

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ

The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation  
The Bohuslav Martinů Institute  
The International Martinů Circle



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY—APRIL 2006 / VOL. VI / NO. 1

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Welcome

## THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ NEWSLETTER

is published by the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation in collaboration with the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague

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B. Martinů & A. Svoboda in Central Park, New York, cca 1943 ©PBM

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THE PREVIOUS ISSUE



## MUNICIPAL MUSEUM — BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ MEMORIAL IN POLIČKA

OFFERS a permanent exhibition 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](http://www.muzeum.policka.net) and [www.policka-mesto.cz](http://www.policka-mesto.cz)

## CELEBRATING TWO GREAT CONDUCTORS

17th November 2005 – Sir CHARLES MACKERRAS – 80th birthday

24th February 2006 – JIŘÍ BĚLOHLÁVEK – 60th birthday

The Bohuslav Martinů Institute and Foundation would like to express their thanks to both maestros for their continuing efforts in promoting the music of Bohuslav Martinů throughout the world. We would like to thank them both and wish them good health and much success in their work in the years to come.

## THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL BOARD

THE UNIFORM WORDING of the introduction to the Collected Critical Edition of the Works of Bohuslav Martinů will be elaborated, the form of the main musical text in part of the first volume of the edition will be harmonised (Concerto grosso H. 263) and the schedule for the editorial work and the timetable for the volumes will be set in cooperation with the publisher during the fourth meeting of the International Editorial Board for the Collected Critical Edition of the Works of Bohuslav Martinů, which will be held at the Bohuslav Martinů Institute on 20th–21st May 2006. Contact Lucie Berná for more information ([lucie@martinu.cz](mailto:lucie@martinu.cz)).

## MARTINŮ MUSICAL THEATRE

THE THEATER MÜNSTER, Freie Universität Berlin and the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague will co-host a public conference on the musical theatre of Bohuslav Martinů. The conference will take place on 29 and 30 April 2006 in Münster upon the occasion of the performance of Bohuslav Martinů's opera *The Tears of the Knife* (*Larmes du couteau*), H. 169 at the Theater Münster.

## THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE SPRINGS (H. 354)

THE OPENING OF THE SPRINGS cantata was first performed on 7th January 1956 in the Tyl House in Polička by the Brno OPUS women's choir under the leadership of Zdeněk Zouhar. The work was performed in the setting for the Musical School and the Parents' and Friends Association of the Bohuslav Martinů Music School.

A concert of the OPENING OF THE SPRINGS was held in the Great Hall at the Tyl House in Polička at 5:00 pm on 7th January 2006 upon the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the cantata. The work was performed by the KUHN CHILDREN'S CHOIR with the conductor Professor Jiří Chvála, recitation by Bořivoj Navrátil, Daniel Wiesner on the piano, Roman Vocel as the baritone and the Martinů Quartet.

## NEW DISCOVERY

Thanks to Eva Velická, the missing *String Trio no. 1, H. 136* (including the parts) has been found at the Danish Royal Library. More information about this fantastic discovery see this issue, page 7!

## THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ DISCUSSION GROUP

THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ DISCUSSION GROUP is a free and spam-free international online forum which allows realtime communication between Martinů lovers everywhere. While our current membership of 285 includes many renowned scholars, composers, conductors, performers and writers, all music lovers are welcome and do participate. Even the most arcane question may be answered in minutes when it is sent to so many knowledgeable people. Email delivery is optional and you may prefer to read the message archives at our website:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BohuslavMartinuDiscussion/>

## DEAR READERS

THE NEW ISSUE of the Bohuslav Martinů Newsletter is focused on Martinů's life and work in the United States. Since we have received many interesting articles on this topic, part of the next issue will be dedicated to this period of Martinů's life as well.

We also bring a traditional overview of most recent news and events and reviews of concerts, operas and festivals featuring Martinů; there were many of them at the end of the last year.

We hope you will enjoy the new Bohuslav Martinů Newsletter.

Zoja Seyčková  
and Jindra Havlíčková  
Editors

## INTERNATIONAL MARTINŮ CIRCLE

### MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

#### YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION

- **20 Euro / 25 USD for individuals** (Subscription includes 3 issues of the Bohuslav Martinů Newsletter and a non-commercial CD recording from the Bohuslav Martinů Festival.)
- **100 Euro for companies** (Subscription includes 10 copies of each issue of the BM Newsletter and three copies of the non-commercial CD recording from the Bohuslav Martinů Festival.)
- Single copies (back issues) of the Newsletter: **CZK 50 / 2 Euro** + postage

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### THE IMC CORDIALLY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- J. L. Chavarot, France
- Martin Prchal, Netherlands
- Gary M. Wright, USA
- Anthony Bateman, UK
- Santiago Castillo Sanchez, Spain
- Jean-Claude Aymond, France



## A CONCERT GIVEN BY PIANO COMPETITION WINNERS

organised by the  
Bohuslav Martinů  
Foundation  
(4 December 2005)

JULIUS HŮLEK

THE CONCERT was commenced by Zuzana Pohůnková (1983), a student at the VŠMU in Bratislava, who received an honorary award. In the Suite of opus 14 by Béla Bartók she used relatively prominent dynamics, attempted to make the rhythm interesting and drew clear dividing lines between the phrases in harmony with the make-up of the piece. The Sonata in C major by W. A. Mozart (K. 309) performed by Pavla Reiffersová (1983), also studying in Bratislava, but at present at JAMU in Brno as part of an exchange programme, sounded rather more robust than delicate. While playing *Island of Joy* by C. Debussy the second prize winner simply excelled with her sense of colourful tone and delicacy of keystrokes. Michal Šupák (1988), a piano and composition student at the Janáček Conservatoire in Ostrava, won 3rd prize and the prize for best interpretation, a skill he demonstrated with his performance of *Eight Preludes, H. 181* by Bohuslav Martinů, during which he won over the audience with his technical brilliance and his spontaneous but well considered and disciplined recital. The enthusiastic response from the audience only confirmed the undeniable talent of this young performer. The surprise of the evening, and indeed of the entire festival, was the modern premiere of *String Trio No. 1, H. 136* by Bohuslav Martinů. The trio was the first work Martinů wrote during his time with Albert Roussel and which he finished in January 1924. The work which had its premiere in 1924 in Paris and the following year in Prague, was until recently thought to have been lost. It is an excellent example of the expressionist leanings of the composer in the 1920s. It is a work charged with inner strength and expressive energy and it was performed with passion and conviction by members of the Zemlinsky Quartet (known earlier as the Penguin Quartet) František Souček (violin), Petr Holman (viola) and Vladimír Fortin (cello). ■

(The review is reprinted from magazine  
*Hudební rozhledy*, No. 2, 2006)



Pavla Reiffersová, Michal Šupák a Zuzana Pohůnková



Members of Zemlinsky Quartet play String Trio No. 1, H. 136



Škampa Quartet

## IVA BITTOVÁ SANG JANÁČEK AND MARTINŮ

PETR VEBER

**IVA BITTOVÁ** spiced up the concert (December 5 at the Rudolfinum), which took place as part of the Bohuslav Martinů Days, with her inimitable delivery and a version of Janáček's *Moravian Folk Poetry*, which you may have heard on CD. This programme had earlier proved a huge success in several European capitals. This comes as no surprise; Bittová is a fountain of ideas, her voice sometimes achieving the almost impossible as far as technique and range are concerned, from purely Moravian folk notes to unfettered gypsy abandon, from delicate hesitant tones and coloratura to chirping, cooing and other assorted sounds. When required, she is accompanied on the violin; when the repertoire is missing, she writes something or improvises. She sampled all of this with the Škampovo kvarteto (Škampa Quartet). She is an actress; she knows how to move, how to impress with stylised gestures; she wanders the stage, stamps her feet and claps to the rhythm; she's a comedian and entertainer; she loves to please without words and she knows how to give a scene a 'punch-line'. The Slovak composer Vladimír Godár put all of this, as well as much heart and soul, into his version of Janáček's *Moravian Folk Poetry*. He stage-managed Bittová and the Škampa Quartet superbly; the musicians sing, the instrument and soloist's parts intertwine... The live performance, as well as the recording, is exciting an experience. The music sounds very natural, poetic, fresh and playful in a genre which could be called a response to folk music. Two songs by Martinů (from the cycle *Songs on One Page, H. 294*) continued in the same vein. The Škampa Quartet confirmed that evening that they are one of the best in the country. In addition to all their specific tasks, including a St Nicholas Day piece of improvisation in between encores, they also performed their oddest role: The Fifth Quartet (*String Quartet No. 5, H. 268*) by Bohuslav Martinů which they played with enthusiasm and pathos in a truly rousing way. Here they logically replaced the two Janáček quartets who played the piece abroad.

The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra contributed to the Bohuslav Martinů Days (December 8) with a programme, which unlike previous years, was definitely not a kind of Martinů + Martinů event, but more Martinů + related music + contrasting music. This approach is fully justifiable.



Iva Bittová

The music of this composer can be, and is a part of the usual repertoire, and there is no need to isolate it as the subject of special attention. Audiences' reactions confirmed this once again. It's no illusion that in the last few years, 20th-century classical composers have received a very warm reception on Prague's music scene. This time only one piece by Martinů was performed, his 3rd Symphony (*Symphony No. 3, H. 299*). The Philharmonic's performance was good, but one would expect from conductor Gerard Schwarz more inducement to thrill. Sadly, the overall impression made by this wonderful symphony was a touch too matter-of-fact and rigid. The lyricism and dramatisation, motifs

and themes and form were all correct, but it didn't provide enough of a 'tingle'. An interesting accompaniment to the work was the three-movement 4th Symphony by David Diamond (1915–2005) a younger American colleague and friend of Martinů's, whom he met in Paris, and with whom he was in contact in America during World War II. Both symphonies were composed in 1944 in New York and first performed by the Boston Symphonic Orchestra. Despite its freshness and the deftness of the composition, the piece is less imaginative, less original. Its relationship to the Martinů symphony is in its similar sound, but in structure and character it is nearer to a Hindemith kind of

serious polyphony than to Martinů's lyricism, slightly hazy unease and fantasy. The slots before and after the intermission were reserved for the American soprano Jane Eaglen. Her voice is Wagneresque in its range and characteristically eccentric colour. She is still in good form and her rendition of Strauss's *Four Last Songs* was a well sung, melancholy epilogue. *The Death of Isolda* from Wagner's *Tristan* helped Eaglen to develop her nasal voice even more, a voice which is adequately capable of conveying every basic nuance. ■

(The review is reprinted from the Czech musical magazine *Harmonie*, No. 1, 2006, <http://www.muzikus.cz/casopis-harmonie/>)





with...

# GERARD SCHWARZ ON MARTINŮ

EVA VELICKÁ

The American conductor GERARD SCHWARZ celebrates his 21st season as Music Director of the Seattle Symphony. His over 100 recordings with Seattle Symphony, many including music by contemporary American composers, and additional 100 recordings with other prominent orchestras have received widespread recognition, including 11 Grammy nominations. Since 2001 he has been Music Director at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

On December 8 and 9 he has conducted two concerts with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra that formed part of Bohuslav Martinů Days 2005.

