repertoire in dramaturgic terms (e.g. the Czechoslovak premiere of Bohuslav Martinů's *Ariadne*), while on the other, it staged attractive grand

operas, such as *La Traviata*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Werther*, *Carmen*, etc. At the time, the Opera Studio was not run exclusively as a student "trial operation", since a large proportion of the major titles (21 out of 60) was directed by Wasserbauer himself. What is more, the most relevant productions were co-created by the leading contemporary Brno opera specialists, the conductors Václav Nosek and František Jílek, as a result of which the opera performances acquired genuinely professional parameters. The attractiveness was further enhanced when the Opera Studio obtained its own hall, in the Brno quarter of Královo Pole, and was later officially renamed the Miloš Wasserbauer Chamber Opera (1967).

A new chapter in the development of the JAMU Opera Studio began in 2012, when, following two years of construction works, the building of the student Na Orlí Theatre was opened. Bearing the title "Music-Dramatic Laboratory", which characterises its essentially being a space for almost unlimited stage experiments, the theatre affords the students great opportunities. It is equipped with state-of-the-art technologies (stage facilities, as well as a modern recording studio in the basement), which provide the students with professional conditions matching high global parameters. The Na Orlí Theatre is available both to the Faculties of Music and Theatre, which have primarily staged operas and musicals.

Compared to the past, the contemporary JAMU opera productions have brought to bear certain aspects that have increased their quality and advanced their reputation to the European level. The resulting form has been influenced by the participation of students trained in a number of disciplines. Whereas at the beginning of the Opera Studio's operation the productions mainly engaged those studying voice, opera direction, instruments and conducting, nowadays they involve music production students, who attend to all the managerial details, as well as composition students, as JAMU has periodically, every second year, staged operas written by its current students. Moreover, in collaboration with the Faculty of Theatre, the Opera Studio has also invited to work on its productions set design and drama students. JAMU can pride itself in the fact that all the projects have been implemented by students, with the teachers serving as the guarantors, not the protagonists, of the activities. Even though this strategy has made the process of exploring and staging of works more complicated and longer, and the outcomes may not always come across as entirely convincing, JAMU has striven to give these activities the utmost encouragement. In this connection, it should be pointed out that not all art academies

afford their students the opportunity to stage operas at a professional level. That is precisely what makes the JAMU Opera Studio unique within the European and global contexts alike. Over the long term, JAMU has pursued activities available to both domestic and foreign students. This year, the JAMU International Master Classes will celebrate half a century of their existence. Attesting to their exclusiveness is the fact that the very first edition of the seminar outside Brno (1967) was attended by Charlotte Martinů, the widow of Bohuslav Martinů. The JAMU international classes have been focused on performance of music by Czech and global composers, as well as the methodology of playing instruments. At the beginning of July, JAMU will welcome those interested in the flute, piccolo, oboe, bassoon, violin, double bass, piano and singing. Another significant activity with an international outreach is the Leoš Janáček Competition, directly referring to the composer's legacy: within five-year cycles, it has centred on the disciplines of string quartet, violin, piano, organ, cello, double bass, flute, clarinet, horn and tuba. The competition has become increasingly popular year by year, with the record number of 150 participants having registered in 2016!

And finally, JAMU has also granted honorary doctorates to internationally recognised artists. The school acquired the possibility of awarding them back in 1993, when the world-renowned pianist Rudolf Firkušný was named the first holder of its honorary doctorate. In the following years, JAMU went on to honour other eminent artists – to name but a few: the conductors Zdeněk Mácal and Sir Charles Mackerras, the musicologist and promoter of Czech music John Tyrrel, and the composer Pierre Boulez. This year, marking the 70th anniversary of JAMU's foundation, two honorary doctorates have been awarded – to stage directors. On 12 May 2017, JAMU granted an honorary doctorate to the Italian author and director Eugenio Barba. The other selected figure is the Austrian actor and director Otto Schenk, a great champion of Czech opera worldwide, including at the MET in New York, where he has presented Bedřich Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*, Antonín Dvořák's *Rusalka* and works by Leoš Janáček. Coincidentally, Schenk's career has been framed by his staging of Janáček operas: in 1964, he directed an adaptation of *Jenufa*, and three years ago, his production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Wiener Staatsoper, conducted by Tomáš Netopil, met with standing ovations. Schenk is scheduled to receive his honorary doctorate from JAMU in November 2017.

13. – 25. 8. 2017, Brno

18th Festival under the stars

ŠPILBERK INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

Mozart – Brahms,
Šostakovič – Kabeláč,
Rossini – Verdi...



www.filharmonie-brno.cz

• • • •
**Filharmonie
Brno Philharmonic**

CZECH MUSIC EVERY DAY

EVENTS AT HOME AND ABROAD

IN THE SPRING OF 2017

Perhaps the spring event most discussed among contemporary music fans was the world premiere of the opera *No Man* at the New Stage of the National Theatre in Prague. They talked about Jiří Kadeřábek's music, the non-traditional production, as well as the subject (the tragic fate of the sculptor Otakar Švec, who against his will created the gigantic Stalin Monument overlooking Prague). Even though the audience's responses were mixed, all those in attendance probably agreed that more frequent performances of contemporary works would invigorate both the prime Czech prime stage and the Czech music scene in general.

New pieces were also heard at concerts, either at prominent venues (Kadeřábek's composition *Duel II*, performed by the Prague Philharmonia at the Rudolfinum), or in unconventional spaces (Jan Trojan's *Circulation*, at the National Technical Museum, within the Prague Spring festival). When it comes to events abroad, they included a premiere of a new production of Miroslav Srnka's recent critically acclaimed opera *South Pole*, staged at the Staatstheater Darmstadt in Germany.

More information about the individual events – in Czech and English – can be found on the Czech Music Information Centre's web portal www.musica.cz (blog.musica.cz).

3 and 5 March, Granada Theatre, Opera Santa Barbara, California, USA. **Leoš Janáček: *The Cunning Little Vixen* (premiere of a new production)**. Directed by Crystal Manich, music director: Kostis Protopoulos.

4 March, Grosses Haus, Staatstheater Darmstadt, Germany. **Leoš Janáček: *Jenůfa* (premiere of a new production)**. Directed by Dirk Schmeding, music director: Will Humburg. Following performances: March 11 and 17, April 9 and 28, May 6 and 21.

23 March, Metropol – Theatre Hall, České Budějovice. **František Lukáš: *Flames of Memories* (world premiere)**. South Bohemia Philharmonic, conductor: Jan Talich.

28 March, Church of Sts. Simon and Jude, Prague. **Zdeněk Merta: *Movimento vivo* (world premiere)**. Trio Martinů (Pavel Šafařík – violin, Jaroslav Matějka – violoncello, Pavel Jiříkovský – piano).

31 March, New Stage, National Theatre, Prague. **Jiří Kadeřábek: *No Man* (world premiere)**. Libretto: Lukáš Jiříčka, Katharina Schmitt. Directed by Katharina Schmitt, music director: Jiří Kadeřábek. Following performances: April 3 and 17, May 1 and 7.

