



NEWSLETTER

MAY—AUGUST 2007 / VOL. VII / NO. 2

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bohuslav martinů
institute

Welcome

THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ NEWSLETTER

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EDITORS

Zoja Seyčková
Jindra Havlíčková
Lucie Berná

TRANSLATION

Hilda Hearne

PHOTOGRAPHS

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Bohuslav and Charlotte Martinů in Cassis, France, June 1952 (the shadow belongs to the photographer – painter Rudolf Kundera) ©PBM

EDITORIAL OFFICE

The Bohuslav Martinů Institute

Náměstí Kinských 3

150 00 Praha 5, Czech Republic

tel.: +420 257 313 104, +420 257 320 076

fax: +420 257 323 761

e-mail: newsletter@martinu.cz

www.martinu.cz

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THE PREVIOUS ISSUE



MUNICIPAL MUSEUM — BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ MEMORIAL IN POLIČKA

OFFERS short-term exhibitions dedicated to the life and work of B. Martinů, a guided tour to Martinů's birthplace in the St. James church tower and for registered researchers archive materials concerning Martinů. Further information available at www.muzeum.policka.net and www.policka-mesto.cz

NEWS FROM POLIČKA

ON SATURDAY 14 April the traditional spring exhibition dedicated to Bohuslav Martinů was opened in the Municipal Museum and Gallery in Polička. It will run until 28 October 2007. The exhibition usually focuses on a certain part of the composer's work or life. This year's is special in that it replaces the permanent Martinů display, which was closed last year due to the museum's extensive reconstruction. Gala opening of the museum is planned for 2009, the year marking the fiftieth anniversary of Bohuslav Martinů's death. Since the museum is located in the building of the former school attended by the young Martinů, in addition to a new permanent display it will also comprise a reconstructed classroom in the style of the early 20th century. The short-term exhibition will guide its visitors through the composer's childhood spent in the church tower, his studies in Prague, stays in Paris and America, return to Europe, and besides his fascinating fate it will, at least partially, acquaint them with his extensive oeuvre. All the material on display comes from the museum's archives and includes music autographs, correspondence, a host of photographs, set designs, as well as Martinů's witty self-caricatures and documentation about performance of his works at the present time.



Composer's native room in the tower of the St. James Church in Polička

HISTORICAL RECORDING

WE HAVE acquired from Czech Radio Brno's archives a unique recording of Bohuslav Martinů's opera *Tears of the Knife*, H. 169. The composer wrote this, his second, opera in 1928 in Paris. However, it was only prepared and performed forty years later in Brno under the baton of the conductor Václav Nosek, who also premiered in Brno another of Martinů's avant-garde operas, *Three Wishes or Inconstancy of the Life*, H. 175 from 1929. The radio recording of *Tears of the Knife* was made in 1969, with stellar performances by L. Lesmanová (Mother), J. Jánská (Eleonora) and R. Tuček (Satan). Václav Nosek conducts here the Orchestra of the Janáček Opera in Brno.

THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ DAYS 2007

► **3 December 2007** / Martinů Hall, Academy of Performing Arts, Prague
Concert of prize-winners from the 2007 Martinů Foundation Competition in the category of piano

► **4 December** / Martinů Hall, Academy of Performing Arts, Prague
The Kinton-Anagnoson Piano Duo
Martinů, Mozart, Stravinsky, Lutoslawski, Dvořák, Gershwin

► **5 December** / Gallery, Academy of Performing Arts, Prague
HOMAGE TO ZDENĚK ZOUHAR
Ensembles and artists to be specified. / Conductor **Jaroslav Kyzlink**
Martinů, Zouhar

► **14 & 15 December 2007** / Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum, Prague
CLOSING CONCERT

The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra / Conductor **Jiří Bělohlávek**
Martinů, Hindemith

Concert programme is subject to change

For more information contact martinu@martinu.cz / www.martinu.cz

THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ COMPLETE EDITION



ON THE 7th OF JUNE a contract was signed between The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation, on the one hand, and Bärenreiter-Verlag and Editio Bärenreiter Praha, on the other. The subject of the contract is The Bohuslav Martinů

Complete Edition which will be edited by the Martinů Institute in Prague. The contract has been signed after long negotiations and ensures the conditions regarding the publication and organisation of the edition. The Martinů Complete Edition will be published in more than 100 volumes in over 50 years starting in 2009.

INTERNATIONAL MARTINŮ CIRCLE

Members receive the illustrated Bohuslav Martinů Newsletter published three times each year plus a special limited edition CD. The IMC is supported by the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation and Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague

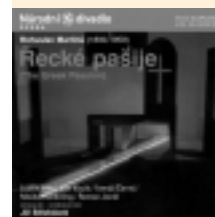
MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

DUE TO THE STEEP RISE OF THE CZECH POST SERVICE PRICES we had to increase the IMC subscription. Many thanks to all IMC members for understanding.

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION

• **For individuals:**
20 Euro / 25 USD / £ 14 UK
+ 15 Euro / 20 USD / £ 10 UK postage
(includes 3 issues of the BM Newsletter and a non-commercial CD recording from the Bohuslav Martinů Days Festival in Prague)

• **For companies: 80 Euro / 100 USD + 30 Euro / 50 USD postage**
(Subscription includes 10 copies of each issue of the BM Newsletter and three copies of the non-commercial CD recording from the Bohuslav Martinů Days Festival)



ASA BONUS (and while stocks last), subscribers for 2007 will receive a special 2CD of Martinů's „The Greek

Passion“ in the 2006 National Theatre Prague production conducted by Jiří Bělohlávek.

For further details and for a free copy of the magazine – e-mail:

incircle@martinu.cz

(Bohuslav Martinů Institute, Náměstí Kinských 3, 150 00 Praha 5)

Gregory Terian – UK members only, tel.: 01625 523326

Mari Tokuda – members in Japan, e-mail: martinu@martinu.jp

THE IMC CORDIALLY WELCOMES THE NEW MEMBERS:

- Dr. Mark V. Sanderford, USA
- Rodney Martin, Luxembourg
- Jonathan Burton, UK
- Rodney Hughes, UK
- The Royal Scottish Academy of Music, UK
- Prof. Pamela Howard, UK

Juliette IN

PETR VEBER

THE THEATRE IN GÖRLITZ in the eastern part of the former East Germany is by no means a large stage, yet judging by this season's programme and the resulting form of the most recent of the series of performances of Martinů's *Juliette, or the Key to Dreams, H. 253*, (30 March) it possesses a healthily ambitious ensemble. Alongside Juliette and several other operas, this season's programme newly contains *The Bartered Bride* too. This

the stage director framed the production in a film sequence and a verbal instruction about the law, dreams and cogitation and when he had the (somewhat trite) idea of letting a modern omnipresent security camera "oversee" everything.

The stage director perhaps most departed from the original notions when it comes to the conception of the title character herself. The Juliette rendered by the soprano Yvonne Reich was very specific, dominant, dressed in bright red – no seductive French phantom but an

of individual characters, while, on the contrary, Act Three in a suggestively implemented "office of dreams" most drew near to the mentioned Kafkaesque Prague. The stage director accentuated the character of the omnipotent clerk, a little ironic, and by means of a red light flickering during the main hero's repeated harrowing attempts at penetrating back to the world of dreams, he managed to escalate the entire scene into a dramatic apex. Subsequently, in the conclusion he managed to logically express the story's return to the starting point.

GÜNTER THIELE

CONSIDERING the not so enthusiastic opinions about some earlier productions of *Juliette, or the Key to Dreams, H. 253*, in Germany, (see for instance Harry Halbreich's book), it was with some trepidation I entered the Görlitz Theatre, and my misgivings were not alleviated either by the directors introduction before the actual performance nor the information that both the main characters were slightly indisposed. I did not understand then, or do



Juliette (Yvonne Reich)



Little Arab (Patricia Bänch) and Michel (Marc Horus)

doesn't necessarily reflect a major gravitation towards Czech culture (after all, the town is closer to Poland than North Bohemia), but rather the fact that the dramaturgy knows what ranks among the cornerstones of the European comic repertoire (Smetana) and what can be an interesting enrichment from among the rarely played or internationally discovered titles (Martinů).

The stage director Klaus Arauner successfully conceived the dreamy surrealistic work for last year's autumn premiere in a comprehensively unified manner; however, significantly differently from the expected and perhaps even logical and usual lyrical anchoring. He primarily didn't resist the alluring fusion of the modern work by the inter-war "Prague" composer with Kafkaesque poetics which may be from the same period too, yet, in spite of a certain affinity, it rather contravenes the poetry of the original work. Kafka led Arauner already in his prime general deliberation, when

expressionistically unkind and aggressive character from the German cultural space. In singing terms, the role came off nicely within this conception's intentions. Just like this conception, disappointing too was the manner in which the stage director took hold of the second act of the opera. Although the orchestra – the New Lusatian Philharmonic – admirably mastered Bohuslav Martinů's music, with which it must have had zero experience, the second act with the magic scene in the forest was owing to the stage director too perfunctory and not entirely satisfactory in musical terms. For example, the magical, poetic juncture with hunting-horns or the music around the words about echo even sounded lacklustre, as if unnoticed or underestimated by the conductor Eckerhard Stier, and consequently, was a wasted opportunity.

Act One successfully made use of the surrealistic absurdity of the port town both in terms of the set design and details

The production was built around the tenor Marc Horus in the role of the seeking, uncomprehending, desiring, naive and suffering Michel. This character doesn't leave the stage. The young singer with a nice timbre rendered the role with sensitivity and adroit technique, lyrically, convincingly. He added to the mix psychologically novel and credible acting and in a decisive manner helped create – notwithstanding all the reservations to the work's Kafkaesque conception – a uniform and to a certain extent phantasmic and intellectually stimulating performance. Naturally, in musical terms it would have been necessary to give preference to a really symphonic *Juliette*, with all the attendant dynamic nuances; however, the structure of the orchestra in Görlitz does not allow for such munificence. Yet the evening's musical level was essentially admirable.

With kind permission reprinted from the Czech musical magazine Harmonie No. 6, 2007

so now, what new light the simultaneous reading and screening of a film of Kafka's parable "Vor dem Gesetz" could cast over Martinů's masterpiece. To my mind this exposure before the actual opera was only confusing. Together with a rather cluttered stage and an orchestra that at times sounded more like Alban Berg than Martinů, the first hour or so was indeed a rather mixed blessing.

I was torn between admiration for the ambitious undertaking and dismay at the actual result most of the time. After the intermission proceedings improved by and by, both musically and conceptually. Already in the climactic meeting between Juliette and Michel in the second act the performance caught fire. And in the office of dreams with its imprisoned inhabitants of perpetual dreamers I was finally won over. Their silent agony made the last act appear as something entirely different from previous productions I have seen; both terrifying and convincing. At this stage the orchestra also sounded much better than before. Afterwards I came to think of the testimony Martinů gave

GÖRLITZ

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ'S **THE MARRIAGE**

Operas

AT DIVADLO KOMEDIE IN PRAGUE

EVA VELICKÁ



Jale Papila, Marc Horus, Shin Taniguchi and choir

after having attended a performance in Wiesbaden shortly before his death, where his initial disappointment seems to have changed to a more favourable opinion, wondering if these productions maybe had something in common. Although the overall conception was only partially successful and the rather limited

resources were an additional handicap, this performance of *Juliette* is not an experience I would like to be without.