**Could you say as an American conductor, devoted to music by many American composers, how much Martinů's music from his American period is really "American"?**

Martinů's American period was extremely important to his remarkable output, especially in the symphonic arena. We know that his symphonies were produced, by and large, while living in the United States. Yet, I believe he continually maintained his Czech identity. It is hard for me to imagine any American influence on his work.

**Is Martinů well known in the USA and can his music impress listeners and gain new audiences in this day and age?**

During the period that he was living in the United States, of course, many of the great composers in the US were immigrants and were here primarily due to the atrocities of World War II. Men like Hindemith, Bartok, Schönberg, Toch, Korngold, and Stravinsky were all part of American musical life, both in New York and Los Angeles. Martinů, as we know, had many friends among American-born composers, yet like most great composers, he maintained his individual identity, which clearly comes from the country of his birth and those most important influences. Martinů is not as well-known in the US as he clearly deserves. His chamber works are played quite often. The symphonies, operas, and piano works are performed less often. I believe there will be a very important public force toward Martinů's major works as they regain the exposure they deserve. I am personally on a campaign to widen this exposure and in the next few seasons I hope to emphasize the remarkable oeuvre that Martinů has composed for orchestra.



Gerard Schwarz

I think there are two reasons for this lack of popularity in our country. One is that he has not had a real advocate, someone who has worked hard and tirelessly to champion the music, and because of the large volume of works he created, especially in chamber music. That can be a deterrent because there is so much from which to choose. I think he will gain the prominence he deserves through the performance of his six symphonies.

**At the concert with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in Prague you performed Symphony No. 3, H. 299 by Martinů and David Diamond's Fourth Symphony. Did you choose this programme yourself and why?**

The juxtaposition was a choice of the Martinů Foundation. When the program was suggested to me I was extremely enthusiastic. I, personally, own pocket scores of the Martinů symphonies inscribed to David Diamond from Martinů. I knew of their friendship, and David Diamond was always encouraging of Martinů's great works. They were written

at approximately the same time, and as we all know, in the same place. David Diamond occupied Martinů's apartment in Manhattan at times when Martinů was spending the summer in Connecticut. It is a natural pairing and a brilliant one, and I was thrilled to participate in this memorable concert.

**For many years you were active as music director of the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York. It is said that Martinů's music is very clear and bright. In your opinion, is there any affinity between Mozart and Martinů?**

I have a long history of connecting Mozart's music, and there is certainly an affinity between Mozart and Martinů in the sense that they are both structurally clear, and they are superficially understandable, and yet with a tremendous amount of depth. Both composers become more important the more one studies because of the remarkable poetry and poignancy of their works. Martinů, like Mozart, can be appreciated on many levels and that, I believe, is the key to great music. ■

## JAGTHUISFESTIVAL IN THE NETHERLANDS DEDICATED TO MARTINŮ

**CHAMBER MUSIC** of the 20th century is the main theme of the yearly JagthuisFestival. In May 2006 the Festival will be dedicated to the chamber music of Martinů: three days with a choice from his famous and less played works.

The first day (May 26) songs and other works by Bohuslav Martinů and Vítězslava Kaprálová will be heard. Performers are the famous Dutch musicians: singer Irene Maessen, flutist Eleonore Pameijer and pianist Marja Bon. On the program among others the *Koleda* by Kaprálová and Martinů, *The Songs on 1 and on 2 pages, H 294 and H 302* (Martinů), *Waving Farewell and Forever* (Kaprálová), *The Tales of a Small Flute* (Kaprálová), the *Scherzo for Flute and Piano, H 174A* and the *Flute Sonata, H 306* (Martinů).

—The second day works of Martinů are surrounded by works of friends from Paris and his contemporary Czech composers. The Czech Bennewitz Quartet is invited to play in the evening *string quartets* by Martinů (*the third: H 183*), the *Fantasy & Fugue* by Gideon Klein and the *second quartet* by Pavel Haas. Late afternoon you can hear clarinet-player Harry-Imre Dijkstra, violinist Radka Dohnalová and the famous pianist Daniel Adni. They are going to play the *Arabesques, H 201A*, *Clarinet Sonatine, H 356* (Martinů) and works of Tserpnin, Harsanyi and Roussel.

—On the final day (May 28) worlds most famous Russian theremin player Lydia Kavina is performing Martinů's *Fantasy for Theremin, string quartet, piano and oboe, H. 301*. On the same program his *second piano quintet, H 298*. Again the Bennewitz Quartet is playing together with pianist Ksenia Kouzmenko and oboe-player Christopher Bouwman. Lydia Kavina is also giving a workshop about the theremin.

—The "Jagthuis" is a small concert hall in the middle of the Dutch polder landscape. Right from the hall you have an extraordinary view on the cows, sheep, birds and clouds passing by. The "Jagthuis" is located in the centre of Holland, about half an hour drive from the international airport Schiphol and Amsterdam.

—**Tickets for the Festival** are available by sending an e-mail to [stal@jagthuis.nl](mailto:stal@jagthuis.nl). A one-day ticket for Friday or Saturday costs 45 euro: this includes two concerts, a lecture and dinner. The Sunday-ticket costs 40 euro: theremin-workshop, concert and buffet afterwards. If you like we can arrange hotel accommodation.

[www.jagthuis.nl](http://www.jagthuis.nl)

The website is in Dutch. When you send us an e-mail, we provide you with an English translation of the Festival Program ([stal@jagthuis.nl](mailto:stal@jagthuis.nl)).

# THE REDISCOVERY

## OF THE STRING TRIO No. 1, H. 136

Discovery

EVA VELICKÁ

IT CAN COME as no surprise that some of Bohuslav Martinů's original compositions have been lost over the years, considering the sheer volume of work he produced (over 400 opus numbers to his credit) and the number of countries he visited. When no copy was made, or the notes were not published, we learn of these lost pieces only via second-hand sources such as letters, concert programmes, reviews and various other documents. This was the case with the *String trio No. 1* which had hitherto been regarded as lost forever. We could only guess what this, the first of Martinů's pieces composed in Paris, would have sounded like from a few reviews of the piece that had survived.

As we can see, the possibility of discovering something new by Bohuslav Martinů cannot be ruled out. Even with this in mind, it was a huge surprise for me and for everyone at the Bohuslav Martinů Institute when, after a long correspondence with the Danish Royal Library in Copenhagen, we received a copy of the original manuscript of the lost trio. The fact that the work had lain for decades in an unknown location, and since 1978 had been filed away in the archives of a library in Denmark without anyone knowing, just goes to show the unique and bizarre fate of many of Martinů's works.

Let us take a look at the story of this interesting piece, which thankfully has a happy end. Martinů arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1923 to study under the French composer Albert Roussel. However, a short-term study stay in Paris turned into 17 years, and Martinů's life and work are closely associated with the French capital, a city which throughout the 1920s attracted the best artists in the world, and where a whole number of trends and movements were born and existed side by side. *The String trio No. 1* for violin, viola and cello is the first piece which Martinů composed in Paris. It therefore provides a fascinating opportunity to observe whether Martinů's arrival in Paris had an immediate affect on his composition style. In a letter of December 17, 1923 Martinů writes to his friend and violinist Stanislav Novák "I have two movements of the Trio and I am beginning on the last. Roussel likes it, though now and then he shakes his head". The Trio was completed in January 1924 and probably performed in Paris twice that same year. Sadly there are no reviews of either of these performances. Sometime at the beginning of 1925, Martinů sent the Trio to Czechoslovakia as documented in other letters from



Autograph of String Trio No. 1, H. 136

Martinů to Novák. In February 1925 the Trio was premiered in Prague by the Ondříčkovovo kvarteto (Ondříček Quartet) at the 7th music evening held by the Society for Modern Music, after which sources confirming the existence of the work slowly fade. We just do not know where the work went afterwards, or how it came to leave Czechoslovakia. Only a few months ago, when the original manuscript was discovered, did the story of this piece continue. Several articles and pieces in the media appeared and the Trio had its modern première December 4, 2005, performed by the Zemlinsky Quartet as part of the Bohuslav Martinů Days in Prague.

So what is the piece actually like? Does it provide any surprises? Martinů probably did not think too highly of the piece. In a letter to Stanislav Novák in 1925 he writes: "I think I should make some changes; I have decided that the last

movement is not very good, as the theme is too exposed". In another letter he goes into more detail: "As far as the Trio is concerned, I think it is a distracted work, as it was the first thing I did in Paris, when I wasn't quite settled; that's still the case today, by the way, but back then I still didn't have everything straightened out. As far as tone is concerned, I think its sounds good, but I didn't write it with this intention. It sounds good as it is clear and pure, but otherwise it's a thoroughly thematic work. But I can hardly stop people from constantly reproaching me for it sounding good. Of course when compared to the bilge they turn out back home, it really does sound good".

Two Czech press reviews of the performance of the Trio in Prague which have survived, to some extent confirm Martinů's fears: "The Trio for violin, viola and cello gives the composer, B. Martinů, as we roughly came to know him from

"Half-time", softer features. The Trio aims to entertain rather than move the listener. It exhibits great musical imagination which shows the western orientation of its creator. The Ondříčkovovo kvarteto would be well-advised to play it again" (*Listy hudební matice*, February 20, 1925). The review in *Hudební rozhledy* (February 15, 1925) expressed the following opinions: "The latest music evening held by the Society for Modern Music brought us the very fresh Trio for violin, viola and cello by B. Martinů, who enthusiastically nailed his colours to the mast of modern music at its most extreme (sounding more like Hindemith than Stravinsky). However, he surprises with a richness of creativity and confident composition, but with a few inexplicably inept moments. For instance, the second movement, the highlight of the piece with its bold form and melodic depth, suddenly towards the end completely spoils the impression left by the climax, with long-winded, musically illogical, lacklustre repetition. The third movement is then much weaker than the first two."

The contradictory and ambiguous opinions of the Czech critics show that the piece belonged to the new, modern style, which Czech critics couldn't always understand or see as positive, and which showed Parisian influence. The short, three-movement piece is undeniably a direct and original precursor to major chamber works of the second half of the 20th century. Despite the doubts of the critics and the author's fears, Trio shows great expertise in composition technique (frequent polyphonic passages) and exact knowledge and estimation of the effective use of string instruments (Martinů was himself a violinist). The brisk third movement based on a distinct rhythm, which we are used to with Martinů, stands in sharp contrast to the first two movements based more on sound and colour.

The fresh sound and rousing tempo of the piece will certainly appeal to many performers who will hopefully include it in their regular chamber repertoire. In the meantime, I can only inform those interested that the first edition of the piece is set to be published by Editio Bärenreiter Prague. ■

The recording of this piece will be published on the CD from Bohuslav Martinů Days 2005. The CD will be part of the IMC subscription.