MARCH-MA

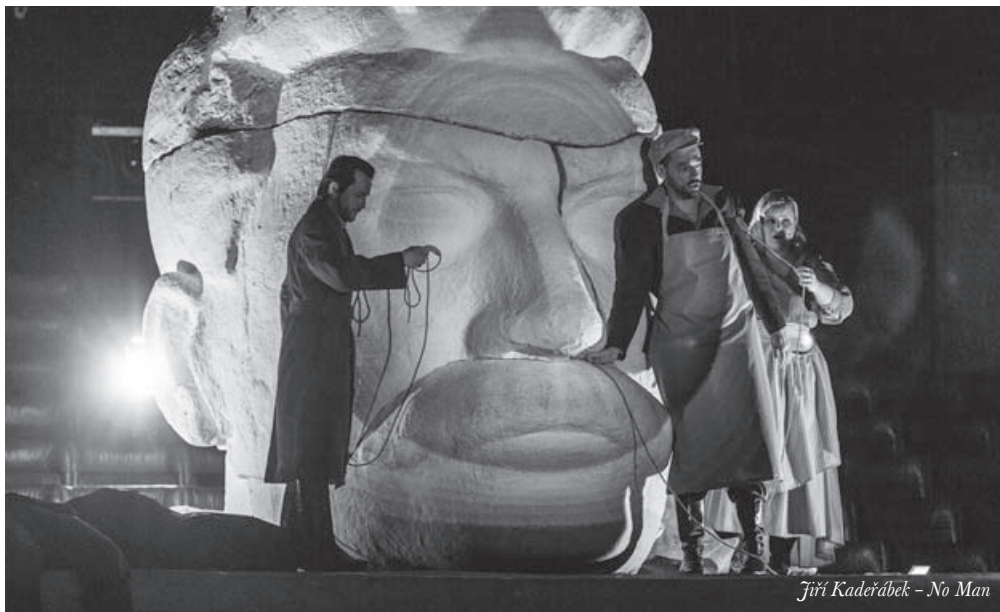


PHOTO: PATRIK BORECKÝ

Jiří Kadeřábek – *No Man*

2 April, Auditorium Rainier III, Monte Carlo. Printemps des Arts de Monte-Carlo.

Miroslav Srnka: *move 03* (world premiere). Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice, conducted by Pierre-Andre Valade.

4 April, Roxy, Prague. **Roman Zabelov: *Být – žít* (world premiere).** Roman Zabelov – accordion, Jan Šíkl – percussion, sampler, BERG Orchestra, conductor: Petr Louženský.

8 April, Landestheater Niederbayern, Passau, Germany. **Leoš Janáček: *The Cunning Little Vixen* (premiere of a new production).** Directed by Stefan Tilch, music director: Basil H. E. Coleman. Following performances: April 22 and 23, May 5 and 6, June 2 and 3.

16 April, Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum, Prague. **Jiří Kadeřábek: *Duel II* (world premiere).** PKF – Prague Philharmonia, conductor: Jakub Hrůša.

20 April, Metropol – Theatre Hall, České Budějovice. **Lukáš Hurník: *Angels Overture* (world premiere).** South Bohemia Philharmonic, conductor: Vojtěch Spurný.

25 April, Bohemian National Hall, New York, USA. Effects New York – Ostrava.

Petr Bakla: *Major Thirds* (world premiere). Momenta Quartet, Joseph Kubera.

2 May, Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church, Prague. **Robert Hejnar: *Lorelei* (world premiere).**

Jan Fišer – violin, BERG Orchestra, conductor: Pavel Šnajdr.

15 May, Bauhaus, Ostrava. **Petr Bakla: *Something with something else III* (world premiere).** Matthias Lorenz – cello.

19 May, Ekaterinburg State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Ekaterinburg, Russia.

Antonín Dvořák: *Rusalka* (premiere of a new production). Directed by Tomáš Pilař, music director: Oliver Dohnányi. Following performances: May 20, 21, 30 and 31, June 13 and 14.

27 May, Staatstheater Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany. **Miroslav Srnka: *South Pole* (premiere of a new production).** Directed by Karsten Wiegand, music director: Johannes Harneit. Following performances: June 10, 18 and 21.

29 May, National Technical Museum, Prague. Prague Spring festival.

Jan Trojan: *Circulation* (world premiere). Karel Dohnal – clarinet, Miro Tóth – saxophone, Jan Trojan – electronics.

30 May, NoD Experimental Space, Prague. The Beauty of Today concert series. **Miroslav Srnka: *Here With You, Tree of Heaven* (Czech premieres).** David Danel – violin, Stanislav Svoboda – viola, Balász Adorján – cello.

MUSIC FOR COUNT MORZIN'S COURT

ANTONÍN REICHENAUER

AND THE FIRST EDITION

OF HIS CONCERTO IN G MAJOR

Life of the Baroque musician

The composer and organist Antonín Reichenauer was a major musical figure in Prague in the 1720s. The date and place of his birth are not known, nor is there any information available as to his childhood and family. The first written mention, documenting his living in Prague, only dates from 1 January 1722, when his son was baptised at the Church of Our Lady under the Chain in the Lesser Town.¹ The registries of other Prague churches contain records of the christening of his other children.

Reichenauer is above all known as a member of Count Wenzel Morzin's orchestra. Morzin was a great benefactor and true lover of music. His orchestra ranked among the best instrumental ensembles in the Czech lands at the time. In line with the contemporary custom, besides professional musicians, Morzin employed skilful musicians from among his serfs. The Count even established contact with Antonio Vivaldi, to whom he granted the title *Maestro di Musica in Italia* and who supplied music for his orchestra for a regular wage. Another distinguished composer in Morzin's services was Johann Friedrich Fasch, who lived in Prague from 1720 to 1722. In all likelihood, the post of Kapellmeister was held by the violinist Melchior Hlava. It would seem that Reichenauer joined

Morzin's orchestra in 1723 (his name was first stated in the ledgers in 1724). His salary ranged from between 110 and 130 guldens a year, and on top of that he received extra fees for the pieces he composed for the needs of the orchestra.²

To all appearances, Reichenauer concurrently served as an organist at one of the churches in Prague. It could have been the Dominican Church of Saint Mary Magdalene in the Lesser Town. This assumption has not been directly documented, yet it is supported by the fact that one of Reichenauer's masses is dedicated to Saint Louis Bertrand, a Dominican missionary, whose cult was not overly followed in Bohemia,³ as well as by Count Morzin's regular contacts with the monastery. Sacred pieces constituted a significant part of Reichenauer's oeuvre, and it is not likely that all of them were paid for by Morzin. His having devoted to church music is further indicated by Antonín Reichenauer's later tenure in Jindřichův Hradec. Some connoisseurs are of the opinion that he also worked for the orchestra of Count František Josef Černín z Chudenic (Franz Joseph Czernin of Chudenice), but this has yet to be verified. Accordingly, the one and only trace that relates Reichenauer to the Černín family is again Jindřichův Hradec, since the noble family had its residence in the local chateau.

1) This entry in the church registry was referred to by Bohumír Dlabáč, vide Gottfried Johann Dalabč: *Allgemeines historisches Künstler-Lexikon für Böhmen, Zweiter Band J-R*, Prague, 1815, p. 550: "Die Taufmatrikel der Maltheser Pfarrkirche zu Maria unter der Kette in Prag führt ihn als Vater des Sohnes Johann beim Jahre 1722, den 1sten Jänner an."

2) For details of the court's account books concerning the expenses for the orchestra, see Václav Kapsa: *Hudebníci hraběte Morzina*, Prague, 2010, p. 89; and also Kapsa: *Account Books, Names and Music: Count Wenzel von Morzin's Virtuosissima Orchestra*; *Early Music* XL/4, 2012, pp. 605–620.



Count Wenzel Morzin's palace in Prague
(period engraving by Johann Georg Ringle)

As a member of Count Morzin's orchestra, Antonín Reichenauer was still receiving fees in 1729, and he also spent some time in Prague in February 1730, when his son Václav passed away. Immediately afterwards, however, he must have assumed a new post, that of the organist at the parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Jindřichův Hradec, the town in which Reichenauer died on 17 March 1730.