Juliette, or the Key to Dreams, H. 253,
lyric opera in 3 acts

Theater Görlitz, Germany
www.theater-goerlitz.de

NEW ENSEMBLE FROM SPAIN

News

MARTINŮ ENSEMBLE is a formation created in Barcelona in an attempt at recovering and spreading non habitual repertoire, belonging mostly to the 19th and 20th centuries, across concert rooms. There are certain composers who have assured their perennial presence in concert programmes. Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Brahms, Bach, Schubert, etc. But what happens to other top level composers such as Karel, Rheinberger, Spohr, Martinů, Schmidt, etc? In Spain they are almost unknown and many of these composers are not known outside their own countries' borders. It is for this reason that we decided to make justice to these composers as well as to uncommon works from well recognized authors, thus filling the hole existing in concert programs today. Parallely, in 2007 we began a project for the promotion of young emerging Spanish talents, which allows us to develop a different project every two years. We regularly invite new directors, players and musicologists to our formation, so that they may help us attain an optimal level in our performances. All in order to render a tribute to great masters of music history and to bring the names of Martinů and many others as far as we can.

Gerard Pastor López



Martinů Ensemble from Barcelona



Podkolesin (Jan Morávek) and Agajša (Pavla Hamerníková)

the work in New York in 1952 upon the commission of NBC television network. The purpose for which Martinů wrote the opera and his great experience in operatic creation led him to a clear concept according to which he adroitly condensed into one hour Gogol's entire drama *The Marriage*, while at the same time retaining the basic characters and wit of the literary work. The theme of comical, even desperate wooers, a bride and matchmakers serves Martinů as a springboard for presentment and musical characterisation of individual figures, induction of moods and comic scenes.

The opera's brisk music requires a very pregnant de-romanticised staging, otherwise the entire work can acquire the tinge of regional farce. Fortunately, the HAMU students and Berg Chamber Orchestra did not present such an inanimate performance. Although certain student "signs" were naturally present in their interpretation, the performance of *The Marriage* given on 24 and 25 March 2007 at Prague's Divadlo Komedie was a great success. The conductors Tomáš Brauner and Lukáš Vasilek prepared the music part very well with the orchestra, and, primarily, the singers, who knitted their parts, many a time comprising difficult ensemble numbers, excellently with relatively solid acting. On the second evening, when I was in attendance, I was surprised by the beautiful voice and dramatic talent of the baritone Jan Morávek, rendering the "hero" Podkolesin. The tenor Juraj Nociar was convincing in the role of his friend Kochkarev. The stage director Gabriela Haukovicová worked with the actors exemplarily, connecting the acting and music in an extremely logical manner. The sets by Gabriela Kaclerová were simple yet very witty – for example, in their making use of the skewed shapes of the doors hanging in empty space. ■

Martinů Fest in Polička

FOR THE TENTH TIME

LUCIE BERNÁ



For those interested in the personality of Bohuslav Martinů, a visit to his birthplace in Vysočina is always the right decision. Throughout the year, they can visit in Polička Martinů's room in the tower of Saint James Church, the display in the Bohuslav Martinů

laureates of Prague Spring, and within these "Echoes of Prague Spring" a young Martinů performer, the cellist Tomáš Janník, and the pianist Ivo Kahánek gave a concert during the tenth edition of the Fest.

The first edition of Martinů Fest took place in 1996 and aimed to loosely link up to "Bohuslav Martinů's Polička", held in the 1960s. Over the past decade the festival's dramaturgy has issued from the immense diversity of Martinů's oeuvre – among the concerts to have taken place are those bearing the subheadings "Jazz and Martinů", "Paris and Martinů" and "Martinů and America". Top Czech artists and ensembles have performed at Martinů Fest – Emil Leichner (piano), Zuzana Růžičková (harp), Václav Nosek (conductor), the Tálích Chamber Orchestra, Janáček Quartet, Czech Nonet and Smetana Trio.



Ivo Kahánek (piano) and Tomáš Janník (cello)

Memorial (at the present time, due to reconstruction, only in a provisional reduced form), as well as the tomb of Martinů and his wife Charlotte. Alongside the larger-than-life Martinů statue in the park, Polička also prides itself on an extensive medieval rampart and a Classicist town hall dominating the square.

The best month to visit Martinů's birthplace is undoubtedly May, when Polička resounds for a week to the stirring music of its native son. Under the title "Martinů Fest", from 13 to 17 May 2007 a series of chamber concerts took place there for the tenth time. The festival included various accompanying events and culminated in a symphonic concert at St. James Church. The tenth Martinů Fest was opened in the newly refurbished premises of the Tyl House by Ensemble Martinů, who have performed at many previous editions. The Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra Olomouc and the Žerotín Academic Ensemble performed at the concluding concert. Regularly invited to the festival are the

Englishová (harp), Václav Nosek (conductor), the Tálích Chamber Orchestra, Janáček Quartet, Czech Nonet and Smetana Trio.

www.policka.org
www.triartmanagement.cz
www.tyluvdum.cz



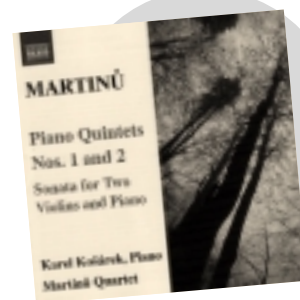
From the left: Lucie Berná (The Bohuslav Martinů Institute), Alena Báčová (the director of the Tyl House) and Lucie Jirglová (The Bohuslav Martinů Memorial in Polička)



Tower of the St. James Church in Polička

Photo Petr Procházka

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ:
Piano Quintets
Nos. 1 and 2
Sonata for Two Violins
and Piano



Karel Košárek – Piano, Martinů Quartet (Lubomír Havlák – First Violin, Petr Matějčák – Second Violin, Jan Jiša – Viola, Jitka Vlašánková – Cello)
Recorded at Czech Radio Studio No. 1, Prague, from 22 to 24 June, 2005 / Producer: Václav Zamazal
DDD / TT: 58:33 / Text: English, German / Naxos 2007, 8.557861

In Bohuslav Martinů's extensive chamber oeuvre it is always interesting to follow the composer's development on a single formal type. This development is symptomatic and well perceptible in string quartets and piano trios. With Martinů, however, we can also find a number of less usual types enabling us to trace stylistic changes and different or, conversely, similar "Martinů" principles in two piano quintets from 1933 and 1944 too. If we leave aside the so-called "zero" *Piano Quintet, H. 35*, *Piano Quintets No. 1 and No. 2* represent chamber works of a high level, dealing with the problem of concerting strings and one phonically different instrument – in this case, piano. With its inclination to folk melodiousness, *Piano Quintet No. 1, H. 229* may evoke the impression of simplicity. Yet in essence it is an extremely complicated and modernist work. Just as this quintet represents Martinů's 1930s French period, so *Piano Quintet No. 2, H. 298* documents the style of the 1940s, which Martinů spent in America. At certain moments the setting is more transparent, with modernism on the one hand and the Czech nostalgia of the previous quintet brought here to a climax. The beautiful second movement captivates us with minimalist-tinged passages. All the mentioned characteristics finely flow from this brilliant recording. Folklore undertones appear in many places but are soon abandoned, and non-diffuse strings with a syncopated piano further continue in tempo. In the second movement of *Quintet No. 1* and in many parts of *Quintet No. 2* the entire suite sounds in lyrical places veiled and mysterious. Elsewhere (for example, in the fourth movement of *Quintet No. 1*) the whole configuration sounds unusually ample, when all the strings compactly take off and the piano supports them. The entire recording is driven by a motoric power, with a nimble beat tending to dominate. Nevertheless, the whole is sufficiently gradated. The set of two quintets is supplemented by the baroque-like *Sonata for Two Violins and Piano, H. 213*.

Eva Velická

A CONCERT BY THE APOSIOPIÉE ENSEMBLE

6 FEBRUARY 2007 OPERA NATIONAL IN PARIS

News

GUY ERISMANN

MORAVIAN FOLK POETRY IN THE WORKS OF JANÁČEK, DVOŘÁK AND MARTINŮ

It might happen that a concert of Moravian folk music goes unnoticed in the rich Parisian musical life even though it has been embellished by the names of Janáček, Dvořák and Martinů. And yet this Moravian music was undoubtedly performed for the first time in Paris at the 6 February 2007 concert. This is also true for the folk cantata by Bohuslav Martinů *The Opening of the Springs, H. 354*, irrespective of the

about a sort of psychological miracle which is highlighted by the closeness between the folk character and an instrumentation comprising modern strangeness which raises the question of delicate belonging to our time or of subtle timelessness. Here Martinů's genius is extremely efficient in its simplicity. The issues of style as the one of aesthetics are absent, the form is just the right one, in harmony with the subject that submerges into the present time that also knows how to be the one "before the folklore". The encounter of wise musical pieces with lively springs, yet impenetrable by the artist's subconscious mind, seems to be here an example, an important lesson of musical know how.

Martinů's work was preceded by about



Aposiopée Ensemble

fact that it was composed in Nice, France, in 1955 where the composer lived for some years following his return from the United States.

The children choir gave an original execution of the Martinů cantata in a new French translation and in a slightly adapted form at the Studio adjacent to the Opera Bastille grand hall. The skilful performance with an alternation of recitatives in French and with vocal parts in the original language brought to the work all its charm and innocence. The psychological impact of this parabola makes the audience shiver at the poet's simple words:

*This is our custom in May every year,
The children help each well to find its spring
as if the earth her heart were laying bare
To bring a harvest fair up in the hills*

We therefore find in this parabola a hymn to children and a folk rite related to nature. And that was Martinů's intention. Composed for a children choir it brings

fifteen fragments from the ballet with songs by Leoš Janáček, *Rakos Rakoczy* (1891), typical of the composer's ethnomusicologist period and by some *Moravian Duets* (1876) by Antonín Dvořák which witness to the encounter of Janáček and Dvořák around the Moravian musical funds of Sušil. It is well known how important those subtle compositions were in the career of the *New World Symphony* composer.

The delicate execution itself of the *Opening of the Wells* is indeed a miracle. We owe it to a French-Czech choirmaster Natacha Bartosek who comes from the Czech Moravian land as Martinů and Bureš do. In France she is in charge of the Young Voices Ensemble *Aposiopée*, founded in 2004 as a successor of a children choir who first performed long extracts of the ballet with songs *Rakos Rakoczy* at the Auditorium des Halles in Paris in 2002 and 2003 and subsequently executed its stage version. The ensemble consists of about thirty young singers aged from 8 to 17 whose repertoire of French and foreign



Autograph of *The Opening of the Springs, H. 354*

music is nowadays quite extensive but it is the only ensemble whose repertoire includes an important part of Czech music in its original version. We still remember the September 2004 concert in the Paris Czech Centre (Janáček Hall) in the framework of the Weeks of Foreign Cultures when we heard choirs by Smetana, Dvořák and Janáček. Since then due to its effort and patience the *Aposioée* choir progressed further and extended its repertoire. Thanks to Natacha Bartosek the choir's future is guaranteed.