## GREGORY TERIAN

**The 10th International Martinů Festival took place in Basel last autumn. From modest beginnings it has blossomed into a significant event attracting artists of international repute. Necessary sponsorship comes from corporations such as Roche and the Martinů Foundation also lends support.**

The opening event took place on 31 October at the Stadtcasino Concert Hall. Vladimir Ashkenazy conducted the Basel Symphony Orchestra in two major Martinů works, the *Frescoes of Piero della Francesca, H. 352* and the *Piano Concerto No 2, H. 237*.

The Concerto was a favourite work of Rudolf Firkušný who gave the premiere in 1935 with Talich and the Czech Philharmonic. Over the course of his long career he continued to perform it, Rafael Kubelík being a frequent collaborator. It is unfortunate that no commercial recording was made when the pianist was at the height of his powers. It was only in 1993, then in his eighties, that Firkušný finally made a studio recording.

Since Firkušný's death the Concerto has lacked a champion. Now the Swiss pianist Robert Kolinsky has taken up the work. It is good to have a young pianist bringing a fresh and vital approach to the work. It may be the most conventional of the Martinů piano concertos but the 2nd Concerto will probably have most appeal for the concert going public.

Kolinsky and Ashkenazy were painstaking in their preparation of the work which was delivered with passion and power. It held a packed house in rapt attention



Robert Kolinsky, after rehearsing the 2nd Piano Concerto which he performed at the 2005 Martinů Festival in Basel

and drew an ovation at the finish. Having come to grips with this most technically demanding work, one can anticipate that Kolinsky will continue to promote it over the coming years.

The concert opened with the rarely heard little *Ouverture, H. 345*, composed in 1953 for the Mannes School of Music and Arts in New York. As for the Three Frescoes, although Ashkenazy did not perform much Martinů during his tenure with the Czech Philharmonic, this was a patently committed reading of the work for which he has an evident affection. One can but welcome Ashkenazy's engagement with one of Martinů's finest works. Debussy's *Prelude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and Ravel's *Bolero* completed the programme.

Of some interest was the make-up of the audience, with a good mix of all ages. Clearly concert going in Basel is in a healthy state and Swiss support for Martinů is second only to that in the land of his birth.

Other notable Festival events included a showing of the film "Unfaithful Marijka", a jazz concert with improvisations on themes by Martinů and a children's concert at the Tinguely Museum. In the concluding concert Heinz Holliger and the Keller Quartet took part in performances of the *Fantasia for Theremin, H. 301* and the *Oboe Quartet, H. 315*.

Robert Kolinsky is the President of the Swiss Martinů Society which mounts these annual Festivals. This was the most ambitious and successful to date. With Kolinsky's enthusiasm and flair, one can look forward to the continuing success of the event. ■

## REVIEWS

## VIEL MARTINŮ ZUR ERÖFFNUNG

"A lot of Martinů at the Opening"  
Paul Schorno, Basellandschaftliche Zeitung,  
1 November 2005

The opening concert (*Piano Concerto no. 2*) "...the pianist and artistic director of the festival, Robert Kolinsky, performed the truly difficult piano part with great competence and feeling and with consummate technical and expressive skill. Ashkenazy conducted the orchestra emphatically, literally "using his entire body".

## DER UNGREIFBARE

"The Intangible"

S. Schibli, Kulturredaktion Basler Zeitung,  
27 October 2005

"...The Basel Martinů Days became a festival with significance which exceeded the boundaries of the region..."

DIE BOTSCHAFT  
HEISST HEIMWEH

"The Message is Homesickness"

S. Schibli, Kulturredaktion Basler Zeitung,  
1 November 2005

(The opening of the Basel Martinů Festival with V. Ashkenazy conducting)

"...Almost 1400 concertgoers came to the opening concert of the Martinů Festival to hear the music of this Czech composer..."

MARTINŮ IST DER MOZART  
SEINER ZEIT

"Martinů was the Mozart of his day"

B. Weber-Ruppli, Zürcher Unterländer,  
1 November 2005

"Robert Kolinsky: 1400 concertgoers

packed into the sold-out concert hall where the atmosphere was magnificent. (...) Vladimir Ashkenazy also became a new admirer of Martinů's music. Five years after we spoke in detail about Martinů, Ashkenazy now considers the *The Frescoes of Piero della Francesca* to be one of the most remarkable orchestral compositions."

## DELIKATTESSEN

Delicacies – critique

R. Wagner, Zürcher Unterländer,  
November 2005

Robert Kolinsky made full use of his technical abilities in Martinů's *Piano Concerto no. 2* – he convinced the concertgoers with his refined keyboard playing, his brilliant running passages and his pure pedal technique. (...) The playing of the Basel Symphony Orchestra, which accompanied

the highly renowned maestro, was above average given its possibilities.

ELEKTRONISCHE KLÄNGE  
ZUM ABSCHLUSS

"Electronic Tones at the Close"

F. Kristman, Basellandschaftliche Zeitung,  
16. 11. 2005

"... The romantically coloured *Fantasia for Theremin, Oboe, String Quartet and Piano*, in which the electronic voice of the Theremin was naturally incorporated as a melodic voice accompanying the other instruments, was a worthy conclusion to the Martinů Festival. Carolina Eyck performed her part using a beautiful dynamic scale and she did not have any apparent problems with intonation, the greatest pitfall when playing this instrument." ■

PREPARED BY LUCIE BERNÁ



ECKEHARD PISTRICK

THE THEATRE OF PLZEŇ, itself a jewel of Art Nouveau decoration, is in these days staging Martinů's splendid stage work **"Hry o Marii", H. 236** (Plays of Mary), the second of his folk-inspired dramatic works preceded by **"Špalíček", H. 214** (The Chapbook) and followed by **"Divadlo za branou", H. 251** (Theatre Behind the Gate) and most representative of his "religious music". Premiered on 11 December 2005 under the baton of Jan Zbavítel this work is worth a visit to Western Bohemia. The four parts of the opera deriving from such diverse sources as a medieval Flemish miracle play and old Moravian folk ballads are constantly switching between the two spheres of the folkloristic and the sacral, creating its unique ambiguous character. While the first part concentrates on sacral symphonic writing, evoking mysterious associations, the fourth pastoral part draws mainly on the inspiration of folk music. These two musical spheres are



Plays of Mary in Plzeň

brought together in the second part and the impressive last part ("Sister Paskalina") to a symbiosis. The ambiguities and harsh breaks within the score are demonstrated

convincingly by the orchestra of the theatre DJKT. The evocative sonorities between the female voices and the high strings, the musical contrasts of the devilish world and the world of heaven in this interpretation never failed to surprise the listeners' expectations. The unique gift of Martinů to extract from an extensive symphony orchestra sensible worlds of chamber music was almost celebrated. The staging by Jiří Nagy remains in general within the conventional frame, offering three-folded scenery, reflecting medieval altar pieces with Virgin Mary throning in the centre. The colourful costumes seem to derive as well from one of the paintings of Jan van Eyck or Rogier van der Weyden. The only exception from this stylistic conception is the representation of the seductive knight as Elvis Presley, a modernization very much out of place in the context of the otherwise traditional staging. Dynamism to this somewhat static scenery is bringing the ballet with Marika (Lenka Hrabovská) as its main protagonist, dancing with a menacing intensity, increasing the dramatic tension inspired by the

rhythmic force of the music. Among the singers Bass Martin Bárta as devil and the dark, expressive Alto of Veronika Hajnová as Archangel have to be mentioned while the commentator (Jaroslav Someš) remains pale and without expressive force. The surprise of this staging is the exceptional young choir, who is celebrating one of Martinů's most impressive choral scores with a multifaceted bright and voluminous sound. One leaves the Plzeň with the triumphant "Ave Maria" in ear – a line which shows Martinů's melodic gift as well as his deep religious convictions.

**The next performances will take place on 14, 18, and 25 April 2006, and 16 May 2006, 7.00 pm at the Tyl-Theatre in Plzeň.**  
[www.djkt-plzen.cz](http://www.djkt-plzen.cz) ■

Operas

## JULIETTE IN PARIS

FEBRUARY 3, 2006 saw the opening of Bohuslav Martinů's **Juliette, H. 253**, or **The Book of Dreams** as it is sometimes known, at the Paris Opéra Bastille. This is a new version of the opera which was performed at the Palais Garnier in November 2002. This time, however, it was staged using a new score and material published by DILIA (the original edition was edited by Aleš Březina and the hitherto unknown original French libretto by Bohuslav Martinů was recreated by Harry Halbreich – you will find details on this edition in the last issue of the BM Newsletter page 6–7. The director of this new production of Juliette is Jiří Bělohlávek, the guest of honour at a public meeting February 1, 2006 at the Czech Centre in Paris. The French musicologist Guy Erismann, the Belgian music critic and Martinů expert Harry Halbreich and the head of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute, Aleš Březina



Man Ray: Femme aux longs cheveux, 1929

also took part in the meeting. Over 100 people attended and the lively discussion among the main guests met with an enthusiastic response. This production of the opera has not been without its problems; William Burden who was to have played the leading male role of Michel, withdrew at the last minute. His replacement John Graham-Hall had a mere week to study the role, as no other tenor is familiar with the new version of the libretto. The main female role – Juliette – was played by the Russian soprano Yelena Semyonova.

**Songer a "Juliette"**  
3. 2. 2006 *La Tribune* p. 30 *Intermede*;  
*La Chronique*

**Jiri Belohlavek, l'Opéra a l'heure slave**  
4. 2. 2006 *Le Figaro* p. 36 *Le Figaro et vous – Culture*  
Jean-Louis Validire

**Un orchestre aux couleurs tcheques**  
8. 2. 2006 *Le Figaro* p. 34 *Le Figaro et vous – Musiques*  
Yves Bourgade

**Un beau reve**  
13. 2. 2006 *Le Figaro* p. 30 *Le Figaro et vous – Culture*  
Jean-Louis Validire

If you are interested in the review texts (in French), contact [zoja@martinu.cz](mailto:zoja@martinu.cz)

### INTERESTING REVIEWS

**Comme un reve éveillé**  
2. 2. 2006 *L'Express* p. 51 *Arts/Spectacles*  
Dermoncourt Bertrand

## NEW STAGING OF THE GREEK PASSION IN PRAGUE

**THE NATIONAL THEATRE, Prague, Czech Republic is going to premiere one of the most famous and most beautiful operas of Bohuslav Martinů on 13 April 2006, at 7.00 pm (2nd premiere on 15 April 2006, 7.00 pm). Additional performances 18, 22 April, 22 May, 7 June 2006.**

The original libretto is in English, based on a translation of Nikos Kazantzakis's novel *Christ Recrucified*; Martinů wrote the opera in careful consultation with the author. The National Theatre is presenting *The Greek Passion* in a new Czech

translation by musicologist Aleš Březina. It will be the first staging of this work in the National Theatre's main historical building. Musical preparation is in the hands of Jiří Bělohlávek, while the staging will be the work of director Jiří Nekvasil and set and costume designer Daniel Dvořák.