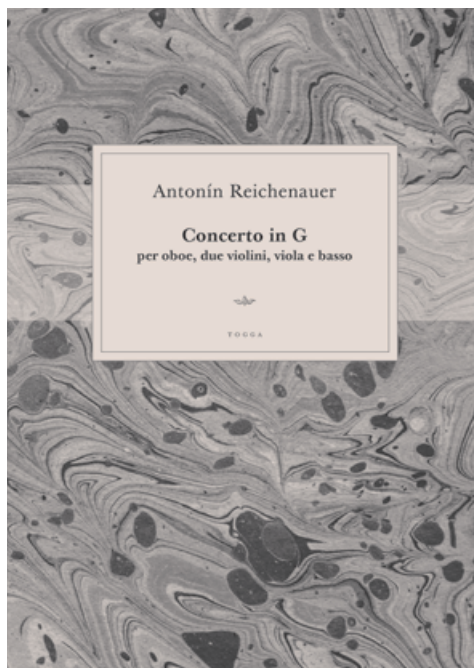
Reichenauer's extensive work enjoyed great popularity, bespeaking of which are the numerous mentions in the period documents. Although, regrettably, the sheet music collection of Count Wenzel Morzin has not been preserved, copies of a host of his instrumental pieces are maintained in archives abroad, primarily in Dresden and Wiesentheid. Their catalogue has been compiled by Václav Kapsa.⁴

Concerto in G major for oboe

When and under what circumstances the Concerto in G major for oboe, strings and basso continuo came into being is not known, yet in all likelihood it was written for Morzin's orchestra. One of its members was the oboist Pavel Vančura, whom in 1720 his master sent to study music in Dresden. That is apparently how the music-loving Count established contact with the Saxon court, through

which the copy of the concerto got into the collection of August II the Strong's ensemble in Dresden. The concerto is of the Italian type, with the first and final movements in the form of ritornello, whose remarkable purity was not overly common in the transalpine countries. This must have resulted from a direct approach to Antonio Vivaldi's music, which Reichenauer had the opportunity to become acquainted in detail while he was serving Morzin. Whereas the fast first and last movements have a fully instrumental texture, the second employs the chamber configuration of the solo instrument accompanied by basso continuo, which duly gives rise to an impressively intimate contrast.

The very first edition of the work, titled *Concerto in G per oboe, due violini, viola e basso*, was published in 2016 by Togga as the first volume of a new series of critical editions of early Czech music, *Fontes Musicae Bohemiae 1*. It is only the second oboe concerto by Antonín Reichenauer to have been printed. The first one was the Concerto in F major, also written for the oboe accompanied by string instruments and basso continuo, which was prepared in 2006 by Wolfram Hader for



³⁾ The first to draw attention to the work *Missa S[an]cti Ludovici Bertrandi* (CZ Pnm – XXVIII E 98) was the music historian Emilián Trolde. Vide, for instance, Otakar Kamper: *František X. Brix. K dějinám českého baroka hudebního*, Prague, 1926, p. 80, and Alexander Buchner: *Hudební sbírka Emiliána Trolde*, Prague, 1954, p. 91.

⁴⁾ Kapsa: *Hudebníci hraběte Morzina*, pp. 177-192.



the Laurentius-Musikverlag in Frankfurt am Main. The edition of the Concerto in G major has drawn upon the one and only known source of the work, a copy that has been preserved in the music collection of the Dresden court orchestra Schranck II. The envelope bears the catalogue label *Schranck No: II. / 22. Fach 7. Lage / No. 7) Concerto / Oboe conc: Vvⁿⁱ V^{la} e Basso. / Partitura Sola. / Del Sig. Reichenauer*. Today, the copy is maintained at the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB) under the mark *Mus.2494-O-2*, and is also available in digital form on the library's web portal. As the autograph's label indicates, it is an independent score without the parts. The copy was made by Johann Gottfried Grundig in Dresden sometime between 1725 and 1731.⁵



We have prepared the edition with regard to the needs of researchers, as well as performers. The publication contains a preface and a critical report in Czech and English, a complete facsimile of the Dresden manuscript, published with the kind permission of the SLUB, and a critical edition of the score with the complete set of instrumental parts. The editors' approach, which is described in the critical report, respects the original copy as much as possible and presumes knowledge of the period music performance. For that reason, the edition does not contain the added basso continuo, nor the ornamentation (unless directly denoted in the manuscript), and hence it meets the urtext qualities, as required by erudite musicians. The first printed edition of the Concerto in G major for oboe makes available a work, which has been splendidly recorded by Collegium 1704 and Václav Luks (Antonín Reichenauer: Concertos, Supraphon, Prague, 2010), and it may well serve to further revive the legacy of the Baroque culture cultivated in Prague in the first half of the 18th century.

The text was written within a research intention of the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Department of Music History (RVO 68378076).

5) Ibid, p. 34.

First page of the Dresden copy of Reichenauer's Concerto G in major above: the catalogue label (Sig. Mus. 2494-O-2)

MILOSLAV KABELÁČ

SYMPHONIST

On the occasion of last year's publication of the complete set of Miloslav Kabeláč eight symphonies on CD, recorded for Supraphon by conductor Marko Ivanović and the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, we present a study of this crucial chapter in the history of 20th century Czech music.



PART 2

Symphony no. 6 “in E” op. 44 (1961–62) is again a *concertante* symphony, for solo clarinet and orchestra with two pianos, composed in three movements. This was one of the first scores in which Kabeláč used his new notation, with which he strived to express as precisely as possible the temporal organisation of the music through graphic means. Another rarity found in this score is the use of a new sound source and sound quality in the 2nd movement: a pedal point (a minor ninth doubled at the octave) played back from magnetic tape, which plays for the duration of the movement. Only its dynamic intensity is regulated by an operator, following a curve in the score. A demanding solo clarinet recitative takes place over this background, which is complemented by the sound of the string section. The sonic and expressive effect of this music is truly unconventional.

The 1st movement, at 786 measures, is extensive, dramatically heightened with a demanding *concertante* element. Its pitch and metro-rhythmic structure is complex, worked out in detail from algorithms determined in the pre-compositional phase. These

algorithms permeate both the micro- and macro-structure of the work. Kabeláč assigns metro-rhythmic specifications to the individual measure directly. The new notation allowed him a fairly exact method to graphically fix his vision.

The pitch material, once again, grows out of an artificial mode – this time, it is the ten-note symmetrical mode 1-2-1-1-1-1-1-2-1-1. This mode is “responsible” for the outer sections of the form – that is, the opening part of the exposition and the final part of the recapitulation, which is an almost literal repetition of the section of the exposition under discussion. The pedal point harmonies are always comprised of notes from the mode and their intervallic range is always that of a major seventh. Measure 108 brings the first change in the modal structure up to this point, when the composer introduces the two remaining pitches from the chromatic scale, which are not part of the mode (in the prime form, it is the notes A and D). This dyad is used to great effect. Almost simultaneously with this change, the dynamisation of the texture begins, through a gradual change of the pedal point background on the basis of an ostinato figure with a different metrical arrangement.

Another change in the pitch organisation comes in measures 198–318, where the mode changes to a new, nine-tone asymmetrical mode, 2-1-2-1-1-1-2-1-1, first presented in the solo clarinet melodic line. At the apex of a monumental intensification in this section, Kabeláč places another change in the modal structure, switching to an octatonic mode with two neighbouring hiatus, highly expressive particularly as it outlines a diminished triad. The number of pitch classes in the artificial modes gradually decreases (10-9-8-7), which also leads to a lower number of seconds and an increase in larger intervals, which also adds to the rise in tension.