*Translated from French into English
by Jana Sadilová*

A CONCERT BY THE APOSIOPIÉE ENSEMBLE

6 February 2007
Opera National in Paris

Heng Shi, Baritone
Emmanuel de Lattre, Recitation
Frédéric Aladjem and Catherine
Martinez, Violin
Alain Martinez, Viola
Frédéric Lagarde, Piano

Aposiopée Ensemble, Choirmaster
Natacha Bartosek, Soprano and Alto
solo Léa Dahan, Mathilde Roge and
Léa Broux

FORTHCOMING CD

News

SMETANA TRIO, consisting of Jitka Čechová – piano, Jana Vonášková-Nováková – violin and Jan Páleníček – cello, are recording a new CD (to be released by Supraphon) containing *Piano Trio No. 2, H. 327* by Bohuslav Martinů. The album will also comprise Zdeněk Fibich's *Trio in F Minor* and Antonín Dvořák's *Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 21*. The CD should appear on the market in July 2007. Smetana Trio have recently won the prestigious BBC Music Magazine Award 2007 for a Supraphon recording comprising A. Dvořák's works – *Dumky, Op. 90*, and *Trio in F Minor, Op. 65*. The recording was selected from some 1,500 CDs released worldwide in 2006 and evaluated as the best in the "chamber music" category. ■



Dear Friend

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ'S LETTERS TO ZDENĚK ZOUHAR

VÍT ZOUHAR

"THE NAME OF THE GUY from Brno is Zdeněk Zouhar [...] he conducts there a female choir, I am in correspondence with him and he has procured some books for me I need here. They took great delight from the chorus." This is how on 2 October 1954 Bohuslav Martinů informed his siblings in Polička for the first time about Zdeněk Zouhar (1927), conductor of the choral society OPUS. The mentioned "chorus" is the cycle *Primrose*, H. 348 the composer was writing for Zouhar that summer. Although five years had already passed since the first letters were exchanged between Martinů and Zouhar, the specific request voiced by the twenty-seven-year-old choir-master and his concert plans for Bohuslav Martinů's compositions were the impulse not only for intensification of their correspondence but also the instigation for the origination and form of several works.

Zdeněk Zouhar, however, had first written to the composer back in 1949. At that time, he was still a music and art pedagogy student at Brno University and a private pupil of the composer Jan Kunc, who was working at this institution. He had just finished his cycle *Songs about Love* to texts of Moravian folk poetry. Enthused by Bohuslav Martinů's new vocal compositions, he sent his cycle for assessment to the composer in New York. A kindly and encouraging reply was the first letter of a correspondence that was to last ten years. Martinů invigorated the young composer by writing back to him on 11 October 1949: "I like your cycle, and what I like even more is that you are 22 years of age, which means that you have ahead of you a number of years of hard and responsible work in which one gets nothing for free, do not forget it, even for a moment." Zouhar continued studying composition with Alexander Moyzes at the University of Performing Arts in Bratislava and with Theodor Schäfer at the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno.

PRIMROSE

In June 1954 Zdeněk Zouhar completed his first season at the helm of the Brno-based choral society OPUS with whose female choir he performed, among other compositions, Antonín Dvořák's complete *Moravian Duets*. He was seeking new compositions for his chorus. Therefore, he resumed his previous correspondence with Bohuslav Martinů in order to ask the composer for a new composition. He suggested that it be a loose continuation of Dvořák's *Moravian Duets* and, at the same time, indicated his further intentions. He had in mind not only performing



In front of the house on the Svěpomoc Street No. 182. From the left: Ladislav Pražan, Zdeněk Zouhar, Jan Šprincl, Věra Šimůnková-Zouharová, Marie Pražanová, Marie Martinů, Jindřiška Martinů, Jan Edinger, František Martinů. Probably October 1954.

Bohuslav Martinů's works with his chorus, but also preparing a new concert series. The 1953–1954 season was also new for Zouhar due to the fact that following his brief employment at gymnasium in Bratislava (1950–51) and Znojmo (1951) he had returned to Brno to join the music department of the University Library, which he was to head until 1961. In this new milieu he began preparing a new concert series from Bohuslav Martinů's works. At the beginning of July 1954, he forwarded his concert plans to Nice with a request for a composition for the OPUS chorus. Martinů was impressed by the letter and duly met Zouhar's requirements. After returning from Allos, when he found the letter, he wrote to Brno on 29 July: "It will be my pleasure to write some duets for you, I am quite free now, [...] Working with our folk texts has always been a joy for me. I hope I will send them to you still during the holidays, and if I am not mistaken you really want duets or don't you want a chorus?" Without waiting for a reply and specifications, he informed as early as on 3 August: "Dear friend: It gave me great joy to compose again to our folk texts, so I will soon send you a collection of five duets bearing the title "Primrose". I will have a copy made and send it within a week or so."

This is how the cycle *Primrose* came to life. Martinů found in Zouhar not only

a performer but also a devoted promoter who always had "plenty of plans" (letter to siblings in Polička dated 27 July 1956) in a city he was bound to by a host of friendships and contacts from the inter-war (Vítězslava Kaprálová, Jan Kunc, Rudolf Firkušný, etc.) and post-war (Jan Novák, Břetislav Bakala, etc.) eras.

KEY TO OUR HOME

The letters Bohuslav Martinů sent to Zdeněk Zouhar form a mere fragment of the composer's correspondence in Czech in the 1950s. The thirty letters he sent to Brno between 11 October 1949 and 21 February 1959 are located in Zdeněk Zouhar's archives. With a few exceptions, they had yet to be published.

This intention only occurred in 2006 when Zdeněk Zouhar, together with the author of this study, completed the annotated edition of these letters, which is being issued in a Czech-English version under the title *Milý příteli: Dopisy Bohuslava Martinů Zdeňku Zouharovi. Dear Friend: Bohuslav Martinů's Letters to Zdeněk Zouhar* by the Palacký University Press in Olomouc. Zdeněk Zouhar's letters to Bohuslav Martinů have not been preserved, the only exception being the greetings on the composer's 64th birthday, which was located at the Bohuslav Martinů Memorial in Polička under shelf marque XVI/a 329.

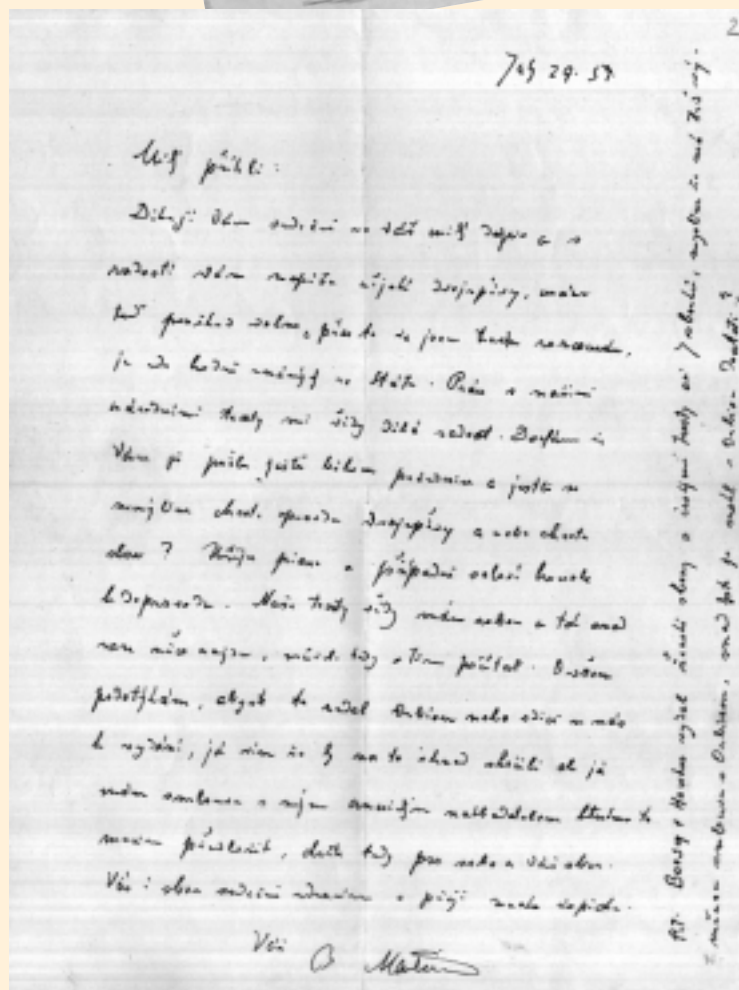
However, even this is now missing.

The correspondence elucidates the origination and performance aspects of Bohuslav Martinů's compositions. Besides the aforementioned *Primrose* cycle, it concerns, for example, the chamber cantata *The Opening of the Springs*, H. 354, the cantata *Mount of Three Lights*, H. 349, the oratorio *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, H. 351, the choral cycles *Brigand Songs I and II*, H. 361, as well as the opera *The Greek Passion*, H. 372. When in a letter dated 27 October 1954 the composer asked Zouhar to consult the Brno philologist Jan Šprincl about the accentuation of the text in the oratorio *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, he also mentioned Kazantzakis's novel *The Greek Passion* and pointed out: "[...] I think that I will take it as the subject for my next opera." Another letter indicates that Martinů considered making use of cimbalom in this opera: "Is there anybody over there who plays the cimbalom? I would like to use it in the new opera I am planning, and unfortunately information in instrumentations about this instrument is scarce and incomplete, only a quotation that such an instrument exists." This is what Martinů asked Zouhar on 30 January 1955. However, he eventually abandoned this intention.

Earlier still, preparation of the cantata *Mount of Three Lights* for the Dutch male-voice choir Die Haghe Sanghers led Martinů to seeking

Zouhar:

1949–1959



Envelope and letter from 29 July 1954

new “folk texts”. Therefore, in September 1954 he asked Zouhar to procure for him the “2nd volume of Janáček’s Moravian Songs”. Zouhar sent him the collection by return, adding the complete 1901 Bartoř and Janáček edition of *Moravian Folksongs Newly Collected*. Although Martinů ultimately used only two texts, the collection and Janáček’s introductory

treatise intrigued him to such an extent that they incited in him deliberations about and research into harmonisation of Moravian folksongs.

Although, with regard to his work on the oratorio *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and the orchestral *The Frescoes of Piero della Francesca*, H. 352 the composer could

not accept other Zouhar requests for new compositions, to which Martinů responded in the letters dated 7 and 27 October 1954 (“Christmas Mass”) and 30 January 1955 (“ballad”), after almost a year he indirectly returned to Zouhar’s calls. When at the beginning of July 1955 he read the volume of poetry *Song of the Rubínka Spring* by the Polička native Miloslav Bureř, he decided to use Zouhar’s OPUS choir and entrust them with the new cantata’s premiere. Without waiting for Bureř’s response, in letters dated 6 and 16 July 1955 Martinů informed Zouhar of the cantata *The Opening of the Springs* and his plans concerning the premiere in Polička.

WHAT MEN LIVE BY

The letters to Zdeněk Zouhar also contain detailed performance instructions. These primarily concern the opera *What Men Live By*, H. 336 and the second cycle of male choruses *Brigand Songs*. After Zouhar had written to Martinů about his intention to perform at a concert in Brno the opera *What Men Live By*, the composer replied on 11 March 1956: “It could be performed in concert version and with piano. It actually concerns a type of old plays that were called *Miracle*, religious and at the same time folk plays that can be performed anywhere, in fact it is not a theatre play as such, it is static and something like the legend of Dorothy. My own and main condition is that it must not be played **pathetically**, but joyfully”. And, in addition to the general tone, he also specified his conception of sets and costumes: “With regard to the concert direction aspect, I think that the piece should be actually performed on a stage without scenery. It doesn’t mean singers on chairs in one row but just that they would probably move on the stage, here, however, only in a small space. [...] Thus the actors would not act but sing and reduce gestures to the most essential.” Similarly, the letter dated 21 January 1957 is virtually given over to performance notes. Bohuslav Martinů dedicated the second cycle of *Brigand Songs* to the Moravian Teachers Choral Society and asked Zdeněk Zouhar to hand over a “directive” to the choir: “The songs are without bar-lines and must be sung according to the text and very free (not slowly!), i.e. like improvisation, they have complete liberty in this respect... I myself would only require two things, namely, definitely not singing them sentimentally, even if the text could tempt them to do so, and another thing, and this is important, getting into them a space, they can adapt everything else at their will.”