**Conductor: Jiří Bělohlávek**  
**Stage Director: Jiří Nekvasil**  
**Sets: Daniel Dvořák**  
**Costumes: Tereza Šimová**  
**Chorus master: Pavel Vaněk**  
**Motion cooperation: Števo Capko**

**Cast:**  
**Grigoris:** Oleg Korotkov / Luděk Vele  
**Patriarchas:** Aleš Hendrych / Jiří Kalendovský  
**Ladas:** Václav Knop  
**Michelis:** Pavel Černoch / Antonín Valenta  
**Kostandis:** Zdeněk Harvánek / František Zahradníček  
**Yannakos:** Jaroslav Březina / Jan Vacík  
**Manolios:** Tomáš Černý / Valentin Prolat  
**Andonis:** Jan Markvart / Antonín Valenta  
**Nikolios:** Aleš Bricein / Václav Lemberk  
**Katerina:** Maida Hundeling / Jitka Svobodová  
**Lenio:** Iveta Jiříková / Petra Nôtová

**Old woman:** Karla Bytnarová / Lenka Šmídová  
**Fotis:** Martin Bárta / Roman Janál  
**Despinio:** Marie Fajtová / Hana Jonášová  
**Old man:** Pavel Červinka / Miloslav Podskalský  
**Panait:** Jaroslav Březina / Vladimír Doležal

**Orchestra, Choir and Ballet of the National Theatre Opera**

English and German subtitles.

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[www.narodni-divadlo.cz](http://www.narodni-divadlo.cz)





# BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ & HIS PLACES OF RESIDENCE IN AMERICA (1941–1956)

gallery

- ▶ 31st March 1941 – after arriving in America, the Martinůs lived in New York at the Hotel St. Hubert on 57th Street near Carnegie Hall.



Bohuslav & Charlotte Martinů at the window of their apartment at 24 West, 58th Street

- ▶ June 1941 – they were invited to spend the entire month in the Šafránek's house in Pleasantville, about 80 km from New York.
- ▶ In the summer of 1941, they rented a small house at Martha's Vineyard, where there was an artistic colony including, for example, the musicians Leopold Mannes and Bernard Wagenaar, with whom Emanuel Ondříček, the violin virtuoso, acquainted them.
- ▶ In the same year, Emanuel Ondříček also took Martinů to concerts in Tanglewood (the Berkshire Music Center, Berkshire, Massachusetts) where the Boston Symphony Orchestra held an annual festival.
- ▶ In September 1941, Frank Rybka found the Martinůs lodgings with Salvator and Rose Castagnola in the New York suburb of Jamaica Estates, where they lived until June 1942.
- ▶ June 1942 – their Parisian friends Nadia Boulanger and Marcelle de Manziarly recommended that they take a summer apartment in Middlebury, Vermont where the local scenery reminded them of the French landscape.
- ▶ From 1st July 1942, Martinů received an offer to teach at the Berkshire Music Center's summer courses.
- ▶ At the end of summer 1942, the Ondříčeks invited Charlotte and Bohuslav Martinů to Manomet, Massachusetts.
- ▶ Rudolf Firkušný helped them to find an apartment on 58th Street in a building which no longer exists (24 West, 58th Street), once again not far from Carnegie Hall, and they lived there until they left for Europe in 1953. It was the place where they lived the longest in their marriage.
- ▶ When the Martinůs were away during the summer, their apartment was used, for example, by David Diamond, Rafael Kubelik or the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Masaryk.
- ▶ Their friend, the pianist Rudolf Firkušný, lived near them and in 1944 the Bartoks also moved near their flat, to 309 West 57th Street. The composers were never close friends, but Jaroslav Mihule in his monography says, that Charlotte got on well with Ditta Bartok, the composer's second wife.
- ▶ The Martinůs spent the summer of 1943 in a small log cabin with a small garden near the sea in Darien, Connecticut.
- ▶ From May 1944, they spent a further summer in Ridgefield, Connecticut (Four Chimneys). From there, they went

- to Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire.
- ▶ In the summer of 1945, they went to a small house in Cape Cod near South Orleans, Massachusetts.
- ▶ The summer of 1946 – while Charlotte was back in Europe, Bohuslav taught composition in Great Barrington at Searle's Castle dating from the 19th century. The course was interrupted by an injury which the composer suffered when he fell in the night from a terrace without a banister (17th July 1946). After a stay in hospital, he went to the Rybka family's summer residence in Keene Valley, New York State, in Adirondack Mountains, with his friend Rybka.
- ▶ He also spent the summer of 1947 with the Rybka family in Keene Valley.
- ▶ From 1948 to 1951, he taught at Princeton University in New Jersey. He commuted from New York. He also taught at the Mannes School of Music in New York from 1947 to 1952.
- ▶ The Martinůs spent the summer of 1948 in Europe, where they travelled by plane.
- ▶ The Martinůs alternated between the USA and Europe during the following years, mostly during the summer months.
- ▶ Couple of months the Martinůs leased the home of pianist Robert Casadesus at Princeton, and that they enjoyed the university atmosphere very much.



Charlotte & Bohuslav Martinů in their apartment, New York, 1942 or 1943

© PBM

- living with Roe Barstow in her apartment on Sullivan Street in Greenwich Village, in lower Manhattan.
- ▶ In October 1955, the Martinůs flew to the USA for the last time for 7 months. At the beginning, they stayed with the Rybka family in Jamaica Estates and Bohuslav went to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. From the end of October, they lived in the Great Northern Hotel, 118 West 57th Street and Bohuslav taught at the Mannes School. They were only there for about a month



Bohuslav & Charlotte in Darien, Connecticut

© PBM



Bohuslav & Charlotte, Four Chimneys in Ridgefield, Connecticut

© PBM

- ▶ In the summer of 1950, the Martinůs vacationed separately, she to Quebec, and he went on trips with Roe Barstow to New England. Then later, he vacationed with Frank Rybka for a few weeks in Massachusetts and Rhode Island where they visited friends.
- ▶ In the summer of 1951, Martinů and Frank Rybka bought together a trailer, and for a few weeks, they camped at Deerland, New York. Then, Bohuš got tired of the rough camping life, so Frank with his son James took him to a resort, "The Lodge at Smugglers Notch" at Mt Mansfield, near Stowe, Vermont where he had Czech friends. Bohuš stayed there for a month.
- ▶ For several months in 1952, Bohuš had separated from Charlotte, and was and then they were able to sub-lease an apartment in Manhattan that belonged to a harpsichordist, Sylvia Marlowe.
- ▶ They sailed from the USA on 2nd May 1956, never to return.
- ▶ Upon the occasion of the performance of some of Martinů's compositions, the Martinůs also visited Boston (1st symphony, 13 and 14 November 1942, conductor: Kusevickij) and Cleveland (2nd symphony, 28 October 1943, conductor: Erich Leinsdorf) in Ohio, where they flew in a plane for the first time in their lives.

Many thanks to James F. Rybka for the cooperation!

Prepared by Zoja Seyčková  
Data taken from the book "Martinů. Osud skladatele / The Fate of a Composer" by Jaroslav Mihule.



# BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ: CONCERTO FOR PIANO (INCANTATIONS)

JANA HŘEBÍKOVÁ

**"Incantation is Martinů's most important work, one of the most outstanding in general."**

Harry Halbreich

I HAVE CHOSEN Bohuslav Martinů's *Concerto No. 4 for Piano and Orchestra (Incantations)*, H. 358 as the topic for my masters' thesis. This topic interested me so much that I subsequently even sought out programs and reviews which were not actually used in my work. I would like to use the following article to share some of the interesting information about the origins, interpretation and reception of this highly concentrated work.

"It will be another haunting history, all 'magic' – at least I hope so." So wrote Bohuslav Martinů in one of his letters to his friend and biographer Miloš Šafránek. At that time, Martinů was in the American continent for the second and last time. He had gone there for the seven months from October 1955 to May 1956 because of several teaching and compositional commissions. The work was commissioned by the *Chicago Fromm Foundation*. This organisation was established in 1952 by Paul Fromm in order to support new music in contemporary American musical life and he led it until his death in 1987. Thereafter, the foundation became established as the *Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard*. Martinů was able to reach his own decisions as to the compositions which he would create. He had in mind a concerto for his friend and pianist Rudolf Firkušný, to whom he gave the exclusive rights to the premiere and all other performances for several years. Martinů wrote back home to Polička: "I have received a commission from Chicago for one thousand dollars, which will help with the publishing in New York – it is really expensive here."

During these seven American months, Martinů composed several chamber pieces and at the same time he began work on his opera of the Greek Passion according to the novel by Nikos Kazantzakis. "But New York is not a city for peaceful work," he wrote to the novelist. "There are too many things here which excite one." He composed the piano concerto with incredible speed. He started work on about December 22, 1955, the first movement was completed on January 15, 1956 and on February 10, when he had already finished the work for the foundation, he informed Miloš Šafránek: "Otherwise I have been very busy. I have



Rudolf Firkušný in Central Park, New York, April 1943

almost finished the 'magic-story' for piano and now I'm not sure which name would be most correct. According to the dictionary, *Invocation [sic]* is like a prayer and I think that it should properly be called *Incantacion [sic]*." (Martinů clearly meant "Incantation").

In May, Mr and Mrs Martinů returned to Europe. They were therefore not present at the premiere of *Incantations* which was held in the autumn, on October 4, 1956 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and performed by Rudolf Firkušný and the *Symphony of the Air* conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Martinů later commented in a letter to Šafránek: "Firkušný played the *Incantations* in N.Y. and apparently it was a huge success. The critics are stupid as usual and I don't know how Stokowski conducted it – I have the impression that he performed magic with it, which is right for incantations."

What then were the reviews of the premiere? The critic of the New York

Times, Edward Downes, the son of the critic Olin Downes, called the work "unquestionably the most brilliant piece of the evening", albeit that he went on to add that "it was also the least interesting music". Let us explore his review in greater detail here. What was it that he disliked about the piano concerto?

"It is dressed in a dazzling fabric of orchestration, it is exquisitely tailored, it is chic, but it gives you the feeling that somewhere you've seen that dress before. And you have. The cut of some melodic lines recalls Bartok. Ravel had that decorative flair. And the composer may have borrowed from earlier models of his own as well." (The New York Times, October 5, 1956, p. 6)

Edward Downes rejected the work and reproved its eclecticism – the assumption and mixing of the styles of other composers and a lack of any distinctiveness. The critic named Bartok and Ravel and

also reproached the composer for repeating himself. Downes ascribed the favourable acceptance of the piece solely to the dramatic playing of Rudolf Firkušný. The critic from the magazine *Musical America* also had a similar reaction: "It is a shapeless and shoddy piece, for all its gorgeous orchestral effects and elements of titillating Czech folk music. One might justly dub it (with apologies to Mussorgsky) 'The Great Gate – of Hollywood'. The piano is handled with extreme, but musically pointless, ingenuity, especially in the cadenza-like passages with harp and other instruments. At first hearing, the work seemed to be almost totally lacking in integration or stylistic unity." (*Musical America*, November 1, 1956, p. 22)

Even though the critic ascribed ingenuity, wonderful orchestral effects and even elements of Czech folk music to the work, he would have preferred "integration" and "stylistic unity" which is completely missing in the piece according to the classical criteria.