The final section of the form, in effect a modified reprise (from measure 594), introduces a four-note melodic model in the clarinet, which, in a tense final “monologue” of the solo instrument, is gradually reduced to only three chromatic notes, presented, however, in an arrangement with a rising major ninth. The melodic model is further reduced to a combination of only two notes in the range of a minor second, i.e. also a major seventh or a minor ninth. The constructivism of the 1st movement of the 6th symphony became

a culmination of Kabeláč’s rational compositional process in symphonic form. Its detail, rigour and the pervasive use of “modal algorithms” is unsurpassed, even by his last two symphonies. As mentioned above, the 2nd movement makes use of a dissonant pedal, recorded on strings (violins, cellos and double basses) onto magnetic tape, in a sustained low dynamic and with a lot of reverberation. This drone should be played back by two to three speakers placed behind the orchestra and directed at the audience. The movement is in ABA form with a condensed mirrored recapitulation. The melodic material is derived from an initial two-note group, which expands to a three- and four-note group, which is subjected to modal rhythmisation. The entire movement is a monologue of the solo clarinet over the pedal.

The third movement is a brusque, brilliant and elemental finale on a foundation of mechanical triplet oscillations of two or three notes, as well as varied forms of 2/4 and 3/4 measures. Kabeláč’s last two symphonies, the seventh and eighth, bring remarkable innovations into the traditional genre in several components at once. They both introduce text in addition to music as a crucial semantic component. In both cases, this is an adapted, or rather intentionally deformed biblical text, in effect also arranged modally on the basis of pre-selected and pre-excluded “constructive elements” of speech.

Symphony no. 7 op. 52 (1967–68) is scored for large orchestra and narrator – it is therefore not a classic vocal symphony, although out of all the varieties of the genre, this is certainly the one it is closest to. The text was assembled by the composer from the Book of Revelation and the Gospel of John, following a dramaturgical plan for the work, thought out in detail in advance. The text contains only nouns (as well as some adjectives, prepositions and conjunctions), as semantically condensed units with profound and timeless validity. Both the text and the music are divided into three movements, arranged symmetrically around the central second movement: *Eternity – Man – Eternity*.

By limiting the text to nouns – general and maximally semantically loaded terms – Kabeláč gave these terms a wider and more emphatic universality, surpassing the religious-ritual

The image shows a page from a musical score for Symphony no. 7 op. 52. The score is written for a large orchestra, including strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The notation is complex, with many staves and various musical symbols. The text "Věčnost! Ewigkeit!" is written in the lower right section of the score.

function. Furthermore, the words of the Bible are dignified and ceremonial even in their basic form, especially in the Kralice¹ translation which Kabeláč used, and are therefore particularly suited to artistic stylisation. In the case of the 7th symphony, the composer used the Bible to express his position on the questions of meaning, man's place in the world, the meaning of life, the meaning of human sacrifice for life in the midst of an apparently chaotic space between the beginning and end of all things. The symbolic meaning of the themes intimated in relation to the events in Czechoslovakia in 1967–68 brought out many additional contemporary connotations.

The presence of a rational constructive element is particularly apparent in the 7th symphony. The entire symphony is governed by a logical order and a strictly adhered to proportion of all its components. The number 7 serves as the fundamental coefficient, which is certainly to do with the biblical symbolism of this number, perhaps also with the serial number of the symphony. The text and music in all three movements – 3 is another important number here – is divided into seven parts, the pitch relations are dictated by the basic modus of the entire work – Kabeláč's favourite 1-2-1-3 (also used in the 2nd symphony) – five-note with a periodicity of a fifth, that is, 7 semitones.

1) The Kralice Bible was the first translation of the Bible into Czech from the original languages, made by monks of the Unity of Brethren (Jednota bratrská) and printed in the Moravian town of Kralice nad Oslavou in the late 16th century.

In the dramatically exalted middle movement, a different mode is used, the five-note 1-3-1-6 with a distinctly exposed succession of a semitone and tritone. Another source material is the Gregorian sequence *Dies Irae* (the interval range of the first and key melodic phrase of this sequence is, again, a fifth, i.e. 7 semitones) and the melody of a pentatonic elegy from New Guinea, which introduces an effective contrast of a distant musical expression against European musical thought. Another important constructive element is symmetry: it controls both the musical and textual macrostructure and also permeates into the lower levels of the structure. Despite the absolute lucidity of the constructive intention, there is not a trace of schematicism in the work. Kabeláč was an excellent architect and thinker, but also a sensitive and experienced musician, with excellent knowledge of the psychology of perception. In his analytical study of this work,

musicologist Vladimír Lébl points out a remarkable structural detail: even though the 7th symphony is demonstrably symmetrical on practically all levels, a mechanistic understanding of symmetry is impeded by the short duration of the final movement in comparison with the first (with which it is otherwise clearly symmetrical).

This fact, however, does not impede the feeling of symmetry, as the author counted on the difference between physical time and the internal time of musical structure. After the expressive climax of the 2nd movement, the final movement is a single drawn out catharsis, with a continuous expressive and dynamic diminution. Therefore, it was necessary not to overburden this diminutive process with an excessive duration. From the psychological perspective, then, the feeling of symmetry remains fully present. This principle is also evidently in place in some of Kabeláč's earlier symphonies, particularly in the 6th.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the flute part of Symphony no. 7. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system features a flute melody with various ornaments and a key signature change. The second system continues the melody with more ornaments. The third system is labeled 'colla parte del recitatore' and shows a short flute melody. The score is handwritten on a grid background.