Besides these compositions, we can find in the letters mentions of performing other Martinů works. The composer repeatedly mentions *Three Legends*, H. 339, *Three*

Part-Songs, H. 338 and *Five Czech Madrigals*, H. 321, *Sonata No. 3 for Cello and Piano*, H. 340, *Fantasy and Toccata*, H. 281, the cantatas *Field Mass*, H. 279 and *Legend of the Smoke from Potato Fires*, H. 360, *Fantaisies Symphoniques (Symphony No. 6)*, H. 343 and the opera *The Marriage*, H. 341.

“SMALL THINGS”

At the same time, the correspondence supplements the mosaic of the composer’s deliberations about returning from exile to his homeland, and serves as proof of its unfeasibility. The letters confirm Bohuslav Martinů’s profound knowledge of the situation in Czechoslovakia, as well as his warnings against the consequences of an overly robust promotion of his person at a time when, as he stated himself, he was “banned”. In the letter dated 27 October 1954 he prompted Zouhar in Brno: “I would like to ask you for cautiousness in my promotion, you perhaps know why. Everything is still not in order, but everything has its time, even a flower.” This also bears witness to clear traces of self-censorship. For example, in the letter dated 18 December 1956, he comments on the situation “at home” merely in indications: “our mutual clasping of hands is also what I wish, perhaps it will happen one day once the clouds have dispersed and the whole horizon will be seen, as I used to see it from the Polička tower, for the present there are black clouds over the spa.” In vain, however, would we look for mentions of the composer’s existential complications or intimate relationships, as he wrote about them to his friends Frank Rybka and Miloř Šafránek. Zouhar was a performer, promoter and editor who did not need to be informed of such things.

The collection of letters intensifies with Bohuslav Martinů’s notes on the compositions written back in his youth. When correcting the list of compositions for *Bohuslav Martinů. Volume of Reminiscences and Studies (1957)*, which was under preparation, he demanded that space not be wasted on those “small things”, pointing out again at another juncture: “I don’t really like the page of small and insignificant compositions, in the case of many of them maybe just a title exists now, so it took up a lot of space.” This disparaging of early works was then significantly extended in the letter dated 26 June 1957. The composer responds in it to the rapid advent of New Music, stating: “you can expect a production that is not so entertaining”, adding, as if in resignation: “So I do not fit in with it obviously.”

The conclusion, however, is an ironic and fresh return. Happenstance dictated that Bohuslav Martinů’s last letter to Zdeněk

Dear Friend Zouhar:

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ'S LETTERS TO ZDENĚK ZOUHAR 1949–1959

Zouhar was a sort of *recontre* with the first letter. Similarly to in October 1949, in February 1959 too Martinů responds to Zouhar's new composition. This time it concerned the Wind Quintet 151. Martinů himself commented on his evaluation: "So I have criticised it pretty thoroughly, so do not be angry with me." The collection of letters concludes in two messages of the composer's wife Charlotte dated October 1959: the obituary announcing Martinů's death and the reply to Zouhar's condolences.

THE ADDRESSEE

In the years that followed Zdeněk Zouhar further developed his career as a composer. In the 1960s he began working at the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno, where later on he was appointed professor of composition and head of the Department of Composing and Conducting. Between 1997 and 2005 he was a professor at the Music Faculty of the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. He is the author of the operas *Proměna* (Metamorphosis, 1971) and *Velká láska* (Great Love, 1986), the oratorio *Plameny kostnické* (Flames of Constance, 1988) and *Půlnoční mše* (Midnight Mass, 1957), a number of chamber compositions, of which the Wind Quintet 151 (1958), to which Martinů responded in the letter dated 21 February

1959, was one of the most frequently performed. Zdeněk Zouhar also symbolically returned to his correspondence with Bohuslav Martinů in 1979 through his orchestral composition *Variace na téma Bohuslava Martinů* (Variations on the Theme of Bohuslav Martinů). Its theme is the song *Děvče z Moravy* (A Girl from Moravia) from the song cycle **Songs on Two Pages, H. 302**. The ten years of correspondence is reflected in the numeral ten in the number of variations.

Whereas Zouhar's compositions react to Bohuslav Martinů's creation rather sporadically, his conducting, scholastic, editorial and organisational activities are closely related to it. As conductor of the OPUS singers' association, in 1955 and 1956 he premiered, in addition to the *Primrose* cycle (whose three parts were dedicated to Zouhar and OPUS), another four Martinů compositions: *Five Czech Madrigals*, *Three Sacred Songs*, *Three Part-songs* and the cantata *The Opening of the Springs*. In Czechoslovak premiere, he performed the cycle *Five Czech Madrigals* and a cross section through the operas *What Men Live by* (*The Fairy-tale of a Cobbler*) and *The Marriage*. He established and prepared concert cycles from Martinů works at the University Library in Brno, which later became the starting point of the international music festival in Brno

whose first edition in 1966 was upon his instigation devoted to Bohuslav Martinů's work. As a music editor for Czechoslovak Radio from 1961 to 1971, Zouhar recorded Bohuslav Martinů compositions, with in many cases these being the first-ever radio recordings.

At the music department of the University Library in Brno he prepared and edited the first Czech book about the composer, *Bohuslav Martinů: Volume of Reminiscences and Studies* (1957). In 2001 he published the monograph *Sborové dílo Bohuslava Martinů* (Bohuslav Martinů's Choral Works). He continuously published studies largely focused on Martinů's work and prepared for publication his



Photo Lucie Berná

On 5 March 2007 Zdeněk Zouhar had been awarded the Bohuslav Martinů medal. The medal was presented by Ivan Štraus, President of the Board of Bohuslav Martinů Foundation.



Poster of the concert with parts of operas *The Marriage* and *What Men Live by*, 11 February 1956

compositions *Primrose, H. 348* (Panton 1976, 1985), *Little Songs for Children Voices' Choir, H. 373* (Panton 1976), *The Bird Feast, H. 379* (Panton 1977), *Czech Nursery Rhymes, H. 209* (Panton 1977, 1984), *Four Marian Songs, H. 235* (Panton 1979) and the opera *Three Wishes, H. 175*. In 1977 Zouhar became one of the founders of the Bohuslav Martinů Society, which he chaired between 1991 and 1999. He formulated the first draft principles of the Complete Critical edition of Bohuslav Martinů's works (1994) and from 1993 to 1999 chaired the editorial board of the critical edition.

The minimal possibilities of travelling in the 1950s from Czechoslovakia beyond the Iron Curtain were the reason why Zdeněk Zouhar never actually met Bohuslav Martinů. He did, however, frequently visit his siblings in Polička, where he acquainted himself with composition autographs, correspondence and documents preserved by Marie Martinů and Marie Pražanová, a close friend of the composer's sister. Only in the

1970s, when Charlotte Martinů visited Czechoslovakia, did he get to meet the composer's wife. Bohuslav Martinů also repeatedly mentioned the addressee's wife, Věra Zouharová (1928), in his letters. As a pianist, she participated in the premieres of the composition *Primrose* and the cantata *The Opening of the Springs*. In 1968, she completed her studies of musicology at Brno University with an extensive dissertation entitled *Klavírní dílo Bohuslava Martinů*. (Bohuslav Martinů's Piano Works).

When, in the letter dated 2 May 1957, Bohuslav Martinů concurred with Zdeněk Zouhar that „*Primrose opened the door*“, it not only concerned his work, but also his friendship with Zdeněk Zouhar and the intertwining of the Zouhars' fate with Bohuslav Martinů's work. ■

MARTINŮ 2009

News

In 2009 we will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the composer's death. Many organisers are preparing for this year large- or small-scale events at which works by Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959) will be performed.

BUDAPEST SPRING FESTIVAL WITH A CZECH OPENING

MARTINA FIALKOVÁ

Serving as a model example is the large-scale project in Budapest for whose materialisation several subjects have combined their powers. Its initiator is Jaroslav Šonský, a Czech violinist living in Sweden, an active member of the International Martinů Circle. (In 2003 he received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic the *Gratis Agit* award for long-term promotion of Czech culture abroad.) On the basis of his proposal, intensive negotiations with the Budapest-based association Bohemia (a holder of the same award) started last year. Subsequently, the

martinů revisited 2009

association's representatives Éva Molnár and Otto Zachár (Chairman) assisted with further steps and contacted the management of the Budapest Spring Festival, the biggest Hungarian musical event. The idea of opening the 2009 festival with Czech Days focused on B. Martinů's works was received very positively by the festival's director, Zsófia Zimányi. The project's preparations have been joined by the Czech Centre in Budapest and also supported by Prague's Bohuslav Martinů Institute. The list of performers and opuses that could form the content of the Czech Days originated according to the proposal submitted by Jaroslav Šonský. Further

discussions of all parties concerned resulted in a very interesting preliminary programme on which the festival committee has already begun working. At present, it is in the phase of specific steps being taken by the committee together with the Bohemia association and the Czech Centre management. The required finance is being sought both in Hungary and the Czech Republic (with the assistance of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute) and other accompanying events are being prepared.

The pivotal point of the festival's Czech opening will apparently be *Comedy on the Bridge, H. 247*, the very first Martinů opera to be presented in Budapest. It should be performed by a Hungarian opera ensemble. The programme will also comprise other significant Martinů works, alongside opuses by other Czech composers. An attractive component will undoubtedly be Martinů's *The Kitchen Revue, H. 161*, a hit with jazz elements composed as a pantomimic revue for five dancers,

narrator, violin, cello, bassoon, clarinet, piano and trumpet. Ensemble Martinů could perform something from its wide repertoire of contemporary Czech music too. The organisers hope that also participating in the Czech opening of the Budapest Spring Festival will be Magdalena Kožená, a unique interpreter of Martinů's songs.

ACCOMPANYING MUCHA

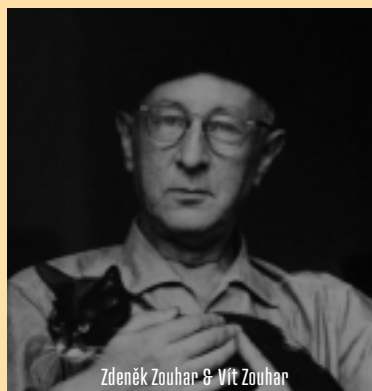
Just like every other big festival, Budapest Spring offers a host of accompanying events. For 2009 there is an excellent opportunity to combine the Bohuslav Martinů anniversary with that of another celebrated Czech who has influenced the course of world art history – Alfons Mucha (70 years since his death). Éva Molnár (from the Bohemia association), who translated into Hungarian Jiří Mucha's novel on his father's life, has enthusiastically plunged into preparations for a large Alfons Mucha exhibition at Budapest's Museum of Fine Arts. The Czech Centre is participating too.

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ZDENĚK ZOUHAR & VÍT ZOUHAR

Milý příteli: Dopisy Bohuslava Martinů Zdeňku Zouharovi

Dear friend: Bohuslav Martinů's letters to Zdeněk Zouhar



Zdeněk Zouhar & Vít Zouhar

Milý příteli:

Dear friend:

Dopisy Bohuslava Martinů Zdeňku Zouharovi
Bohuslav Martinů's letters to Zdeněk Zouhar

In English and Czech language

Palacký University, 394 pp
Scheduled date of publication:
June/July 2007

This unique collection of letters from the last ten years of Bohuslav Martinů's life addressed to Zdeněk Zouhar is a key testimony to Martinů's works, life circumstances and the relationship between the composer and the interpreter of his works who recorded the cantata *The Opening of the Springs, H. 354*, the cycles *Three-Part Songs, H. 338* and *Three Legends, H. 339*, and initiated the origination of the *Primrose, H. 348* cycle.