Bohuslav Martinů was fully aware of the formal construction of all of his musical works, but in his final creative period he endeavoured to achieve the loosening of form. In a letter dated December 22, 1957, he himself stated to Šafránek, that the process of release from the given geometric forms had already begun in the *Double Concerto*, H. 271, while true release had been achieved in his sixth symphony, *Fantaisies Symphoniques*, H. 343, and it continued in his other compositions from the 1950s. This liberated fantastic style manifests itself in the pieces in various ways. Whereas the *Frescoes* of Piero della Francesca, H. 352 are more lyrical, Martinů's fourth piano concerto most closely approaches the dramatic *Fantaisies Symphoniques*. He wrote them in 1953 at the end of his stay of exile in America. He was aware of the rejection of the critics when he further wrote in the letter: "with a little imagination, the form significantly changes (which bothers the critics), but that does not mean that there is no form."

The piano concerto was only ever designated as no. 4 in the catalogues. Martinů always simply called it *Incantations*. It differs from other piano concertos in the fact that it only has two movements. Martinů wrote the commentary to the piece in English; he referred in it to the Webster's Dictionary when interpreting the work "incantation": "Webster dictionary describe it as a spell, charm, magic, and that's exactly what I meant. Magic is a royaume of music."

"Incantation is a piano concerto in the form of a Symphony or Fantasia," says Martinů.



# AND ORCHESTRA NO. 4

Research

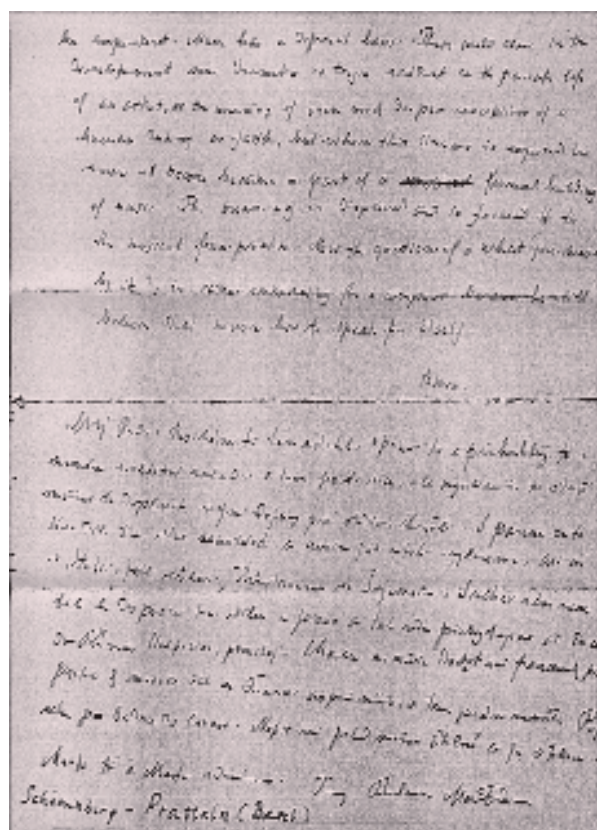
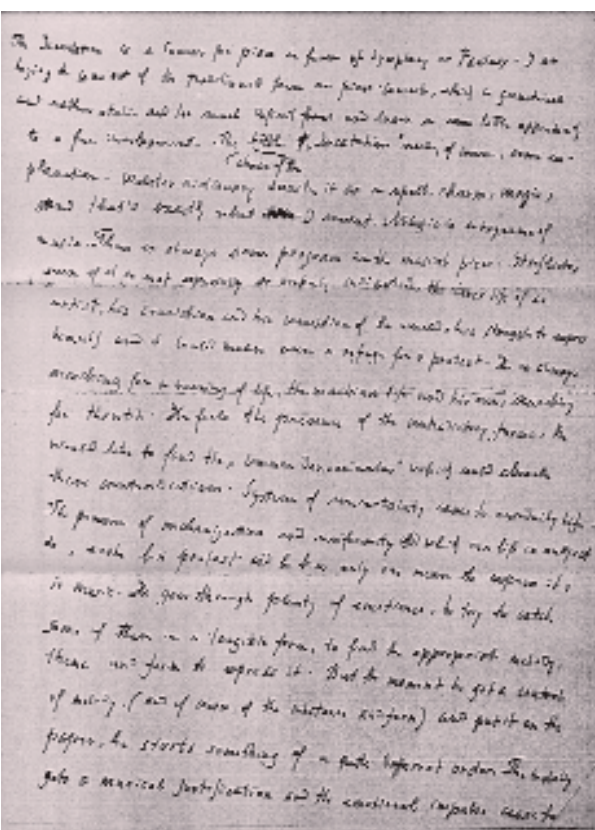
Of the classical forms, there is still the literal repetition of both movements shortened by only a few bars. The progression of the work is "freestyle" and it is therefore more of a flow of ever new associations and metamorphoses. The formal looseness and relaxation of the fantasia, which makes demands on the freedom of the formation and the release of all creative forces without predefined borders, as well as the environment of modern New York gave rise to a work full of contrasts and it thus even became an

chamber groupings of instruments, for example the quartet of the flute, the harp, the piano and the viola in the first movement or the combination of the piano and the harp. The most interesting moments without doubt include the dialog between the piano and the harp at the beginning of the second movement or the "ticking of the clock" in the first movement which may call to mind the clock in the tower in Polička or the clock in a room. The regular quavers played by the harp, the flutes and the violins measure

group of percussion instruments. Fine instrumentation, differentiation between methods of playing and polyrhythmic interlacing on several planes are all evident. The pentatonics and wavy melodies of the individual instruments may evoke the orient. After all, the idea of searching for "a common denominator which absorbs opposites" is an idea from Asian wisdom. The composition is subject to constant radical changes and eruptive explosions and despite all efforts the piece immediately collapses. Theodor W. Adorno

a letter to Šafránek dated 11th July 1958. At the end of this letter, there is the conciliatory or rather resigned statement:

"You mention the fact that given the sense of life and the program of the latest works I have begun to moralise (considering what I see around me today in the world, I didn't write it, but thought it), but you don't mention the fact that soon after that letter I wrote that I have already given up on moralising. So, as always, I don't want to improve the world."



Letter from Bohuslav Martinů to Rudolf Firkušný about Incantations

© Rudolf Firkušný Archive

expression of the composer's protest, as Martinů wrote in his commentary: "He is always searching for a meaning of life, the mankind[s] life and his own, searching for thruth [truth]. He feels the pressure of the contradictory forces, he would like to find the "common denominator" which would absorb[e] these contradiction. System of uncertainty came to our daily life. The pressur[e] of mechanization and uniformity which our life is subject to, evoke[s] his protest and he has only one mean to express it, in music."

The composition includes moments which shine in fantastically glittering colours like an alchemist's laboratory and then restlessly disappear irretrievably. Often, these colourful "pictures" are performed by

the time, while the falling free melody of the bassoon is like reminiscences. Martinů returned to the impressionist musical style in his compositions. Edward Downes was therefore correct when he stated that the composer had also drawn on his earlier techniques. The basic unit of the piece is the interval of seconds horizontally forming a fluctuating series between two tones and vertically forming two and more parallel voices in seconds. The melodic side mainly consists of small steps according to the principle of improvisation and ornamentation. The piano takes on many roles: solo and chamber roles and it becomes both the opponent of and part of the orchestra. The classical orchestra is expanded to include a larger

writes about the principle of interruption that it is the only thing which enables the transition from one moment to a completely new one without development. (Theodor W. Adorno, Komposition für den Film. Der getreue Korrepetitor, Frankfurt a. M. 1997, p. 330.)

No matter what the initial impulses were – the restless life in New York, an expression of the rationality and technology of the surrounding world and possibly also Martinů's awareness of the fact that he would not return home to Polička – the music speaks for itself and "everything is subject to different laws than the emotional, descriptive and possibly also social (and technical) laws", as Martinů explained in

## EUROPEAN PREMIERE IN EDINBURGH AND PERFORMANCE IN LONDON

The concerto made its way across the ocean one year after its first performance in New York. The European premiere took place on August 30, 1957 in Edinburgh where the concert was part of the 11th Edinburgh International Festival. This time Rudolf Firkušný was accompanied by the Scotland Philharmonia under the baton of Rafael Kubelík.

The author of the concert's program, Norman Del Mar, emphasized that the most remarkable features are in particular "the kaleidoscopic use of every form of instrumental colouring" and "the imaginative virtuosity", alongside which "the snatches of potential melody or theme become entirely secondary in importance."

The work was received with great enthusiasm, albeit that the critics were somewhat more reserved: "Influenced by both Bartok and Stravinsky, there is nothing particularly new in his language. But what exactly is he trying to say in it? I was in no doubt at any time that something interesting was indeed being said." (The Scotsman, August 31, 1957, p. 5)

The second European performance took place on September 5, 1957 in London where Rudolf Firkušný was accompanied by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under the leadership of Sir Malcolm Sargent. Here too, the critic was somewhat sceptical with regard to the formal looseness of the work: "There are two movements, and both seem to lack true continuity and organic growth. Further study of the work may perhaps reveal thematic metamorphoses and developments not easily recognizable at first hearing, but on superficial acquaintance the music does seem too episodic and inconsequential. Now and again in the first movement there were echoes of Stravinsky (Petrushka) and Walton (the symphony) [symphony], but for the most part (and particularly in the second movement) Martinů speaks with [with] a recognizably individual voice of his own." (The Times, September 6, 1957, p. 7)



The Edinburgh Festival and the subsequent London performance were also attended by Jiří Hlaváček, the editor of the *Hudební rozhledy* magazine, who published an article on the concerts in the magazine's 10th edition of that year. (Jiří Hlaváček: From the Musical Festival in Edinburgh, *Hudební rozhledy* X/1957, pages 760–761.) He stated in it that “according to the composer’s statement, this work is one of the expressions of a disquieting search for truth and the meaning of life and at the same time it is a tribute to music which is a refuge for the musician, and a force and tool of struggle.” He was surprised by the fact that the critics had shown their lack of comprehension and confusion. “After all, it was possible at the very least to acknowledge the simple pleasure from the sound texture of the composition and the musically rich use of the concerto form.” He expressed his personal conviction that the work “will become one of the excellent examples of contemporary concerto work”.

Rudolf Firkušný also included the Incantations in his other concerts. He performed the work several times in New York with Rafael Kubelík, in Paris on November 24, 1960 with the Orchestre de la Société Philharmonique de Paris conducted by Leon Barzin, in Washington on January 15 and 16, 1963 with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Mitchell and in other cities.