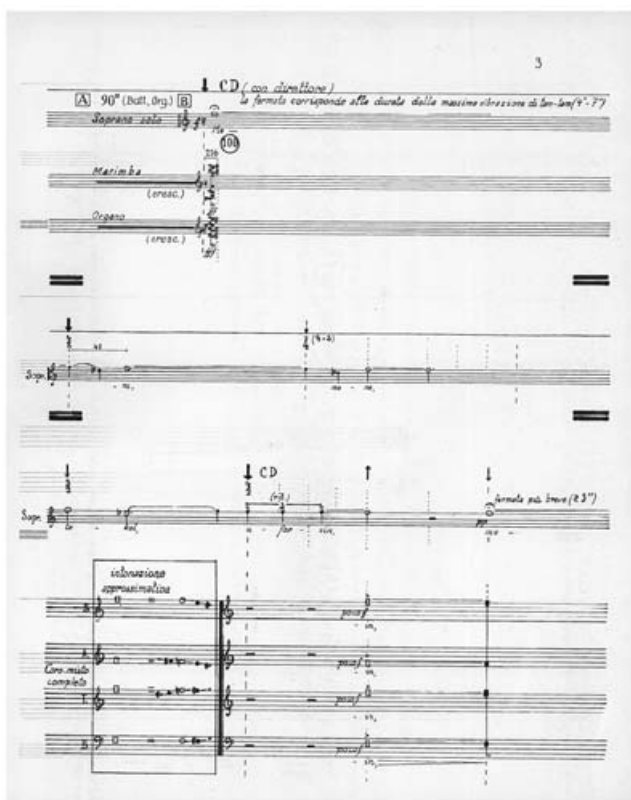
*Symphony no. 7
flute part*

Symphony no. 8 “Antiphonal” op. 54 (1969–70) is a work extraordinary in its form, its instrumentation and also in its musical and conceptual content. It has nine sections: five movements and four interludes. Their structure is dictated by a firm logical order, proportionality and symmetry. The axis (both in structure and meaning) is the third, longest movement. The interludes which connect the individual movements are identical in their duration and musical materials, and differ only as to the alternating direction of dynamic development. The work is written for an ensemble of percussionists (6 players), organ, coloratura soprano and two mixed choirs (large and small). The text, once again, comes from the Bible. This time, Kabeláč opted for statements and formulas of ritual, magical and symbolic meanings: *Mene, tekel, ufarsin, amen, hosanna, hallelujah*. The musical language of the symphony is modal and grows out of another one of Kabeláč’s strange modes. At the climax of the 3rd movement, we hear a suggestion of the Gregorian Dies Irae. The musical expression also mines elements of shouts, crowd chants and both monotonic and exalted enchantments. The basic idea of the 8th symphony is an emphatic warning against the danger of degeneration of all the positive values of humanity (we must realise the historic situation of the work, which was composed in the direct aftermath of the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia). The suggestive images of doom and suffering alternate with states of apathy at first. Only later is there a flash of hope from the depths of a destructive storm, and the conclusion of the work is a grasping of this hope. The ending is positive at its core, even if redeemed by suffering by which it remains marked. The 8th symphony was written at the request of Les percussions de Strasbourg, who premiered it in Strasbourg in June 1971, together with soprano Jana Jonášová and organist Václav Rabas. The work was conceived for a specific venue, the Church of St. Paul in Strasbourg, where the premiere was to take place. Following the authors’ instructions, the performers were divided into four places in the church: the organ at the back, Les Percussions de Strasbourg in the front, by the altar, the small and large mixed choirs on the left, and on the right (in the pulpit), the solo soprano. Hence the subtitle, “Antiphonal”. The conductor stands in the middle, facing the percussion ensemble and the choir. The work was premiered at an evening titled “Hommage à Miloslav Kabeláč”, together with

the *Eight Inventions for Percussion* op. 45, the two organ *Phantasias* op. 32 and the four *Preludes for organ* op. 48. Kabeláč could not attend the premiere, as he did not receive the necessary documentation from the totalitarian authorities. The Czechoslovak premiere of the 8th symphony only took place 13 years later, on the 12th of January 1984 in Prague. At this time, the composer was no longer alive. Timbre and rhythm play key roles in the musical expression of the 8th symphony. The melodies are typically economical (mostly composed of steps), and as in previous symphonies, is based on an artificial mode. The numerical relationships derived from it are then applied to other parameters. A five-note mode with the periodicity of a fifth prevails: 1-1-2-2-1. It is identical to Messiaen’s sixth mode of limited transposition. As in the 7th symphony, the number 7 has a key role, and can be discovered in practically all components of the work. Seven is the number of the perfect fifth, i.e. the period of the chosen mode, and it also clearly structures the textual component: mene – tekel – ufarsin = 7 syllables, hallelujah – hosanna = 7 syllables, amen – amen – hosanna = 7 syllables. We could continue in this way for some time.

It has been stated multiple times that Kabeláč’s creative development was remarkably logical, consequential, without any major twists and contradictions in his basic creative principles, which he reached very early on, at the very beginning of his compositional career (i.e. at the beginning of the 1930s) and from which he never deviated in a major way. Not even during his climactic creative period, which lasted from second half of the 50s throughout the 60s and 70s, when he was, somewhat paradoxically, considered the leading figure of the Czech musical avant-garde. He was aware of this characteristic disposition of his creative type and his work, and repeatedly stated that the basic principles of his musical thought and compositional process never changed, whether it concerned work in traditional compositional systems or composition in a more, let’s say, experimental vein. He always respected the symphony, the most important “instrument and environment” of his artistic expression, in its constitutive parameters, petrified by tradition, despite all the innovations that his eight symphonies bring about. As was stated already, in addition to the instrumental and ensemble character, these innovations consist particularly in cyclical form as concerns structural properties.

Symphony no. 8
"Antiphonal" op. 54



In content, it is the highly universal nature of his artistic message and a fundamental inclination towards a dramatic treatment of the subject. The natural and indisputable tendency for the monumental touches on both the structural and the sonically-spatial and expressive components. The other traditional parameters are subject to innovations of various intensities and extents. As to the diversity of form, it is the orchestral (non-programmatic) and *concertante* symphony that are most common with Kabeláč, with three instances of both. There are also two vocal symphonies, and, if we include his graduation piece, also a sinfonietta. The import of Kabeláč's symphonies (and his work in general) lies partly in a consistent striving for unusual sound (particularly in the 1st, 3rd, 6th and 8th symphonies), partly in the individual and untypical formation and development of musical material, with the distinctive participation of constructive deliberations. Furthermore, there is the highly economic use of musical material. Kabeláč seldom uses explicitly new types of material (exceptions include pieces of *musique concrète* such as the *Hradčany*

vigils and, in particular, *E fontibus Bohemicis* op. 55, 1971-73), but he has the ability to grasp traditional means in an entirely untraditional way – therein lies his innovativeness, originality and uniqueness.

We have also expressed the opinion that Miloslav Kabeláč, together with Antonín Dvořák and Bohuslav Martinů, are the three Czech symphonists of greatest importance. While the symphonies of Dvořák and Martinů have long been graced by a series of complete recordings made both at home and abroad, in the case of Kabeláč's eight symphonies, a full recording was only made last year. Prior to this, half of the symphonies were unavailable on commercially published discs: recordings of the 1st, 2nd, 6th and 7th symphonies existed only in radio versions, often made some time in the past and of corresponding technical quality. This unhappy situation was remedied with a series of modern digital recordings issued on four compact discs.

This task was undertaken by the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra and conductor Marko



Ivanović (see CMQ 2012/3, and pp. 9–17 in this issue), who prepared for the recording in an exemplary manner and became well acquainted with the interpretive particularities of Kabeláč's symphonic scores. His rendition is artistically flawless in all respects, doubtless also thanks

to the exceptional form of the orchestra and its responsiveness to the conductor's vision of the shape, sonic character and content of the individual works. The highest praise should be reserved not only for the orchestra and its conductor, but also for all the soloists on the recording, and of course the recording engineer and three musical directors responsible for the discs. As the last bars of the 8th symphony come to an end, we can make a general impression of the conductor's conception of the entire recording: Ivanović consistently oscillates – in a carefully considered manner – between a majestic, exalted, even dramatically devastating plane, and a quiet, enigmatic mysteriousness: sometimes tense, sometimes soothing, surreal, or contemplative. These are the two poles of Kabeláč's expression, and Ivanović's approach carries them across with full conviction. This recording of the symphonies of Miloslav Kabeláč can significantly enrich the appreciation for the exceptionally valuable symphonic oeuvre of a Czech composer not only at home, but also abroad. Czech musical culture still owes much to his work.



KABELÁČ YEAR 2018

Discover the eminent Czech composer

piano • organ • violoncello •
flute • percussion • choral
and orchestral works



Bärenreiter Praha

exclusive publisher of the works of Miloslav Kabeláč (1908–1979)

www.baerenreiter.cz • www.baerenreiter.com

Zuzana Růžicková

JS Bach: The Complete Keyboard Works

Zuzana Růžicková - harpsichord,
Jiří Suk - violin, **Pierre Fournier** -
cello, **Jean-Pierre Rampal** - flute,
Prague Soloists,
Eduard Fischer - conductor.

Text: English, French, German.

Recorded: 1965-1974. Released: 2016.

20 CDs, digitally remastered,

Erato/Warner Classics 0190295930448.