In the letters, published for the first time after almost fifty years, Martinů conveys his ideas of how the opera *What Men Live by, H. 336*, the *Primrose* cycle, the male choruses *Brigand Songs, H. 361*, the cantata *The Opening of the Springs* should be interpreted, and gives opinions on the new music, Moravian folksongs, his return from exile and many other topics.

This edition captures Martinů's singular literary style in authentic form, provides facsimiles of letters and juxtaposes the correspondence with the composer's letters to his family, friends, interpreters, as well as the reminiscences of his wife Charlotte.

My own and main condition is that it must not be played "pathetically", but joyfully. That is why it is called opera-pastoral. The text tempts a lot to a very serious and "deep" conception, but it was not my plan. For me it is a rather cheerful work and the listener must feel not a religious-like moral but joy. The moral is precisely in joy.

—From Bohuslav Martinů's letter to Zdeněk Zouhar on the interpretation of the opera *What Men Live by*, 11 March 1956

I have received a beautiful poem from a Polička native, M. Bureš, about the opening of the springs in our Vysočina. I was totally enchanted by the poem and immediately sat down at the piano. And now I think, if you would be interested, that we could make a premiere of this composition in Polička. I know you are looking for material and this would perhaps be the most suitable. It is for female choir and simple, Soprano and Alto Solo, Baritone Solo, two violins, viola and piano. I am sure that Bureš will agree too. So write to me and tell me what you think.

—From Bohuslav Martinů's letter to Zdeněk Zouhar, 6 July 1955

A 'SPORTSMAN CO

MARTINŮ, SPORT & SOKOL

ANTHONY BATEMAN

THE MODERN RENAISSANCE of organised sport originated in the elite 'public' schools of Britain but by the 1920s games such as football had achieved significant popularity across Europe. This development registered itself in the creative arts and particularly in artistic modernism. Sport provided many progressive young artists, writers and musicians with a rich source of inspiration as they broke with the traditions of nineteenth century Romanticism. For them sport was at once democratic, quintessentially modern and irreverently lowbrow. This article suggests that Bohuslav Martinů was one such musician, and that sport and sporting institutions made a significant impression on his life and work.

If we exclude hunting, there was little contact between sport and so-called 'classical' music before the twentieth century: Mozart's 'Skittle ground' trio was perhaps the product of his leisure pursuits, although scholars have recently doubted this; in Vienna the Strauss family waltz industry occasionally exploited the increasing vogue for sports such as horse racing by employing sporting titles for their publications; and composers such as Sir Edward Elgar sometimes scribbled musical sporting ditties for their own amusement. The remarkable Charles Ives was an early exponent of sports music (writing works such as *Yale-Princeton Football Match* as early as 1896), but he worked in a musical vacuum and these compositions were not performed until considerably later.

By the time Martinů wrote his groundbreaking football work, *Half-Time, H. 142* in 1924, sport was indelibly imprinted on the Parisian musical map. Two compositions were seminal in this process: Debussy's *Jeux*, a Nijinsky ballet employing tennis as an erotic metaphor, and Erik Satie's *Sports et Divertissement*, a multimedia experiment in irreverent musical Dadaism. But the interest in sport of Martinů and other younger composers was more substantial than that of Debussy and Satie. His friend Arthur Honegger had already written a fine ballet score called *Skating Rink*, a topical comment on the Parisian craze for roller-skating, a pursuit which enabled him to portray musically the Futurist fascination with mechanical movement. Honegger was surely influenced by *Half-Time* when he later composed his *Symphonic Movement No. 2 (Rugby)*, although he preferred the "savagely brusque, untidy and desperate rhythms" of that sport to the "more scientific" game



Half-Time (drawing by B. Martinů)

© PBM

of football. In 1922 fellow member of the *École de Paris*, Alexander Tcherepnin, had composed *For Boxing Training*, one of his *Three Pieces for Chamber Orchestra*, a highly contrapuntal and suitably punchy work first performed in Riga in 1926. Dmitri Shostakovich, an avid football fan, wrote *The Golden Age* in 1929, a propaganda ballet in which a Soviet football team visit corrupt and decadent Western Europe to play a game. There was also Pavel Bořkovec's *Start*, Louis Beydt's *Fanfares* and Loucheur's *Défilé Olympique*. However, not everyone approved of the trend for sports music. In 1934 the English composer, Constant Lambert, disapprovingly referred to Martinů and Honegger as "sportsman composers"; for him, their sports works had merely replaced Romantic pictorialism with an equally questionable "mechanical

picturesque". Ironically, Lambert himself had composed a ballet on a boxing theme only ten years before.

Whilst *Half-Time* forms part of a constellation of sports pieces emanating from Paris in the 1920s, its composer had a genuine and longstanding interest in sport, and particularly football, a game he had loved since his childhood. Although not related to sport in its formalised sense, his early ballet score, *The Shadow, H. 102* (1916) takes a macabre line on the idea of 'play'. In this one-act scenario a girl playing with a ball and a skipping rope literally dances herself to death as she chases her own shadow. More significantly, in the Foreword to Martinů's mousy ballet, *Who is the Most Powerful in the World, H. 133* (1923), his friend, the poet Vítězslav

Nezval, laid out a modernist manifesto for forward-looking young artists such as he and Martinů. Nezval suggested that popular culture, including organised sport, could provide them with a dynamic source of inspiration: "We are going to study the possibility of new ballet on the street, in the ring and the dance hall, everywhere movement is naturally manifested. We are going to look for immediate expressions of it at football and boxing matches..."

In Paris Martinů did exactly this. Shortly after his arrival he shared an apartment with the journalist, Ondřej Sekora, who was then a sports correspondent for the *Lidové noviny* newspaper and who soon afterwards introduced the sport of rugby to their native Czechoslovakia. The pair often went to football matches together and must have discussed the sport at length. In addition,



Paris 1924 – official poster of the Olympic Games

sport in Paris in the early 1920s was highly conspicuous. Although Martinů was back in Polička writing *Half-Time* during the 1924 Paris summer Olympics, he could not have avoided the significant hype and publicity that preceded this major sporting event. Furthermore, he would have taken great patriotic pleasure in the success of the Czechoslovakian national football team who had asserted the confidence and pride of this newly created nation by holding the world championship between 1919 and 1923. Perhaps because of these factors, an undated postcard to a friend in Prague states that his sporting interests were leading him to neglect composition!

Martinů owned a score of Debussy's *Jeux*, suggesting that he had studied this masterpiece in detail, but it is significant that he

IMPOSTER?

signalled his conversion to Stravinskian modernism with his own take on sport, *Half-Time*: the subject matter has superficial similarities to *Jeux* but gone is the impressionistic idiom. Whilst Satie had taken middle class leisure pursuits as a stimulus for an aesthetic of almost total inconsequentiality, the democratic modernity of organised spectator sport was for Martinů something altogether more serious. The Martinů scholars Brian Large, Miloš Šafránek and Jaroslav Mihule are in general agreement that in *Half-Time* Martinů conveys a sense of the movement and noise of a soccer crowd in music of a predominantly rhythmic character. The brisk tempi, which only dissipate for a few bars in the middle of the work,

also convey this context. In terms of its orchestration, the predominance of winds and brass and the use of an obligato piano part lend the work a suitably aggressive vigour and vitality. Structurally the entire work is based upon a short, two-bar rhythmic motif (the referee's whistle?) which is subjected to a process of continuous development and also recurs to separate the seven different variations (or 'phases of the game'). Like a game of football, the work has a remarkable rhythmic freedom within a relatively rigid formal structure; harsh ostinati, motoric rhythms and aggressive stabbing chords create a palpable sense of dramatic tension whilst demonstrating Martinů's debt to Stravinsky's *Petroushka* and



Half-Time (caricature by B. Martinů)

© PBM



Polička.



Sokolovna.

The building of the Sokol Gymnastic Society in Polička

© PBM

appropriately, given that sport itself is a quasi-religious social ritual, *The Rite of Spring*. At the same time, though *Half-Time* relates to professional, competitive sport, a sense of play in a more childlike sense permeates the work. As is evident in much of his music, Martinů never lost touch with the 'child within', a factor later made explicit in the children's games depicted in Act 1 Scene 3 of *Špalíček* (H. 214, 1932).

Half-Time was first performed by Václav Talich and the Czech Philharmonic on December 4th 1924 with the audience in Prague's Smetana Hall divided in loyalties like a football crowd, one section loudly enthusiastic and another vociferously hostile to the obvious influence of Stravinsky. Nevertheless, the work heralded Martinů as an important new musical voice and in 1926 he composed what can be described as a companion piece to *Half-Time*, *La Bagarre*, H. 155 (or 'The Tumult'). By the time of its first performance in 1928 Martinů had cleverly dedicated the work to Charles Lindbergh in the light of his solo non-stop flight across the Atlantic the previous year (also the subject of an opera by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill). Whilst the composition's aviation links were clearly an opportunistic afterthought, as with *Half-Time*, *La Bagarre* is fundamentally a musical expression of the crowd. In its programme notes Martinů wrote, "In *Half-Time* ... I have portrayed the tension of spectators at

a football match. *La Bagarre* is, properly speaking, an analogous subject, but multiplied, transported to the street. It's a boulevard, a stadium, a mass, a quantity which is delirium, clothed as a single body. It's a chaos ruled by all the sentiments of enthusiasm, struggle, joy, sadness, wonder. It's a chaos governed by a common feeling, an invisible bond, which pushes everything forward ... a new form of powerful, unconquerable human mass." Here Martinů gave eloquent expression to the modernist preoccupation with the crowd but with none of the reactionary connotations of W. B. Yeats's "rough beast". Rather, the movements, sounds and passions of the crowd betoken sport's democratic immediacy. Sport is therefore regarded as a suitable subject matter for a new form of art music. At the same time, whilst we can search for direct musical references to sport in works such *Half-Time* and *Rugby*, both Martinů and Honegger ultimately believed that the abstract language of music was incapable of representation in any realist sense. These works use musical language to create *abstract expressions* of the essence of the sporting experience and thus have visual parallels in abstract art works of the 1920s such as Willi Baumeister's *The Footballer* and John Heartfield's *Football*.

There is another important facet to Martinů's relationship to sport, one that is both highly personal and undeniably

A 'SPORTSMAN COMPOSER'?

MARTINŮ, SPORT & SOKOL

nationalistic, namely his connections with the Sokol gymnastic society. The Sokol (or 'Falcon') society was formed by Miroslav Tyrš and Jindřich Fügner in 1862 in order to promote Czech cultural and social life and to cultivate the physical and intellectual development of its members. Although gymnastics was the organisation's primary means of developing a national ideal in which the strong and healthy human body and the body politic were symbolically conflated, it also sought to nurture moral, educational and cultural principles. From 1882 Sokol held mass festivals (or in Czech 'Slety') in Prague, large-scale patriotic jamborees featuring vast collective gymnastic displays as well as theatrical, literary and musical events. Musical accompaniment to gymnastics was introduced at the second "Slet" in 1891 and, at the 1895 "Slet", a large contingent of Moravian Sokols performed an exercise routine with Indian clubs to the music of a lifelong Sokol member, Leoš Janáček.