Josef Páleníček, Rudolf Firkušný, Bohuslav Martinů and Jiří Mucha, Jardin Luxembourg, Paris, Spring 1938

© PBM

Rudolf Firkušný (1912–1994) made a recording of the Incantations and Martinů’s piano concertos no. 2 and 3 in Prague on June 14–20, 1993 and Supraphon issued this recording in 1994 (11 1869-2, RCA/BMG). Rudolf Firkušný was accompanied in the recording by the Czech Philharmonia under the baton of Libor Pešek. It is a great piece of luck that this recording was made, because Firkušný, who was Martinů’s closest performer, thus allows us to see deep into Martinů’s musical world. Firkušný said about Incantations: “It’s not really a concerto as such. It’s more a fantasy for piano and orchestra. It’s a very strong work, very beautiful.” In the review of the recording from which this quote comes from, Firkušný also recalled his cooperation with Martinů during the creation of the piano parts: “Sometimes he came to me to ask me about the pianistic possibilities, the pianistic effects, which he wanted me to try out,” Firkušný said of Martinů in typically modest fashion shortly before his death. “So in this way I did play for him, and we sometimes changed things according to his ideas.” (Erik Entwistle: Recordings view. At Live’s End, a Tribute to an Old Friend, The New York Times, August 13, 1995, pages 25 and 30.)

### THE RECEPTION OF THE CONCERTS IN GERMANY: 1974–1993

In my work, I concentrated on the reception of the work in Germany and I evaluated the reviews which I had available from 1974–1993.

- October 28 and 29, 1974, Bremen, Leonard Hokanson – piano, Zdeněk Mácal – conductor
  - March 3 and 4, 1997, Frankfurt am Main, Leonard Hokanson – piano, Zdeněk Mácal – conductor
  - November 1, 7, 9 and 10, 1979, Rosenheim, Paderborn, Düren and Witten, Prague Symphony Orchestra, Emil Lechner – piano, Vladimír Válek – conductor
  - October 13, 1993, München, Igor Ardašev – piano, Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiří Bělohávek – conductor
- Unfortunately, I was unable to find the date of the premiere of the Incantations in Germany.

The concerto was received very favourably there and the audiences rewarded the performances of the musicians with stormy

applause. Here too, the critics compared the work to the music of other composers such as Stravinsky, Bartók, Ravel, Shostakovich or Gershwin. They also played up the piece’s Czech characteristics. The critics differed in their interpretation of the form of the work and they even contradicted one another. However, they were all in agreement with regard to the diversity and range of expression (from hardness to expressiveness and the lyric), the richness of the sound colours, the dramatic character and the piece’s suggestive and visual effect. They also pointed out the multiple roles of the piano, especially its chamber role. Perhaps the most interesting review was in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung dated March 8, 1977, in which the critic wrote about “Martinů’s unique emotive world which contains both an enormously sensitive fantasy and an almost clever wit” (“die eigentümliche Gefühlswelt Martinůs, die eine ungeheuer empfindliche Phantasie ebenso einschließt wie einen fast pfliffigen Witz”) and unequivocally rejected any reproach due to eclecticism in his music. ■

**A challenge for readers: We would be very pleased if you could provide us with any information concerning the premiere in Germany. We have also so far been unable to find the program from the world premiere on October 4, 1956 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.**

### Music: Four Premieres

Smekowski Conducts,  
Firkušný at Piano

by EDWARD BOWEN

WHAT could almost suffice the excitement last night in the Grove Haller, where the premiere of the Incantations, by Bohuslav Martinů, was given by the Czech Philharmonia, was the fact that the piano part was played by Rudolf Firkušný, who was Martinů’s closest performer, thus allows us to see deep into Martinů’s musical world. Firkušný said about Incantations: “It’s not really a concerto as such. It’s more a fantasy for piano and orchestra. It’s a very strong work, very beautiful.” In the review of the recording from which this quote comes from, Firkušný also recalled his cooperation with Martinů during the creation of the piano parts: “Sometimes he came to me to ask me about the pianistic possibilities, the pianistic effects, which he wanted me to try out,” Firkušný said of Martinů in typically modest fashion shortly before his death. “So in this way I did play for him, and we sometimes changed things according to his ideas.” (Erik Entwistle: Recordings view. At Live’s End, a Tribute to an Old Friend, The New York Times, August 13, 1995, pages 25 and 30.)



Rudolf Firkušný

Incantations, the most brilliant piece of the evening was the Martinů Piano Concerto, which had the added advantage of being played by the Czech Philharmonia, who was Martinů’s closest performer, thus allows us to see deep into Martinů’s musical world. Firkušný said about Incantations: “It’s not really a concerto as such. It’s more a fantasy for piano and orchestra. It’s a very strong work, very beautiful.” In the review of the recording from which this quote comes from, Firkušný also recalled his cooperation with Martinů during the creation of the piano parts: “Sometimes he came to me to ask me about the pianistic possibilities, the pianistic effects, which he wanted me to try out,” Firkušný said of Martinů in typically modest fashion shortly before his death. “So in this way I did play for him, and we sometimes changed things according to his ideas.” (Erik Entwistle: Recordings view. At Live’s End, a Tribute to an Old Friend, The New York Times, August 13, 1995, pages 25 and 30.)

New York Times, 5 October 1956



# RESOURCES FOR MARTINŮ RESEARCH AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Report

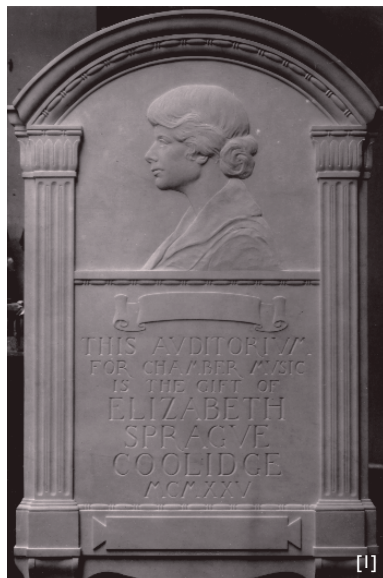
JUDITH FIEHLER

THE MUSIC DIVISION of the Library of Congress has only a small percentage of the autograph compositions and letters which Martinů produced during his stay in America. However, some of them come from the estates of Sergei Koussevitzky and Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, both of whom provided indispensable support at critical moments of Martinů's career. Their extensive archives provide an unparalleled record of the context of American music which deeply affected Martinů's development. Martinů corresponded with Mrs. Coolidge for more than twenty years, most intensively before World War II. The correspondence folder contains many Martinů autograph letters, mostly in French – some evidently written by his wife Charlotte – as well as carbon copies of her responses in English, which were typed by her secretary. Of particular interest are early letters about the two compositions which have direct connections with Mrs. Coolidge. **The String Quintet, H. 164** (1927) was dedicated to her. Its premiere evidently took place on September 20, 1928 at Pittsfield; the performers were the Roth Quartet with violist Egon Kornstein. **The String Sextet, H. 224** (1932) won the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Prize at a competition held at the Library of Congress. The autograph includes the temporary title page used for the competition, which bears Martinů's pseudonym "Paris – Prague 32". Martinů's relationship to Mrs. Coolidge seems to have been that of artist to patron. His extensive correspondence with Sergei Koussevitzky shows a much deeper friendship – artist to artist as well as man to man. It contains almost a hundred letters, including Martinů's letters in French and English to Koussevitzky, carbon copies of Koussevitzky's correspondence through his secretary, telegrams, as well as an announcement of Martinů's wedding, which was held "dans la plus stricte intimité" on March 21, 1931. Koussevitzky's personal letters to Martinů would have been written by hand and are not in the folder; however, one can sometimes conjecture what they may have contained from Martinů's replies. Koussevitzky did much to establish Martinů as one of the foremost composers in America, commissioning the **Symphony No. 1, H. 289** as a memorial to his own wife. The sketch of this symphony helps us recreate these times, for its margins include data such as telephone numbers as well as spontaneous doodles. Another touching glimpse of Martinů is provided by handmade Christmas and birthday cards given to his friend Hope Bogorad in 1941 and 1942,

now in the Music Division. The portion of the Moldenhauer collection in the Music Division contains a copy of the announcement of Martinů's death. The Library possesses the following autographs of Martinů's compositions: The above-mentioned String Quintet from the Coolidge estate, the String Sextet from

Division also has a presentation copy for Mrs. Coolidge of the printed full score of **Three Ricercars, H. 267** (1938), which bears an autograph note on the title page. There is also an extensive collection of Martinů's works. The programs of these Music Division concerts ordinarily did not contain notes.

relatively few items from 1936 through the 1950's, the holdings of the periodical *Tempo* are particularly of interest: the courageous last issue before World War II, and the issues published between 1946 and 1948. Czech holdings from the 1960's to 1989 are fairly representative of officially sanctioned publications, and thus



[1] Dedication plaque of Coolidge Auditorium at the Library of Congress, with its portrait of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. The words on the plaque are: "This auditorium for chamber music is the gift of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge MCMXXV"  
[2] Unidentified quartet playing in the Coolidge Auditorium in 1944

© Library of Congress

the above-mentioned competition; the sketch and final version of **Symphony No. 1, H. 289**, from the Koussevitzky Foundation; the **Piano Quintet no. 2, H. 298** (1944), donated by the publisher; **Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola, H. 313** (1947), donated by Mrs. Rosalie J. Leventritt. The Moldenhauer collection contains fragmentary sketches by Martinů of an unidentified composition, possibly the **Jazz Suite, H. 161** (1928). In addition, the Library has photocopies of the **Sinfonetta La Jolla, H. 328** (1950), **Estampes, H. 369** (1958) and **Intermezzo, H. 330** (1950). The autographs of the last two works are in the library of Peer Music Company in New York City. Peer is the successor of Southern Music Company, who published these compositions. The Music Division has a photocopy of an autograph of **Symphony No. 6, H. 343** entitled "New Fantastic Symphony." According to Lillian Guenther, the autograph of this work is in the Boston Symphony Orchestra library. The second and third movements of the photocopy correspond to the autograph. However, the first movement photocopy seems to have been made from an earlier draft which has not been located. The Music

A rare exception states that the public premiere of the String Sextet was its performance on April 25, 1933 by the Kroll Sextet, along with Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. It is heartening to note that Sextet was performed again at the Library on January 19, 1939, giving Martinů's career a welcome boost when it was most needed. The Library has archival recordings for later historical performances, as well as for many other concerts given in the Coolidge auditorium. These recordings can be found in the Library of Congress website catalog at <http://catalog.loc.gov>. Bound with the programs is a memoir by Jay Rosenfeld, "Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: a tribute on the one hundredth anniversary of her birth" (privately printed, 1964). Mr. Rosenfeld tells us that Mrs. Coolidge's grandson intended to visit Germany in 1936, but decided against it – for Germany would always be there, but Granny might not. She lived until 1953. When she told this story, she would add that she had outlasted Germany! The Library has many other resources for Martinů scholars. The Music Division has comprehensive holdings of musicological texts and music published in Prague and Paris from around 1905 to 1936. Of the

include the monographs on Martinů which were published when his body was transferred to Czechoslovakia. The Library has received a variety of related materials from the Czech Republic since the Velvet Revolution. There is also a superb collection of Czech history, literature, and theater, assembled by Area Specialist Jiri Kovtun; émigré publications; and related archival materials, including part of the archive of New York émigré Jan Papanek. The vast collection of newspapers on microfilm contains many reviews of Martinů concerts. It includes full runs of émigré newspapers such as *Newyorské Listy*. Musicology owes an enormous debt to the reference librarians of the Music Division. Wayne Shirley, now retired, was been particularly helpful and resourceful in finding important sources. He kindly located most of the above-mentioned Martinů autographs in 1998, and provided generous support to the Martinů Institute in a variety of musicological quests. Susan Clermont found additional autographs, and provided valuable suggestions for this paper. ■

# MARTINŮ'S CONTRIBUTION TO MODERN DANCE

JUDITH MABARY

IN RECENT YEARS, one of Martinů's American works, which had seemed destined for oblivion, has enjoyed a mild resurgence. In 1990, his dance drama was presented in Brno as part of the International Music Festival honoring the composer. In 1998, London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama presented the work on a double bill with the one-act opera *Ariane, H. 370* as part of the School's festival featuring the works of Martinů. The Internationale Musikfesttage B. Martinů in Basel programmed the work in 2004. The work's co-creator, choreographer and dancer Erick Hawkins, had hoped *The Strangler, H. 317* would be, in short, a scandalous success, much like Nijinsky had created with Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Such a statement makes the work all the more intriguing and begs further explanation.