One of the 20th century's most influential harpsichordists, this year **Zuzana Růžicková** is celebrating her 90th birthday. To mark the anniversary and to pay tribute to the extraordinary artist, Erato has re-released a set of 20 digitally remastered CDs containing the recordings of the complete keyboard works of Johann Sebastian Bach she made from 1965 to 1974 (originally issued on LP in 1975). At the time, the project met with great international acclaim (Grand Prix de l'Académie Charles Cros) and contributed to the renaissance of the harpsichord as a solo instrument, with Zuzana Růžicková joining the ranks of the pioneers promoting early music performance. The re-release is of great significance for several reasons: firstly, it serves as a source for research into the different approaches to performance pursued within a certain time frame; secondly, it bears witness to the artistry of a distinguished Czech musician at the time by which she had become a mature interpreter; thirdly, it pays homage to Růžicková, as well as the others paving the way to early music performance; and fourthly, the project will give a nostalgic glow to those who once listened to the LPs and grew up with them. Viewing the presented recordings in the strict terms of historically informed performance and the current knowledge of Bach's music would be rather short-sighted, yet, on the other hand,

deeming Zuzana Růžicková's conception, as it is captured on them, outdated would be inappropriate indeed. The artist performed all the works with a clear notion of each and every phrase, every single note, giving due deliberation to them with regard to both the music itself and the literary-philosophical aspects, while concurrently processing her own dramatic experience. I simply cannot imagine that the listener would not be touched by at least one of the facets of such a bold statement.

The globally renowned harpsichordist **Mahan Esfahani**, who has curated this box set, aptly refers to Růžicková as the "last romantic" performer of Bach's music. Let us, however, not imagine that her account is overly sentimental, or emotionally slushy, tempo-protracted and excessively compact in sound. The very opposite is true – Růžicková's presentment is mathematically pregnant, sonically inventive, with a highly economical treatment of emotions (while the passages in which she affords them a greater scope directly touch the heart). Her tempos may now and then be slower than what we are used to nowadays, yet, in my opinion, they are not detrimental to the music.

The majority of the recorded pieces were performed on modern instruments (Neupert, Ammer), with the exception of the Preludes, Inventions, Sinfonias, Suite in E flat major, BWV 817, and other miniatures (CDs 6, 14, 15), in the case of which Růžicková played double-manual harpsichords built by Johann Heinrich Hensch in 1754 (at the time the album was made, they were in the possession of Claude Mercier-Ythier, today they are located at the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich) and 1761 (Musée de la Musique, Paris). In my opinion, the use of these instruments is one of the reasons why these three discs come across as somewhat better than the others, albeit superb too – Bach's music simply sounds even more impressive. Praiseworthy too are Zuzana Růžicková's superlative partners, a trio of lyricists and true masters of tonal palette: the violinist **Josef Suk** (*Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord*, BWV 1014-1019, *Concerto for Flute, Violin, Harpsichord and Strings in A minor*, BWV

1044), the cellist **Pierre Fournier** (*Sonatas for Cello and Harpsichord* Nos. 1-3, BWV 1027-1029) and the flautist **Jean-Pierre Rampal** (*Concerto for Flute, Violin, Harpsichord and Strings in A minor*, BWV 1044). All in all, a veritable torrent of sheer musical poetry.

Dina Šnejdarová

Mieczysław Weinberg, Ernest Bloch

Piano Quintets

Aneta Majerová - piano,
Stamic Quartet.

Text: Czech, English. Recorded:
Czech Radio in Prague, Studio 1, 16-17
December 2013 and 23 January 2016,
Music Studio of the Academy of Music,
Prague. Released: 2016. TT: 66:03.
1 CD Animal Music AM 057-2.

The 2010 Bregenzer Festspiele played host to the world premiere of the stage performance of the opera *The Passenger* by Mieczysław Weinberg. The production came as a pleasant surprise, as it brought to light a piece by a distinct composer who had previously been known to precious few. Subsequently, other Weinberg pieces began appearing on concert programmes and recordings alike, and the audience became familiarised with the details of the life of the artist, who was prosecuted by the Nazis in his native Poland, as well as by the authorities in the Soviet Union, where he had fled. These facts are referred to by Jindřich Pazdera in the booklet of the album, coupling works by two composers of Jewish origin who, although divided by a generation, have many a thing in common as regards their professional career and personal fate alike. The eternal question remains as to what degree a work is connected with the life of its creator, whether it functions (or can function) in and of itself, independently of the opinions and





Bohuslav Martinů

The Greek Passion

Wilfried Zelinka (Priest Grigoris), Ivan Orešcanin (Archon), Dietmar Hirzberger (Captain), Falk Witzurke (Schoolmaster), Tino Sekay (Ladas, spoken part), Rolf Romei (Manolios), Dshamilja Kaiser (Katerina), Manuel von Senden (Yannakos), Martin Fournier (Michelis), Taylan Reinhard (Panait), Dariusz Perczak (Kostandis), Tatjana Miyus (Lenio), Richard Friedemann Jähnig (Dimitri), Sanggyoul Lee (Andonis), Christian Scherler (Nikolio), Markus Butter (Priest Fotis), Sofia Mara (Despinio), Yuan Zhang (Old Woman), Konstantin Sfiris (Old Man), David McShane (baritone), Benjamin Plautz (Commentator); Choir & Extra Choir of the Graz Opera, directed by Bernhard Schneider, Choir of the Graz University of the Arts, rehearsed by Franz Jochum, Graz Philharmonic Orchestra, Dirk Kaftan – conductor. Text: German, English. Recorded: 3–4 June 2016, Oper Graz, Graz, Austria (live). Released: March 2017. TT: 68.40 + 68.23. 2 CDs Oehms Classics OC 967

When looking beyond Leoš Janáček's operas, to which this applies without reservations, the majority of the contemporary CDs featuring the Czech operatic repertoire have been released outside the Czech Republic, cases in point being works by Antonín Dvořák (Gerd Albrecht's project and the recordings of *Rusalka* made by R. Hickox, F. Welser-Möst, J. Bělohlávek, T. Hanus, A. Fischer and Y. Nézet-Seguín), Zdeněk Fibich (*The Bride of Messina*, recorded in 2015 in Magdeburg, CPO Classics), Bedřich Smetana (Bělohlávek's London albums of *Dalibor* and *The Bartered Bride*), and Bohuslav Martinů. The recent

recordings of Martinů's *Juliette*, released in Frankfurt (Sebastian Weigle, 2015, OC 976), and *Ariadne*, made in Essen under the baton of Tomáš Netopil (Supraphon, SU 4205-2), have now been joined by a CD with the first London version (1954–1957) of his four-act opera *The Greek Passion* (H 372 I), to the composer's libretto, based on Nikos Kazantzakis's novel, as reconstructed by Aleš Březina for the premiere at the Bregenzer Festspiele (1999, Koch Schwann 3-6590-2). Less than 17 years down the road, the first, musically more kaleidoscope- and collage-like version of Martinů's *The Greek Passion*, was staged again in Austria, by the Oper Graz company, in the run-up to Easter 2016. In March 2017, a live recording of the performance of *The Greek Passion*, conducted by **Dirk Kaftan**, was released by Germany's Oehms Classics, thus within a short time adding to its catalogue yet another album featuring Czech music, in the wake of the recordings of Dvořák's symphonies (Ivan Anguélov) and chamber works, as well as Janáček's *Jenufa*, also conducted by Dirk Kaftan (2015, OC 962). The booklet of the 2-CD box contains the complete libretto in English and photographs of the Graz production, directed by **Lorenzo Fiononi**. I had the opportunity to attend one of the performances, and I consider it one of the most engrossing opera evenings I have experienced over the past few years. The very fact that the Graz team opted for the first version of Martinů's *The Greek Passion*, instead of giving preference to the more oratorio-like, more musically- and audience-friendly second version (1959), ensured that the production would be an extraordinary operatic event. The effect of the premiere, on 5 March 2016, was further augmented owing to the current events, as it took place at the time when Europe was exposed to a great wave of refugees and migrants coming from the Middle East and North Africa, who, years after the war in the Balkans, were to test the tolerance and solidarity of South Austria's inhabitants, including those of Graz. The audience in Graz was presented with a production extremely variable visually and highly expressive, a production now