Music had played an integral part in the ceremonial and social aspects of Sokol culture since its earliest days. In the early 1860s no less a figure than Antonín Dvořák amended the title of a short musical fragment to 'Sokol March' although the work was never completed. Later, the talented composer of band music, František Kmoch (1848-1912), received a regular salary from Sokol to provide marches for its ceremonial occasions. Martinů's teacher, Josef Suk, wrote a suitably uplifting march, *Towards a New Life*, for the 1920 "Slet". The work later received a silver medal in the music competition at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics (the gold medal not being awarded). The most famous Sokol composition is undoubtedly Janáček's *Sinfonietta*, a work first performed at a concert during the Prague "Slet" in June 1926. In the work's majestic opening *Allegretto* perhaps we can hear the emphatic syllables of the word 'Sokol' in the timpani part over which, in the long phrases of the brass, a triumphant falcon soars.

In many ways Martinů's relationship with Sokol demonstrates the broader cultural role of the organisation within Czech society. Martinů's father was an active member of the Polička Sokol and his son was thus involved with the society from his early childhood. The Polička Sokol provided moral and financial support for the composer's studies in Prague and also provided the young musician with performing opportunities. For example, in spring 1920 Martinů played the piano in two musical events organised by Sokol, the first of which formed part of the



La Bagarre, first page of the score (autograph)

© PBM

celebrations marking President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk's 80th birthday. Later, in 1933, the Sokol in Mělník expressed an interest in performing *Who is the Most Powerful in the World*, suggesting the extent to which Sokol was a cultural, as well as a sporting, organisation. On his summer trips back to Czechoslovakia during the 1920s and 30s Martinů made a point of attending the Sokol festivals in Prague (in the colder months he would enjoy skiing and other winter sports around Polička). As his letters suggest, Sokol gymnastic displays always made a profound impression on him.

In 1931 he wrote to his family from Paris telling them of his intention to enter a Sokol competition for an orchestral work due to be performed at the "Slet" of the following year. Soon afterwards he had completed his **Festive Overture for Sokol Festival, H. 211**. On the 29th March 1932 he again wrote to his family: "I received the [second] prize for the *Festive Overture for the Sokol Festival*.

It will be performed at the opening concert. I would have won first prize. Kunc wrote to me that it had been the only serious piece that had been entered, but one gentleman did not find it festive enough, therefore they could not award first prize to me, even though all the others were for it. First prize was not awarded at all." The jury included Josef Suk and the conductor of the first performance, František Stupka with Martinů receiving a prize of 3,000 Czech crowns. The work was later performed at the 1938 Festival. A critique of the performance in *Radio-journal* highlighted the contemporary interface of sport and music: "The relation of today's music to sport is all the stronger in so far as the new generation of composers draws inspiration from sport... Bohuslav Martinů wrote in Paris the football-inspired *Half-Time* and today gives us his *Festival Overture*. However, we have a lot of other composers who have found a strong stimulus for their creation in the Sokol exercises. The model is, of course, Suk's immortal march whose introductory

fanfare has already created a school." Martinů later continued this tradition by writing a 32-bar fanfare entitled **Greetings to Sokols and the Sokol Festival (without H-number)**, for the 1948 event. The piece was never performed and was smuggled into exile by Marie Provazníková, a Sokol official. It was subsequently arranged for 9 wind instruments by Jan Hanuš from the original piano version and published in 1976 in the Swiss journal, *Konfrontace*. The 1948 Sokol festival was the last before the organisation was banned by the communist regime.

The 1938 "Slet" had also occurred at a significant watershed in Czech history. As the storm clouds of war gathered, the media portrayed Sokol as a defiant symbol of Czech resistance to foreign tyranny and aggression. Martinů's experience of the 1938 Festival had confirmed him in this view and shortly afterwards, with the world teetering on the brink of conflict, he wrote: "All my thoughts and desires have been constantly bound-up with my imperilled homeland, where just a few months ago I was filled up with such great hope and joy from the unforgettable moments of the All-Sokol Festival." The composer was clearly an enthusiastic believer in the philosophical, nationalistic and athletic principles of the Sokol movement.

Sport was therefore a significant thread running through Martinů's life and work. At the level of his national identity, his relationship with Sokol – a relationship he nurtured even when living abroad – provided this deracinated figure with consistent point of reference, a sense of Czechness and national solidarity that he saw so graphically symbolised by those Sokol displays. At a more personal level, Martinů's interest in sport and his willingness to musically engage with it suggests a refreshingly unpretentious and democratic attitude towards popular culture more generally. Martinů was a creative artist of the highest order who nonetheless did not see himself as above or beyond the ordinary man or woman in the street. He could identify with, and celebrate, the passions, desires and pleasures of the crowd. For him the increasing separation between so-called "High Art" and the "Popular" was anathema to his musical aesthetic. Citing Martinů's programme notes to his First Symphony (1941), Miloš Šafránek wrote: "In *Half-Time*, Martinů's interest is focused on things and happenings of our everyday life, things often overlooked and their importance underestimated, but, in Martinů's view, 'more vital than many of the different slogans under which music today proceeds along beaten paths'". If, as Constant Lambert suggested, Martinů was a "sportsman composer", it was for sound musical and humanistic reasons. ■

JIŘÍ KOLLERT

...with

Interview

EVA VELICKÁ

In 1996 the pianist JIŘÍ KOLLERT received the 3rd prize of The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation Interpretation Competition, category of piano. Two years later, in 1998 as a member of Trio Concertante he won the 1st prize at the same competition in category of chamber music. Long before that time and ever since he has intensively devoted himself to performing and promoting Bohuslav Martinů's music. In addition to giving concerts and recitals, he has also recorded, written texts, organised competitions and participated in the editorial preparation of music for a Japanese publisher. Jiří Kollert, who is a distant relative of Bohuslav Martinů, has a Japanese wife and often gives concerts in Japan. In our interview, we also asked him about his experience with Japanese audiences.

For your CD "Martinů – Piano Works", released by the Japanese company Octavia Records Inc in 2003, you recorded five opuses from various periods of the composer's life. Can you try, on the basis of these compositions and from the viewpoint of a piano virtuoso, to characterise Martinů's stylistic development and direction?

Martinů's development is extremely interesting – from his enchantment with colour, through rollicking with rhythm to a synthetic and philosophical view at the end of his life. In all periods, however, he is truly Martinů, with his typical gentleness and refinement. The butterflies and birds of paradise are the result of his being bedazzled by Debussy, with his extensive range of colours, tints and reflections. I think that he learned a lot about the piano's palette, although he did not continue to pursue the same style. Then came France and its avant-garde milieu. Les Six, the admired Stravinsky and others must have been a revelation for Martinů. He managed to perfectly absorb new trends, move in them freely, as well as connect himself with his Czech roots. **Three Czech Dances, H. 154** is an excellent example – polka dances with jazz rhythms in a masterly synthesis. In addition, it is one of the favourite works of pianists. We pianists can perhaps also count ourselves lucky for Martinů's friendship with Firkušný, which might have encouraged him to write larger compositions, such as **Fantasy and Toccata, H. 281**. The second exile engendered a cleaving to his Czech roots and a profound and unpretentious



emotionalism. At the same time, in composing terms, he achieved a refined simplicity.

What are, in your opinion, the basic interpretational pitfalls of Martinů's piano music?

His delicacy, refinement, taste. In Paris he encountered all the latest artistic trends – it was a great place for honing one's taste. He is said to have been "chic" when it comes to appearance and he had exquisite taste in art. Thus, the greatest pitfall is the scale of means – not overburdening his music with an unduly great strength, massive *espressivo*, but at the same time retaining his emotional charge and boldness. With Martinů, the border is narrower than with the majority of composers.

On the CD you present piano music for solo piano. Do you also possess experience with Bohuslav Martinů's piano concertos or other orchestral compositions with piano?

Yes, a couple of years ago I played **Double Concerto for Two String Orchestras, Piano and Timpani, H. 271**. The conductor liked what I'd done with it and suggested that the next year I play **Piano Concerto No. 1, H. 149**. Unfortunately, some organisational complications occurred and the concert was abandoned. I would like to play all Martinů's concertos. However, few orchestras are willing to include them in their seasonal repertoire. And I would also like to record them.

To what extent does Martinů's music draw upon Czech tradition? Do audiences in Japan, where you have often given concerts, perceive Martinů's music as a kind of folk or exotic matter?

He draws a lot from Czech tradition, but it is significantly recast and enriched with

global trends. Hence, foreign listeners can also find in it what they already know. In addition, he does not have anything as folksy as the **The Opening of the Springs, H. 354** for solo piano. So, it is not exotic. But the Czech elements, the Slavonic touch, melodiousness, charm – yes, it is cherished.

Which other composers does Martinů's music fit well with on a concert stage in dramaturgical terms?

Thanks to its "classicality", it can be combined very well. It mixes superbly with Mozart or Beethoven, as well as, for example, with Debussy or Suk. I like playing Martinů with Suk due to a certain kinship of spirit and, at the same time, a substantial contrast in style. When abroad, I frequently juxtapose Martinů music, as the centre of gravity, with music by other Czech composers and add to it other European composers who influenced each other. The audience better orientate themselves, and it is interesting for me. Sometimes I even prepare an entirely Czech programme.

Let us return to the Czech tradition. Polka abundantly appears in many of Martinů's cycles. This dance and its piano stylisation is, however, also more than typical of Bedřich Smetana. What is the difference between the Smetana and Martinů piano polka?

Yes, Smetana began with it as a symbol of national music. It is beautiful, overgrown with folksiness, as if garbed. Martinů takes polka as a template, selects its typical elements and blends them with other elements, imparting its regularity with *contretemps*, puts the bass alternatively on the weak and strong beat. He also makes fun of it without causing offence. He is witty, amuses himself with it.

On another of your CDs you recorded music by Josef Suk, with whom Martinů briefly studied before leaving for Paris. However, this short "study" must be put in inverted commas. At the age of thirty-three, Martinů was already seeking style orientations and influences and yearned to obtain a scholarship in Paris. Could Suk still, in spite of this, have influenced Martinů somehow, and what could Martinů have learnt from him?

Martinů was definitely attracted by Suk, he visited him 11 years before this study. Suk created music with a national character, which was one of the major sources of inspiration for Martinů, as he said himself. At the same time, he was a much-travelled man with an overview of the course of events worldwide. In his music, I can see elements similar to those appearing in the work of some French composers. Suk's *Fantasy-Polonaise* reminded me of Saint-Saëns, *Filled With Longing* of Fauré, *The Breeze Summer Impressions* indicating impressionism. From among Czech composers, he perhaps represented a type closest to Martinů's notions. Martinů did not continue to pursue Suk's style, as you indicate, but I think he was influenced by him, and not only by the one year but also by the previous work he must have known. Maybe they had a similar relation to the piano too – for Suk it was a confessor of intimate feelings, while Martinů also opens his heart to the piano at difficult times.

Could you, in conclusion, reveal to us some of your future artistic plans?

In April I will play Rachmaninoff's *Concerto in C Minor* in Yokohama. I am scheduled to perform with the FOK Prague Symphony Orchestra and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. Abroad, I strive to promote Czech music as much as possible. I have just begun writing about Czech piano art on the website of the Japanese Society of Piano Pedagogues, every month one article supplemented by recordings. In addition, I am giving concerts and concerts with comments, will appear within a festival and will record a number of works by leading Czech composers for a programme of a Japanese television channel. I immensely enjoy presenting the beauties of our music. So far, I have mainly been successful in doing so in Japan, thanks to excellent cooperation with the company releasing my CDs and the publisher that issued a Suk album edited by me. Nevertheless, I hope that I will manage to extend my sphere of activity in such a scope into other countries too. ■

MILOŠ ŠAFRÁNEK: ENCOUNTER AFTER FIFTY

ALEŠ BŘEZINA

TORST PUBLISHES THE MEMOIRS OF MILOŠ ŠAFRÁNEK, DIPLOMAT AND MUSIC WRITER

MILOŠ ŠAFRÁNEK (1894–1982) was from the Europe-oriented generation with a liberal education who reached maturity at the time of the origination of Masaryk's Czechoslovakia. The relation to Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the founder of an independent nation built upon the ideals of healthy self-confidence supported by education and an extensive international perspective, became the determining basis for his own direction in life.