The premiere of Martinů's *The Strangler* took place in New London, Connecticut (USA) on August 22, 1948 as part of the first annual season of the American Dance Festival. The festival was to provide a venue outside New York City for students and the public to experience new works by the leading dance companies in the country. Martha Graham was among them for the premiere event, featuring her own creations based on Greek myth, including *Night Journey*, opposite Hawkins's *Strangler*, both based on the Oedipus story. While Graham's choreography remains close to the original myth, Hawkins elected to create a new interpretation that combined the Greek original with his own personal experiences and information he had obtained from Gezá Róheim's 1934 volume *The Riddle of the Sphinx or Human Origins*. The result was an explicit presentation that focused on one portion of the myth, a young man's sexual journey to manhood. Even though Hawkins had the support of Martha Graham, the foremost modern dancer and choreographer of the time; a text by Robert Fitzgerald, whose reputation as a prominent and respected translator of Greek writings was already being established; and music by Martinů, one of the most popular and frequently commissioned composers of the day, the work was more avant-garde than critics were willing to accept. John Martin of *The New York Times* reported at the work's revival in 1950 that it was "a thoroughly embarrassing piece of ineptitude that should have been quietly interred back in 1948.... The poetry is by Robert Fitzgerald and the music by Bohuslav Martinů and both of them would probably be pretty good under other circumstances. As it is, they haven't a chance in the world."

Cecil Smith, reporting for *Musical America*, found the original 1948 performance "empty and exhibitionistic.... With one of the greatest of living choreographers [Martha Graham] at his disposal, it is hard to understand why he persists in turning out forced and almost frantic 'original' dances instead of having something really distinguished created for him, as other dancers have not hesitated to do." Such a rocky start to Hawkins's career was a poor indication of what was to come, however. His future contributions were highly regarded and he would eventually be recognized as one of the great pioneers of modern dance in America.

Graham's company gave Hawkins a relatively safe venue in which to try new concepts. Nevertheless, he felt it necessary to provide the audience with a few paragraphs of explanation in the program for the premiere of *The Strangler* (August 22, 1948):

**THE SPHINX, half lion and half woman, represents the father and mother in the primal scene; her wings are a symbol of the physical ecstasy of the parents, and her name, in Greek meaning The Strangler, refers to the danger of parental fixation or domination.**

**OEDIPOUS overcomes the Sphinx by discerning in her the child's phantasy of the primal scene and by deciphering her riddle to mean the four-legged being of the primal scene, the two-legged image of the naked human being, and the three-legged image of the physically creative man. His name in Greek is a euphemism, Swollen Foot.**



*The New York Times, January 5, 1950*



*Autograph of The Strangler, H. 317*

**THE CHORUS, a single figure, speaks as the internal everpresent witness of every drama; at times for himself, and at times for Oedipus at this moment of his initiation into manhood.**

**The scene is the ritual dancing-place in a stony pass on the road from Delphi as it approaches Thebes. Oedipus is asleep.**

Hawkins's hope that the work would be accepted as a poetic exploration of a real human experience, an actual "rite of passage," were frustrated. Hawkins took part in only one other performance of the work during his career; it was no more successful than the first. He coped with the failure by attributing it to a particularly traumatic period in his relationship with Graham, one that he would rather forget. John Martin's critique of the performance, quoted above, renews some hope for the work, however. If not for Hawkins's

conception and choreography, then for the text and Martinů's music. In fact, the music contains several gestures, rhythmic and motivic, that we typically associate with Martinů. There are, indeed, several points recognizable in the score from their appearance in Martinů's other works.

By the time Martinů began work on *The Strangler*, he was already experienced in the dance medium, having completed eleven works for ballet and modern dance, even though the most recent had been completed for Paris's own avant-garde theatre in 1935. Martinů had also worked with the Oedipus myth, providing incidental music for Prague Radio in 1936 to accompany André Gide's *Oedipe*, which like Hawkins's version, combined music and spoken text.

Hawkins recalled hearing one of Martinů's symphonies performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was impressed with





*The Strangler at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, 1998*

© Laurence Burns

his work, and commissioned the composer, apparently without much discussion, to write the music for *The Strangler* for \$300. The result was a sizable effort (58 pages in the autograph score). Hawkins indicated that his only direction to Martínú was that he use a collection of Native American instruments that Hawkins had heard in the music of Carlos Chávez at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The request comes as no surprise, as it is well known that Hawkins preferred live accompaniment to his choreography and was intrigued by unusual timbres, which he utilized effectively in many of his later works under the capable hand of composer Lucia Dlugoszewski.

The Museum of Modern Art performances to which Hawkins refers were most likely part of a special exhibition "Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art" where in May 1940, Chávez premiered his new work *Xochipilli, an Imagined Aztec Music*, which

calls for the teponaztle, comparable to the wooden log used in *The Strangler*. Chávez's *Sinfonia India*, first performed in 1936, accounts for the remainder of the percussion group, with the exception of the Cochiti drum. The Yaqui metal disk rattle (sonasum), deer hooves (rihu=utiam) and cocoon rattle (teneboim) in *The Strangler* are featured in the original instrumentation of *Sinfonia India* where they are designated as a metal rattle, grijiutian, and tenabari respectively. The more important association, however, is found in Luis Sandi's arrangement *El Venado*, which was also performed at the 1940 exhibition and uses themes and instruments from the Yaqui deer dance (i.e., the cocoon rattle, metal disc rattle, and deer hooves). With the exception of the Cochiti drum, this work also accounts for the remaining indigenous instruments in *The Strangler*. Martínú makes it easy to correlate the instruments by providing drawings on the title page of the

autograph score. In addition, the music calls for a small collection of winds (flute, piccolo, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon), piano, timpani, gong, and cymbals.

The traditional associations with the indigenous instruments make an interesting story by themselves, embedded in ritual and sacred practices. In the case of Yaqui tradition, these associations were derived from their original context in Sandi's *El Venado*. The Yaqui deer dance originates with the Yaqui ancestors, the Surem, who before they went on a hunt, held an all-night fiesta in honor of their prey. The purpose of the ritual, which combines influences of indigenous and Catholic practices, is to ask the deer's forgiveness for causing its death. Each indigenous instrument used in the ritual has a symbolic significance. The cocoon rattles, wound around the legs of some of the dancers, were once the homes of large moth larvae that have been extracted and small stones inserted. As the Yaqui dance, they want the moth to know that its spirit is still alive and its house is occupied. The deer hooves around the dancer's waist represents the many deer that have died so that men can live. In the traditional dance, an instrument sometimes referred to as a water drum (a large gourd placed rounded side up in a pan of water and struck with a stick) represents the heartbeat of the animal. The metal disc rattle, a traditional device to frighten away evil spirits, is played by the pascolas, the performers who deliver the sermon, perform skits for the audience, and mock the deer dancer.

The remaining indigenous instruments in *The Strangler* have ritualistic associations as well. The Aztec teponaztle (Martínú's wooden log) is a type of slit drum, made from a hollowed-out log and often elaborately carved. In some instances, the drum was taken by Aztec warriors into battle. On more ceremonial occasions, such as royal accessions, it was filled with the blood of sacrifices. The Chochiti double-headed drum also has a ceremonial significance and is used in several native dances.

Though no such ceremonial allusions are made in *The Strangler*, the unique instruments add an element of exoticism and sacredness by their inclusion, not to mention the association to ritual they bring to this rite of passage work. Martínú also capitalizes on their unique timbral qualities in the telling of the story and to emphasize elements of the action. For the remainder of his musical choices, Martínú remains rather predictable. The percussive manner in which he treats rhythm, his conservative diatonic harmonies, tinged

with sections utilizing the octatonic scale; the short rhythmic and melodic cells, seasoned with periodic minor 2nds and tritones are expected. But innovative treatment is not Martínú's goal, but rather to produce a score that facilitates the delivery of a colorful story and unique choreography. While the score itself is no masterpiece, Martínú was successful in satisfying the commission. Although Hawkins admitted that he wished Martínú had been another Stravinsky, hinting at his real ambitions for this controversial work, he thought Martínú "...did an excellent job of integrating the text with the music because he didn't know English very well." Nor did Hawkins make any apologies for his own efforts in the face of harsh criticism. While he shelved the work soon after its premiere, his decision is not to be interpreted as an apology, but rather as a consequence of the increasingly tense relationship with Graham. More to the point, *The Strangler* is characteristic of his future efforts to communicate the essence of life's experiences in a primal and poetic way. Hawkins felt that modern dance should "...present ideas of enlightenment, and in this way...reconfirm the intuitions that each member of the audience has latent within him about how he can mature and fulfill all the possibilities of a complete and meaningful life." Yet, at the same time, in the words of his colleague Stuart Hodes, as he describes some of Hawkins's early solo attempts after leaving Graham's company in 1950, "...it was that sense of a kind of gauche freshness that almost went too far every time. And it didn't sell me right away, but eventually it did." Perhaps *The Strangler* will as well.

- 1) Unless otherwise indicated, references to Hawkins's statements or beliefs are the result of an interview conducted by the author with Mr. Hawkins on October 5, 1991.
- 2) John Martin, "2 Premieres Mark Graham Program," *The New York Times* (January 25, 1950), Section I, L23.
- 3) Cecil Smith, "Dance Moves to the Country in New England," *Musical America* LXVIII/10 (September, 1948), 7, 23. Erick Hawkins was the first male dancer admitted to Martha Graham's previously all-female troupe. Graham featured Hawkins in several of her works, the source of significant jealousy from older members of the troupe, and supported his original works. Their personal relationship continued to develop and Hawkins and Graham were married in 1948.
- 4) Erick Hawkins, "Pure Poetry," *The Modern Dance – Seven Statements of Belief*, ed. Selma Jeanne Cohen (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1966), 44.
- 5) Interview conducted by the author with Stuart Hodes, October 5, 1991.