the character of the artist (this question has been repeatedly raised in relation to Richard Wagner's anti-Semitism). And there is also the mystery of our own perception. How would our listening experience of the music by Weinberg, Bloch, Krása, Schulhoff and others differ were we to know nothing at all about the composers? Weinberg's Piano Quintet, Op. 18, dates from 1944, and given that we are aware of the creator's life and the year in which he wrote it we simply cannot ignore his state of mind and the atmosphere amidst which the piece came into being. That is also impossible when listening to Bloch's Piano Quintet No. 2, written in 1957, two years before the composer's death (in 2003, Bloch's two piano quintets were recorded by the Kocian Quartet and Ivan Klánský for PraGa Da Camera). What is more, all these aspects naturally influence the performers' approach. Total abstraction of a particular work from the circumstances under which it was written and looking as if from the composer's personality would only be possible upon hearing it by chance, without possessing any information in advance. I am convinced that when it comes to these two pieces (and numerous others), they would indeed speak – for themselves and the background of their origination. Works of great power succeed in doing so, as this effect is given rise to by their very physiognomy, and therefore they are not mere testimonies to a certain phase of musical development. The best-known from among Ernest Bloch's oeuvre are the pieces based on Hebrew themes, including the Suite Hébraïque and Schelomo. The present album was recorded with support from the Gideon Klein Foundation and the Jewish Museum in Prague. The combination of compositions by Mieczysław Weinberg and Ernest Bloch has been well chosen, the CD features top-notch performers and is furnished with a sensitive graphic design and valuable accompanying notes in the booklet.

Vlasta Reittererová



and then politically incorrect, not sparing the local elite. Although the album logically does not capture these contemporary connections, as regards the music it can be deemed one of the best recordings of Martinů's *The Greek Passion* released in recent years. Its quality certainly matches that of older studio recordings made by Charles Mackerras (in the English original, 1981, Supraphon 10 3611-2; it was used in Tomáš Šimerda's TV film, released on DVD by Supraphon, SU 7014-9) and Libor Pešek (in a Czech translation, 1981, Supraphon SU 3984-2). In my opinion, the Graz album even eclipses the recording made by Ulf Schirmer in Bregenz, with the dazzling Nina Stemme and Christopher Ventris, and the commercial recording made by Jiří Bělohlávek in Prague, based on Aleš Březina's Czech translation (National Theatre, 2006). The fact that the Graz album is cobbled together from several live performances is only slightly perceptible. All the more admirable is Kaftan's preparation and the performance of the **Graz Philharmonic Orchestra**, who have splendidly mastered Martinů's musical idiom and blending of styles, both in the emotionally extreme orchestral passages and the lyrical episodes evoking the composer's compositional language of the 1930s, as well as the melodramatic passages, with accordion accompaniment. Laudable too is the performance of the **Choir of the Graz Opera** and the **Choir of the Graz University of the Arts**. Yet the live recording's greatest assets are the soloists, particularly **Dshamilja Kaiser** (Katerina) and **Rolf Romei** (Manolios). While the Swiss tenor, possessing an almost Mozartian timbre, is truly convincing in his portrayal of the character's youthful fumbling and religious infatuation, the mezzo-soprano Kaiser excels in rendering the power of female emotions and compassion. Their joint scenes are efficiently seconded by the two priests: Grigoris, sung by **Wilfrid Zelinka**, and Fotis, performed by **Markus Butter**, whose voices harbour the Orthodox masculinity. Cast in the host of other characters in Martinů's opera were either Oper Graz members or guest artists (for instance, the talented young Polish baritone

Dariusz Perczak in the role of Kostandis). I could go on and on highlighting the fortes of the production. Praiseworthy too are the booklet's contents and the graphic design. The album is highly recommended, and one will certainly be able to savour repeated listening to it. By and large, the Oper Graz seems to understand Martinů's music. And Oehms Classics certainly deserve our thanks for such a top-quality recording.

Martin Jemelka

Antonín Dvořák

The Spectre's Bride

Simona Šaturová, Pavol Breslik, Adam Plachetka, Wiener Singakademie, ORF Radio-Sinfonieorchester Wien, Cornelius Meister – conductor.
Text: German, English (libretto: Czech, English). Recorded: 2–3 June 2016, Wiener Konzerthaus, Vienna, Austria (live). Released: March 2017. TT: 78.25.
1 CD Capriccio C5315

At the beginning of 2016, a Viennese audience got to hear – for the very first time in the more than century-long history of the Konzerthaus – Antonín Dvořák's 1884 cantata *The Spectre's Bride*, Op. 69, B 135 (1884), based on Karel Jaromír Erben's eponymous ballad. Its performances on Czech stages have always been special occasions, while abroad they constitute truly extraordinary events. The two sold-out concerts in Vienna were recorded by the ORF1 radio station which, in co-production with the Austrian label Capriccio, within less than a year released an album put together from the performances. The conductor **Cornelius Meister**, the music director of the **ORF Radio-Sinfonieorchester Wien**, invited for the occasion the semi-professional **Wiener Singakademie** and

three superlative soloists: **Simona Šaturová** (Maiden), **Pavol Breslik** (Spectre) and **Adam Plachetka** (Storyteller), owing to whose engagement the CD has joined the ranks of the work's few benchmark recordings, which include those made by G. Albrecht in 1991, P. Tiboris in 1993, J. Bělohlávek in 1995, Z. Mácal in 2001 and V. Válek in 2001, and which are still overshadowed by the oldest album, with the conductor Jaroslav Krombholc (Supraphon, 1961).

The high-quality rendition is the result of the sterling efforts of the 37-year-old German conductor Cornelius Meister, who has devoted to Dvořák's symphonic and orchestral works with an admirably systematic focus, with one of the most noteworthy recent projects of his being performances in Vienna of the composer's tone poems based on Erben's ballads. Meister rounded off the cycle of concerts of Dvořák's programme pieces in a truly monumental way – with a performance of *The Spectre's Bride*. Even though Dvořák somewhat blunted the edges of Erben's spine-chilling ballad on hazardous playing with the other world and love transcending death by occasional soft harmony, the introduction, the orchestral interludes, the scenes of the Spectre's wandering with the Maiden and the scene of the Maiden at a cemetery contain a number of (not only onomatopoeic) passages that give one the creeps. Meister quickly drove the orchestra and the choir through the Erben tale, yet at the right moment he succeeded in suspending the musical flow and resting with the audience above one of the vocal scenes. The conductor benefited Dvořák's piece with pregnant rhythmisation, sharp accents in the brass instruments, pointed tempos and dozens of minor details, such as fierce crescendos in the cellos or highlighting of the solos in the winds – the bass clarinet, trumpets, and the horn obbligato in the opening Maiden's prayer. Meister's energy duly enraptured the Wiener Singakademie, who deserve praise for their outstanding declamation of the Czech text and mastering the rhythmically intricate chorus passages of Dvořák's score. Although by being faithful to Dvořák's original work the choir revealed the tricky passages that diverge from the current rules applying to declamation in the Czech language, they evidently fully understood the text and managed to draw the listener into the night-time wandering and chorus scenes, framing Dvořák and Erben's story. The three soloists are among the finest representatives of the contemporary Czech and Slovak vocal art known to the Viennese audience. Adam Plachetka, now and then resorting to the lowest dynamics, may not possess the profound timbre of the peerless Ladislav Mráz, featured on Krombholc's landmark recording, yet owing to his subjective approach to his part, immaculate articulation and the ability to cope with Meister's brisk tempos, he has accomplished his most exemplary Dvořák creation, which, in my