After completing his studies, Šafránek entered the diplomatic services. In 1927 he began working as a press attaché at the Czechoslovak embassy in Paris and thus found himself at the centre of probably the most important cultural metropolis of

the time. Within a short time, owing to his diligence, wide cultural interests and tolerant personality, he had made the acquaintance of a number of leading artists and politicians of the era. Later on, Šafránek himself expressed his experience in the words: "My element has always been action, as well as service, primarily for my country, Martinů in particular." The driving force behind his miscellaneous activities was the desire to mingle with extremely talented personalities and do in their favour everything that was within his powers. Perhaps he never strove to get his own personality into the centre of attention. He not only helped Czech artists living in Paris, but in fact all artists he met, be they European, or American, French or people attracted to Paris by its reputation as a city open to new trends in contemporary art. Music, composers and performers were at the centre of Šafránek's attention. Of interest is the fact that his first wife was the brilliant pianist Germaine Leroux, primarily famous for performing contemporary music. Šafránek was aware, as he stated himself, that



Germaine Leroux, Miloš Šafránek's wife, in New York



Miloš Šafránek in Paris, 1927

"music was a special, fateful phenomenon of my life, its catalyst. Music has never abandoned me."

Bohuslav Martinů, living in Paris from 1923 to 1941, found Šafránek a nigh-on indispensable assistant owing to his practical turn and unceasing desire to help. Šafránek introduced Martinů to artists and benefactors, he advocated performance of his works. He published many articles about the composer in dailies and magazines, later on also monographic works (1944 USA, 1946 England, in 1961 a definitive extensive version was published in Prague, also issued in German and English, to date still one of the basic sources for Martinů research). Over the decades, in his texts Šafránek drew the world's attention to Bohuslav Martinů's personality and music and strove to elucidate and interpret its aesthetic and general intellectual

resources. In addition to championing his music, Šafránek was also helpful to Martinů in tackling complicated life situations. Perhaps this most manifested itself at the beginning of World War Two when first he prepared the groundwork for Martinů's emigration to the USA, then procured for him an American visa and prior to the composer's arrival in the New World began energetically building up for him a good starting point in social, musical and musicological circles.

Šafránek managed to sort the composer's hitherto scattered oeuvre into an inventory which has served as the basis for all other work of this type. His extensive probate estate, also comprising the manuscript of the presented reminiscences, is deposited and gradually being worked through at the Bohuslav Martinů Memorial in Polička. Besides autographs and photographs, it contains correspondence, a prolific and

YEARS

interesting source for research into Martinů's work and life.

In his lifetime, Šafránek did not receive gratitude in Czechoslovakia for his work in favour of Martinů, who lived in exile from the 1940s and later on even became a US citizen. The very opposite was the case. However, his impact on research into Bohuslav Martinů was immense. We still encounter in Czech and foreign literature alike formulations taking over his intellectual patterns and stereotypes without the necessary critical reflection. This is primarily the case of his indirect records of the composer's statements and testimonies to the intellectual circles in which their multiyear dialogue took place. Upon closer inspection, we can still see traces of his distanced relationship to music analysis and the proclivity to excessive deprecation of the group of composers from German-speaking countries who were for Martinů at the outset of his music career apparently more important than he later on admitted. Typical features of Šafránek's literary activity are spirited formulation, the ability to immediately intrigue and lead every story to its point. In this respect, he is similar to his somewhat older contemporaries André Maurois and Stefan Zweig, who also saw in the genre of biography an artistic expression of its kind.

Naturally, during the years spent in France and the USA Miloš Šafránek experienced much more than was possible to fit into the mentioned monographs on Martinů. Fortunately, he set aside time for writing memoirs into which he put at least a part of that which was essential for him. Today,



Bohuslav Martinů and Miloš Šafránek in Paris, 1927

after the more than forty-year isolation of Czechoslovakia from the free world caused by the communist regime, we can barely imagine just how significant a personality of the Paris of that time Miloš Šafránek was. A number of Czech artists whom in the 1950s and 1960s he helped to spirit away from that prison of the mind, at least by means of his works, speak about encounters with Miloš Šafránek and the stories he told with a slightly amused look on their face. As if they were conveyed by someone who must be taken with a pinch of salt and not a man who effectively helped them. In stark contrast to this view is the pronouncement of Jean Leduc, director of one of the world's

largest publishing houses. When, several years ago, I told him that The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation had dedicated to Miloš Šafránek the concluding concert of the Bohuslava Martinů Festival 2002 and, *in memoriam*, also its memorial medal, he lit up with happiness and quietly said: "Mon oncle Miloš. It was he who introduced me to French high society at that time."

Owing to the fact that for several decades their author fraternised with the most important personalities of the time, Šafránek's memoirs represent a fascinating cross section through the cultural and political history of Europe and the USA. A cross section all the more valuable in so far as it presents a 20th century history different to the one that could be presented at the time of the German and Soviet occupations of Czechoslovakia. Šafránek does not so much describe the development of his own deliberations – these appear as definitively formulated during his studies in Telč and Prague and the first years of his stay in Paris – to a much greater extent he focuses on encounters with important people. That is also why his reminiscences are not lined up chronologically but as (mini)portraits of personalities. The publication of Miloš Šafránek's memoirs is one of the most significant publishing events of the present time since it markedly contributes not only to an understanding of the non-communist history of the Czech lands but also to a more profound knowledge of the political and artistic history of Europe and North America in the first half of the 20th century. ■



NEW BOOK

Miloš Šafránek: Setkání po padesáti letech (Encounter after Fifty Years)

Prague, Torst 2006, 364pp ISBN 80-7215-295-5
In Czech language.



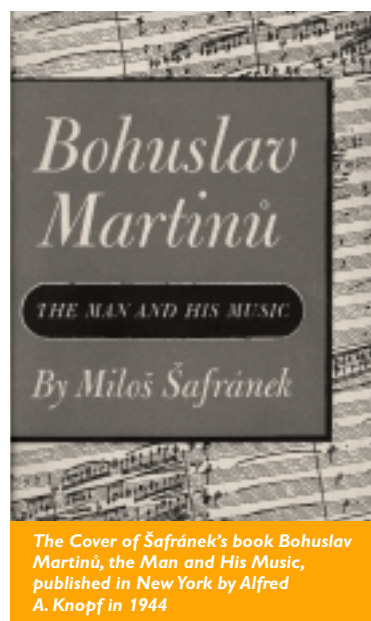
The name of the diplomat and music writer Miloš Šafránek (1894–1982), father of the photography historian Anna Fárová and co-founder of Prague's Theatre of Music, is primarily known in the Czech Republic thanks to his pioneering books about his friend Bohuslav Martinů published between 1961 and 1979. Little is known, however, about the remarkable course his life took, his diplomatic work in France (1927–38), sojourn in the United States (1939–45) and his systematic championing of Czech music worldwide. This all is dealt with in a voluminous book of his reminiscences whose core is formed by his pre-war stay in France and the wartime years spent overseas. Šafránek was in close personal contact with the dozens of personalities of French and Czech culture he depicts in his book. The centre of gravity of his interest is Czech music, whose promotion in France he significantly participated in. Essential parts of the book are devoted to the personality of Bohuslav Martinů. The book comes with a photography supplement and an index of names.

www.torst.cz



Bohuslav Martinů, Germaine Leroux and Léon Barzin before the premiere of *Sinfonietta Giocosa*, H. 282, in New York, 1942

© PBM



The Cover of Šafránek's book *Bohuslav Martinů, the Man and His Music*, published in New York by Alfred A. Knopf in 1944

CONCERTS

19 August 2007

• Biel, Switzerland
The Revolt, H. 151
Bieler Symphonieorchester

ENSEMBLE MARTINŮ IN GREECE

14 September 2007 / Santorini
17 & 18 September 2007 / Athens
Promenades for flute, violin & piano, H. 274

24 & 25 September 2007

• Augsburg, Germany
The Frescoes of Piero della Francesca, H. 352
Philharmonisches Orchester Augsburg

25 September 2007

• Brasilia
Symphony No. 6 (Fantaises Symphoniques), H. 343
Conductor: Ira Levin

4 October 2007

• Konzerthaus, Kleiner Saal, Berlin, Germany
Sextet for piano & wind instruments, H. 174
Quintett Chantilly, Pirmin Grehl (flute), Florian Grube (oboe), Johannes Zurl (clarinet), Dmitry Babanov (horn), Bence Boganyi (bassoon), Ben Kim (piano)

13 October 2007

• St James Church, Piccadilly, London, UK
Covent Garden Chamber Orchestra
Conductor: Peter Stark
Paul Silverthorne (viola)
Rhapsody-Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, H. 337

24 October 2007 / 7.30 pm

• Rudofinum, Prague, CZ
Tre Ricercari, H. 267
Prague Philharmonia
Conductor: Jiří Bělohávek

1 November 2007 / 7.30 pm
2 November 2007 / 11.00 am
3 November 2007 / 8.00 pm

• Lincoln Center, New York, USA
Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra, H. 292
New York Philharmonic
Conductor: Semyon Bychkov
Katia and Marielle Labèque (pianos)

FESTIVALS

MITTE EUROPA FESTIVAL 2007

www.festival-mitte-europa.com
17 July 2007 / 7:30pm

• Schloß, Schloßplatz, Schlettau, Germany
Martinů, Fibich, Dvořák
Smetana Trio

25 July 2007 / 7:30pm

• Aegidienkirche, Schulstraße, Regnitzlosau, Germany
Martinů, Dvořák, Bach
Tomáš Jamník (cello), Eleonora Reznik (piano)

ASPEN MUSIC FESTIVAL

www.aspenmusicfestival.com
2 August 2007 / 6.00 pm

• Benedict Music Tent, Aspen, CO, USA
Double Concerto, H. 271
Aspen Concert Orchestra,
Conductor: Tito Munoz

FESTIVAL DE MÚSICA DE LA CATALUNYA CENTRAL

www.aimsnet.org
15 August 2007 / 10.00 pm

• Teatre Comarcal de Solsona, Catalunya, Spain
Seon-hee Myong (piano)
Paul Silverthorne (viola)
Sonata for Viola and Piano, H. 355

24 August / 10.00 pm

• Església de Sant Llorenç de Morunys, Spain
Evgueni Grach (violins), Andriy Vityovych (viola)
Madrigals (Duo No. 1) for Violin and Viola, H. 313

OPERAS BALLETS

21 & 22 September 2007
11 & 12 October 2007

• Konzerthaus, Werner-Otto-Saal, Berlin, Germany
The Amazing Flight, a mechanical ballet, H. 159
Conductor: Gerd Herklotz
Modern Art Ensemble

21 September 2007 / 8.00 pm

• Konzerthaus, Werner-Otto-Saal, Berlin, Germany
Larmes de couteau – The Knife's Tears, opera in one act, H. 169
Conductor: Gerd Herklotz
Modern Art Ensemble

ON AIR

23 July 2007

A recording of Martinů's **Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra, H. 342**, from February 2007 at the Smetana Hall, Municipal House, Prague, performed by the Rozhdestvensky family, will be broadcast by Český rozhlas 3 – Vltava. The concert will be broadcast online as well (www.rozhlas.cz/vltava).

BBC PROMS

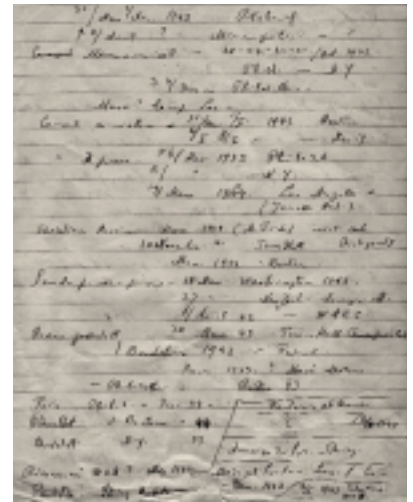
www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2007
26 August 2007 / 7.30 pm

• Royal Albert Hall, London
Prom 56
Piano Concerto No. 4 'Incantation', H. 358
BBC Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Jiří Bělohávek
Ivo Kahánek (piano)
Live broadcast by BBC Radio!
The concert will as well be broadcast online at www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2007/whatson/week1.shtml

This is only a selection of Martinů performances all over the world. Please, help us to compile the concert calendar; inform us about events involving Martinů's music!

THE MARTINŮ INSTITUTE'S CORNER

THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ INSTITUTE would like to extend its cordial thanks to Mr Oldřich F. Korte for donating part of lists of performances of Martinů compositions written in the composer's hand. On the first page the list begins with the compositions **Concerto Grosso, H. 263, Sinfonietta Giocosa, H. 282, Double Concerto, H. 271**, followed by **Symphonies No. 1, H. 289 and No. 2, H. 295**. The second page finishes with **Piano Quintet No. 2, H. 298**. It primarily concerns the compositions' performances in the USA. Although the data from Martinů are not complete and with several compositions he himself adds question marks concerning the exact date of performance, this source provides valuable information about performances of Martinů works and the composer's efforts to monitor and record these performances. ■



List of performances in the United States in the 1940s (Martinů's hand)

OBITUARIES

DR. RICHARD KLOS

Ivan Štraus

Dr. Richard Klos had the misfortune to be born in 1924, part of a generation earmarked for total deployment during the Nazi occupation. He managed, however, to escape this fate before graduating from secondary school by signing up as an apprentice locksmith. His apprenticeship finished right at the end of the war. In addition to manual skills, he also received an indenture that was to provide him with sufficient working-class credentials during post-1948 loyalty screenings. Hence, he was able to complete his studies of law in 1950. His first job was as an accountant in the company Textilia, which was in liquidation. Two years later, he was employed by Tesla Hloubětín, this time as a lawyer. However, the work proved to be tedious, which is why he had ten years to further educate himself in civil law. Later on when his mother persuaded him to apply for a lawyer's position at the Czech Music Fund he had already turned 40. There the most interesting chapter of his life began: a continuous balancing act between obligatory libations to the Communist gods and the endeavour to do something good – first for Janáček, later on (in a scope surmounting the national significance) for Bohuslav Martinů. Following rapid training in copyright law, he could see to efficient setting up of financial mechanisms in the case of Leoš Janáček's bequest. As a result, the Zdenka and Leoš Janáček Foundation could begin taking better care of Janáček's works, which at that time started to be asserted in a larger scope. Later on, his experience with settlement of Janáček's matters came in useful when building up The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation under the aegis of



the Czech Music Fund. The ideological leader of the Martinů cause was Josef Páleníček, a close friend of the Martinůs, who spread visions and ideals around him. The infantryman who rounded them up and translated into juridical language acceptable for the powers that be, was Dr. Klos. Among his achievements during the twenty years he worked for the Czech Music Fund was, for example, the drawing up of a last will and testament template by the Faculty of Law of Charles University which could be accepted worldwide. His deep knowledge of German allowed him to communicate with one of the members of the Martinů Mission, including the world's greatest copyright expert, Dr. Uchtenhagen; the commander-in-chief of the Swiss Armed Services and Mayor of Lucerne, Dr. Meyer; the closest friend of the Martinůs, the pastor Max Kellerhals; and other prominent persons, mainly in Switzerland. Although he did not consider his French language skills up to scratch, he still became the most important legal adviser to Mrs Charlotte Martinů and enjoyed her boundless confidence. He formulated her first and second (significantly amended) last will and testament, the one in which she bequeathed the bulk of the revenues to The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation within the Czech Music Fund. He induced its director, Mr. Ševčík, to

REPORT FROM A RESIDENCY AT BÄRENREITER-VERLAG, KASSEL

Thanks to financial support from the European Social Fund*, Aleš Březina, Director of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute, was able to take up a residency at the German music publishing company Bärenreiter in Kassel. The residency took place from 20 to 30 March 2007 and its objective was to extend editing experience and familiarise the participant with the operation of a leading global publishing company specialised in urtext and critical editions. Aleš Březina pursued both common current and urtext editions (for example, Claude Debussy – Suite Bergamasque), as well as critical editions (for example, Hector Berlioz-Gesamtausgabe and Gioachino Rossini-Gesamtausgabe, currently under

preparation). The internship also comprised excursions to the publisher's various departments (the distribution depot, rental depot, production department).

During his stay, he also studied and described all the B. Martinů autograph sources at the Bärenreiter publisher and discussed the conditions of the project of digitising all Martinů's autographs deposited at Bärenreiter.

A. B. worked with the publisher's lecturer on revision of the Editorial Principles – their division into a wider variant exclusively intended for editors of The Bohuslav Martinů Complete Edition and a narrower variant that will be published for the public.



Another outcome of the residency was the acquisition of coloured copies of three B. Martinů autographs (*La Rhapsodie, H. 171, Rhapsody-Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, H. 337* and *Mirandolina, H. 346*).

* The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund, the state budget of the Czech Republic and the budget of the City of Prague. The project has been supported within the framework of the JPD 3 programme (Single Programming Document for Objective 3) Measure 3.2 Development of Further Education. The name of the project is Professionalisation in music materials editing through further education of music experts.



invest the initial 100,000 Czech crowns in the Foundation. By means of his infallible pen, Dr. Klos protected this finance against the grabbing hands of the bosses of that time. He convinced Minister of Culture Klusák, on the basis of his flawless French and personal charm, to befriend Charlotte Martinů, which he consequently did. And, last but not least, Dr. Klos was the inconspicuous prime mover behind the transfer of the remains of Charlotte and, later on, Bohuslav Martinů to Polička. He encountered dunces and shysters, as well as persons of extraordinary character. He knew how to talk to each and every one of them in the right pitch so that nothing could set back the Martinů cause and it could slowly progress. He knew how and on whom to foist an idea, convincing the respective person that it was precisely him/her who had initiated the next step forward. He knew when it was necessary to be cautious and when he could take risks. His life was Big Manoeuvres. He staved off stress by means of his famed dry English-type humour, as well as the support he had in his precious wife. Now Dr. Klos can talk to Janáček and Martinů in person. We, the survivors, believe that both of the two great men have extended to him their effusive thanks for the immense yet primarily behind-the-scenes work he carried out to preserve their respective legacies. Let us remember him with love and gratitude.



ductor at the Tanglewood Music Festival in Lenox, Mass. In 1942, he studied with Bohuslav Martinů in Tanglewood. In 1945 he joined the New York Philharmonic, where he became assistant conductor. In 1949, Hendl was appointed music director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra; from 1953 he simultaneously held the same post with the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, staying until 1973. Hendl was always interested in new scores: he had given the first performance of Peter Mennin's Third Symphony with the New York Philharmonic in 1947, putting the 23-year-old composer on the map; and in Dallas his premiere performances included, in 1949, the **Third Piano Concerto, H. 316**, of Bohuslav Martinů who, with the soloist, his fellow Czech Rudolf Firkušný, had come to the United States as a refugee early in the war. Another important premiere came in 1954, when he conducted Aldo Parisot and the New York Philharmonic in Villa-Lobos' Second Cello Concerto. Mr. Hendl headed the Eastman School in Rochester from 1964 to 1972. After leaving Eastman, he joined the conducting faculty of the Juilliard School in Manhattan. He directed the Erie Philharmonic Orchestra until 1990.

<http://news.independent.co.uk/people/obituaries/article2461436.ece> ■

WALTER HENDL

Walter Hendl, musician, pianist, well-known conductor and former director of the Eastman School of Music, died on 10 April 2007. He was 90. Mr. Hendl was born January 12, 1917, in West New York, N.J. He won the New Jersey State Piano Competition in 1936 and entered the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia the next year. His breakthrough came in 1941, when Serge Koussevitzky trained him as a con-

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- *Piano Quintet No. 1*, H. 229
 - *Piano Quintet No. 2*, H. 298
 - *Sonata for Two Violins and Piano*, H. 213
- Martinů Quartet, Karel Košárek – Piano
Recorded in 2005 / Naxos LC 05537, 2007
See also review on page 6.

NEW BOOKS

Martinů's Mysterious Accident

Essays in Honor of Michael Henderson. Ed. Michael Beckerman.
New York,

Pendragon Press 2007, 198 p. Studies in Czech music No. 4, ISBN 978-1-57647-003-9

Despite the fact that Bohuslav Martinů lived for several years in the United States and had many of his works premiered in this country, he still stands as an enigma. This collection of essays by an international group of experts, is dedicated to the memory of **Michael Henderson**, who died in 1994 at the age of 47. Henderson was in the process of writing a biography of the composer. These essays include a range of new approaches to Martinů – **Judy Mabary** gives a concise history of Martinů's collaboration with choreographer Eric Hawkins, **The Strangler**; **Aleš Březina** looks penetratingly at the often tortured relationship between Martinů and the Czechoslovak government; and **Michael Beckerman** explores questions of construction in Martinů's *Piano Concerto No. 2*. Shorter pieces by Czech scholars **Iša Popelka** and **Jaroslav Mihule** are also included. In addition, there will be an essay by Michael Henderson on „Martinů's Mysterious Accident“ which will shed light on one of the most harrowing events in the composer's life. More info and orders: www.pendragonpress.com



Bohuslav Martinů

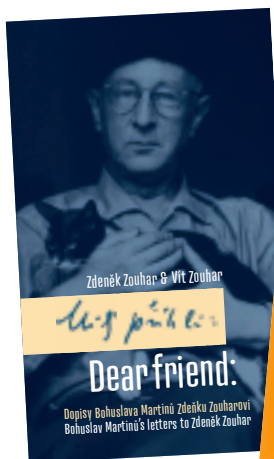
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- Philipp Naegle – Violin and Viola, Pina Carmirelli –
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Recorded in 1979 / Da Camera Magna, ADD, DaCa 77 803

Zdeněk Zouhar & Vít Zouhar Dear friend: Bohuslav Martinů's letters to Zdeněk Zouhar

For details see page 11.

Miloš Šafránek: Setkání po padesáti letech (Encounter after Fifty Years)

For details see page 17.



Bohuslav Martinů: Kammermusik

- *Fantasy for Theremin*, H. 301
 - *Quartet for Oboe, Violin, Cello and Piano*, H. 315
 - *Duo No. 2 for Violin and Viola*, H. 331
 - *Duo No. 1 for Violin and Cello*, H. 157,
 - *Duo No. 2 for Violin and Cello*, H. 371
- Stamitz Quartet, Lajos Lencsés – Oboe,
Valérie Hartmann-Clavierie – Ondes-Martenot,
Helena Suchárová – Piano
Recorded in 1996 / Bayer Records, DDD, 100 358, 2006