opinion, is even more impressive than his albums of Dvořák's songs (Radioservis 2014 CR 0729-2, 0724-2). Initially, the choice of Simona Šaturová struck me as somewhat surprising (to date, she has not sung many Dvořák roles), and in dynamic terms she fell short of the two male soloists at the concert, yet the sound direction had markedly improved her creation, one that may serve as an alternative to the commonly cast young dramatic sopranos. Šaturová's long-term experience with early music mainly bore fruit in the two prayer scenes, in which she veritably rendered the text and succeeded in maintaining tension among the listeners. Inviting Pavol Breslik to portray the role of the Spectre was a masterstroke, as his voice lacks the Slavonic fervency of all the Jeniks and Princes, who have usually performed the role. In my opinion, he could have brought to bear greater irony, but his performance on the CD comes across as highly poignant and technically faultless in the high registers. Breslik's engagement represents a watershed in the interpretation tradition. In final analysis, *The Spectre's Bride* as conceived by Cornelius Meister is a great listening experience, with the CD being an absolute must for all Dvořák admirers.

Martin Jemelka

Antonín Dvořák

Slavonic Dances

Czech Philharmonic,
Jiří Bělohlávek – conductor.

Text: English, French, German.

Recorded: December 2014 (1st set) and November 2015 (2nd set), Rudolfinum, Prague. Released: 2016. TT: 76:08.

DDD. 1 CD, DECCA 478 9458.

A cursory glance at the previous recordings of Antonín Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances* made by the Czech Philharmonic proves to be very interesting. They are intriguing owing to the respective conductors' conceptions, as well as the transformations of the orchestra's characteristic sound. Considerable differences are even evident in the case of the two Václav Talich recordings. Whereas the one for His Master's Voice (London, 1936) teems with vitality, and now and then features very rapid tempos, the better-known 1950 disc actually represents a series of small musical poems. The story goes that during the recording sessions at the Domovina studio in Prague, Otakar Šourek, Talich's friend and biographer, annoyed the maestro by pointing out that this and that dance was



a few seconds longer than that on the disc produced in London. The very opposite of Talich's second recording is Karel Šejna's torrential account at the Rudolfinum in Prague in 1960, so charged with energy and pulsating rhythm that Dr. Eckstein even criticised it as overly vigorous. When it comes to Václav Neumann's recording made in 1972, it was deemed to be a sort of return to Talich's take on the work. A hearty atmosphere radiates from Zdeněk Košler's performance, recorded in 1979. Notwithstanding the excellent technical quality, the remaining recordings – two more made by Neumann (for the Czech label Supraphon and Japan's Extone, dating from the 1980s) and one by Sir Charles Mackerras (with Supraphon, released in 1999) – did not come up with anything extraordinary in artistic terms. The new CD of the *Slavonic Dances*, made by the Czech Philharmonic, led by Jiří Bělohlávek, is not the first recording of Dvořák's series the conductor has made. In 1998, Bělohlávek recorded the pieces with the Prague Philharmonia for Multisonic. The two accounts differ in many a respect, yet the conductor's approach has not markedly changed over the years, as regards the tempos, for instance. The latest recording is merely eight (!) seconds longer. With respect to the possible temporal nuances between the tracks, covering in total an area lasting one and a quarter hours, the durations of the discs are thus virtually the same! In artistic terms, the new Bělohlávek recording of the *Slavonic Dances* can be clearly ranked within the group of albums, each of which is specific and remarkable in some regard. Its most valuable, and most impressive, trait is the conception of the tempos and expressive means. The nuances making it different from the mentioned renowned recordings are very distant from the expected tradition, bearing witness to their having been thoroughly preconceived, as well as to the profound sensation of the individual passages, the endeavour to present them devoid of any burden of the tradition. Right away in the first dance, the listener can

savour the relatively considerably contrastive slower tempo of the middle section, and similar is the case of the third and other dances. Impossible to overhear in the sixth dance are the canny "neighbourly" double basses at the beginning. The tenth and the sixteenth dances tempt to sentiment, while the absence of great ritardandos and the rather brisker tempos makes the lyrical charge more forcible and veritable. The overall structure is logical and all the more impressive is the culmination in the form of riveting endings, which is the most perceptible in the fifteenth dance, perhaps the best of all the tracks. Compared to the previous ones, the new recording of the *Slavonic Dances* possesses the forte of bringing joy to the listener, and it also has the value of increasing the Czech Philharmonic's prestige – by its having been released on the Decca label. It is a continuation of the heralded cycle of recordings of the cornerstone works of the Czech national music, which was launched by the globally acclaimed album featuring the complete Dvořák symphonies and concertos. In connection with it, much was said and written about Decca's specific sound, which truly is a great positive in this case too. The orchestra sounds smoothly in the individual instruments and instrument groups alike. Nonetheless, I would venture to voice a few remarks relating to the generally lauded acoustic-technical aspects, occasionally resulting in indiscriminate admiration. I would like to point out that I have encountered similar difficulties with other Decca recording too. I have objections to the stifling of the first violins at some junctures, their excessive inwardness, the result of which is their being often drowned out by wind instruments, the woods in particular. This decreases their characteristic succulence and brilliance, for which the Czech Philharmonic has always been commended worldwide. Admittedly, over the years, the orchestra's sound has changed, yet the first violins have retained this quality at concerts, as well as on other recordings. On the new CD, though, the highest frequencies are somewhat less audible than we are used to. Virtually inaudible is, for instance, the triangle, whose part was splendidly scored by Dvořák, as are the expected bells in the sixteenth dance, as confirmed by comparisons with the older recordings. Naturally, it is a technical matter, one that does not relate to the orchestra itself. Nevertheless, by and large, given the otherwise perfectly compact, impressive overall sound, this – in my opinion – miniscule defect does not appear to be so salient as to disturb the general impression of the production and diminish the sheer delight of listening to the recording.

Bohuslav Vitek

NEW & EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC FESTIVAL



OSTRAVSKÉ CENTRUM NOVÉ HUDBY
OSTRAVA CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

OSTRAVA DAYS



www.newmusicostrava.cz

Wolff Sciarrino Lucier
Cage Ayres
Kotik Saariaho
Feldman Glass
Young Bakla Nihilock
Szewski Lewis
Srna Lang Walshe
Novák Newirth
Abcam's Rychlik Mitchell
Sabat Butterfield

August 24 — September 02, 2017

In cooperation with



provoz

With financial support from

OSTRAVA!!!



MINISTERSTVO
KULTURY

ART MENTOR FOUNDATION LUCERNE



LIBOR WINKLER

KUŠNÝ KÁMEN

COOROUT



Moravskoslezský
kraj



ernst von siemens
music foundation



Státní fond kultury ČR



embassy



Main media partners



Česká televize



Vltava
Český rozhlas



Radio Wave
Český rozhlas