## CONCERTS

6 April 2006 / 7.30 pm

• Harare, Zimbabwe

8 April 2006

• Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.  
Libor Nováček – Piano  
**Three Czech Dances, H. 154**

7 April 2006, 5.00 pm

• Smetana Hall, Municipal House, Prague  
Aleš Bárta – Organ  
**Vigilia, H. 382**

9 April 2006 / 2.00 pm

• Městská Beseda Hall,  
Plzeň, CZ  
Radio Symphony Orchestra Plzeň  
[www.plzenskafilharmonie.cz](http://www.plzenskafilharmonie.cz)  
Children's Choir Plzeň  
Bedřiška Koželuhová – Choirmaster  
Presented by Ilya Šmíd a Jan Řezníček  
**"What have you done now, Bohouš?"** –  
Concert for children composed of Martinů's works

10 April 2006

• Rudolfinum, Prague, Czech Republic  
String Orchestra of the Prague Conservatory  
František Pospíšil – Conductor  
**Suite No. 1, H. 212**

19 April 2006 / 7.30pm

• Wigmore Hall, London, UK  
[www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk)  
Juliette Bausor – Flute  
Iain Farrington – Piano  
**Sonata for Flute and Piano, H. 306**

19 April 2006

• Kongresshaus, Biel, Switzerland  
Kammerorchester Basel  
[www.kammerorchesterbasel.ch](http://www.kammerorchesterbasel.ch)  
Christopher Hogwood – Conductor  
**Double Concerto for Strings,  
Timpani and Piano, H. 271**

20 & 21 April 2006

• Philharmonie, Alfried Krupp Saal,  
Essen, Germany  
Essener Philharmoniker  
Stefan Solyom – Conductor  
**String Quartet with Orchestra, H. 207**

22 April 2006 / 10.30 am

• Besední dům, Brno, Czech Republic  
Brno State Philharmonic Cantilena  
Jakub Klecker – Conductor  
**The Chapbook (a selection), H. 214**

24 April 2006 / 7.30 pm

• Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum,  
Prague, CZ  
Prague Chamber Philharmonia  
[www.pkf.cz](http://www.pkf.cz)  
Jiří Bělohávek – Conductor  
Isabelle Faust – Violin  
**Toccata e due canzoni, H. 311**

25 April 2006 / 7.30 pm

• Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum, Prague, CZ  
Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra (SOČR)  
Petr Vronský – Conductor  
**Symphony No. 1, H. 289**

26 April 2006 / 7.30 pm

• Konserthus, Helsingborg, Sweden  
Pollux Brass Quintet, N. N. – Piano  
**Sextet for Piano and Wind Instruments, H. 174**

4 May 2006

• Philharmonic Hall,  
Hradec Králové, Czech Republic  
Philharmonic Orchestra  
Hradec Králové  
Andreas S. Weiser – Conductor  
**Bouquet of Flowers, H. 260**

8 May 2006

• Polička, CZ  
Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra  
**The Field Mass, H. 279**  
and the **Hymn to St. James, H. 347**  
will be broadcast live from Polička by the EBU

9 May 2006 / 7.30 pm

• St Lawrence Jewry, London, UK  
"Music for a While"  
City Chamber Choir  
[www.citychamber.org.uk](http://www.citychamber.org.uk)  
Stephen Jones – Conductor  
Cathy Nardiello – Piano  
**Songs on One Page, H. 294;**  
**Songs on Two Pages, H. 302; Piano Solos**

10 May 2006

• Theater am Marienort, Duisburg, Germany  
Duisburger Philharmoniker  
Jonathan Darlington – Conductor  
**Symphony No. 3, H. 299**

10 & 11 May 2006

• Philharmonie, Berlin, Germany  
Berliner Philharmoniker  
Jiří Bělohávek – Conductor  
**Fantaisies symphoniques  
(Symphony No. 6), H. 343**

11 & 12 May 2006 / 7.30 pm

• Culture House Hall, Ostrava, CZ  
Janáček Philharmonie Ostrava  
Theodore Kuchar – Conductor  
**Double Concerto for Strings, Timpani  
and Piano, H. 271**

15 May 2006 / 7.30 pm

• Švanda Theatre, Prague, CZ  
Prague Chamber Philharmonia and guests  
Barbara Maria Willi – Harpsichord  
**Sonata for Harpsichord, H. 368**

24 May 2006 / 7.30 pm

• West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge, UK  
The Endellion String Quartet  
Andrew Watkinson & Ralph de Souza – Violins  
Garfield Jackson – Viola,  
David Waterman – Cello  
**String Quartet No. 3, H. 183**

25 May 2006

• House of Arts, Zlín, CZ  
"May Inspiration"  
Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic  
Orchestra  
[www.fbmzlin.cz](http://www.fbmzlin.cz)  
Martin Lebel – Conductor  
Jan Adamus – Oboe  
**Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, H. 353**

28 May 2006

• Hochschule für Musik und Theater,  
München, Germany  
Performed by the students of the School  
of Music and Theatre Munich  
**Sextet for Piano and Wind Instruments,  
H. 174**

6 June 2006

• Salle Gaveau, Eglise St-Germain-des-Prés,  
Paris, France  
Colonne Orchestra  
Laurent Petitgirard – Conductor  
**Ouverture, H. 345**

14 July 2006

• Cottbus, Germany  
RBB Radio-concert "850 years Cottbus"  
Carolina Eyck – Theremin  
**Fantasia for Theremin with Oboe,  
String Quartet and Piano, H. 301**

## OPERAS

**The Greek Passion, H. 372/III**

4, 14 April 2006, 10 May 2006 / 6.30 pm

• National Moravian-Silesian Theatre Ostrava, CZ  
Václav Návrat – Conductor  
National Moravian – Silesian Theatre Opera  
Orchestra  
Michal Tarant – Stage Director

**The Greek Passion, H. 372**

13 April 2006 — PREMIERE

• National Theatre Prague, CZ  
For more information see p. 9 in this issue

**Comedy on the Bridge, H. 247**

28 April–21 May 2006

• New Victory Theater, New York, USA  
[www.newvictory.org](http://www.newvictory.org)

**Larmes du Couteau, H. 169**

30 April 2006 / 6, 7, 13, 19, 26 May /  
3 & 11 June 2006

• Städtische Bühnen, Kleines Haus,  
Münster, Germany  
[www.stadttheater.muenster.de](http://www.stadttheater.muenster.de)  
Theater-Jugendorchester  
Peter Meiser – Conductor

**Plays of Mary, H. 236**

14, 18, 25 April / 16 May 2006

• Plzeň, CZ  
For more information see page 9 in this issue

## FESTIVALS

**BRIGHTON FESTIVAL**

6–28 May 2006 / UK

[www.brightonfestival.org](http://www.brightonfestival.org)  
24 May, 1:00 pm  
• Pavilion Theatre  
Libor Nováček – Piano  
**Three Czech Dances, H. 154**

**JAGTHUIS FESTIVAL**

26–28 May 2006 / Netherlands

For more information see page 6 in this issue

## NEW ITEMS IN THE LIBRARY

MUSICOLOGIST Jana Urbanová wrote her **dissertation** in 2005 upon the basis of a semester-long internship at the Université de Paris – Sorbonne in Paris. Her work explores in more detail the acceptance of Martinů into the contemporary musical life of Paris in 1923–1940 – one chapter is dedicated to his cooperation with Parisian publishers (Leduc, Eschig and Salabert) and there is a subsequent description of his correspondence with significant musical personalities (N. Boulanger, A. Coeuroy and G.-J. Aubry). At the work's core is a summary of approximately 130 critiques of B. Martinů's work and personality (in the French originals with Czech translations).  
*Urbanová, J.: The Parisian Reception of Bohuslav Martinů in 1923–1940. The Musical Science Institute at Charles University, Prague 2005, 142 pages + 40 pages of annexes*

THE LIBRARY at the BM Institute has received Dr. Gabriele Jonté's **dissertation** entitled **"Ästhetische Konstanten im Werk Bohuslav Martinů"** (Aesthetic Constants in the Works of Bohuslav Martinů). In this work, the author has concentrated on the relationship between the composer's aesthetic ideas and opinions and their externalisation in his compositions. She has chosen four compositions from various periods which are related temporally or by content to Martinů's writings about aesthetics and has used her analysis of these four works to demonstrate the compositional procedures and components which Martinů used in relation to his aesthetic premises. The work also includes a brief biography of Martinů with an orientation towards how the composer Albert Roussel influenced Martinů.  
*Jonté, G.: Ästhetische konstanten im Werk Bohuslav Martinů. Universität Hamburg, Hamburg 2005, 100 pages.*

## HISTORICAL RECORDINGS

THE INSTITUTE'S library has acquired a **rare period recording** thanks to Jean-Louis Roux. This involves a recording from the American premiere of Bohuslav Martinů's **Symphony no. 5 (H. 310)** which was performed on 24th January 1948 by the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Ernest Ansermet (1883–1969) in the presence of the composer. Martinů dedicated *Symphony no. 5* (completed on 13th May 1946) to the Czech Philharmonia upon the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its establishment. The Swiss conductor and founder of the L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, E. Ansermet, also performed many other Martinů orchestral works.

THE INSTITUTE has also received a copy of a **live recording from a concert** where Eugene Ormandy conducted Martinů's **Symphony no. 2 (H. 295, 1943)**. This recording comes from the estate of the late American violinist and conductor of Hungarian origin, Eugene Ormandy, (1899–1985) in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library at the University of Pennsylvania (USA).



## OBITUARY

### MILADA SVOBODOVÁ HAS DIED

ON 30 JANUARY 2006, MILADA SVOBODOVÁ, one of the last people who knew the Martinůs during their stay in America, died at the age of 96. She first met Bohuslav and Charlotte Martinů on a ship sailing to the USA in 1941. Milada Svobodová was an astronomer and an excellent painter. She also played the piano superbly. Her husband, Professor Antonín Svoboda, taught at California University (at that time, he was one of the leading mathematicians in the world) and their son, Tomáš, later became a composer. Mr and Mrs Svoboda often met the Martinůs during their summer stays at Darien (Connecticut) and Cape Code (Massachusetts) in 1943 and 1945. Martinů dedicated two sections of his Etudes and Polkas piano cycle to Milada Svobodová (H.308, 1945).

We have received this information from Mila Smetáčková, the Chairwoman of the Czech Musical Association



Tomáš Svoboda, Milada Svobodová, Bohuslav Martinů, Charlotte Martinů and Rudolf Firkušný, South Orleans, Cape Code, 1945

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## MISCELLANEOUS

### FROM THE RARE BOOK & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

A RECORD of a telephone conversation between Oliver Daniel and Rudolf Firkušný about the conductor Leopold Stokowski and containing information about Martinů's *Piano Concerto no. 2* (H. 237). The conversation took place in 1977 and R. Firkušný mentioned in detail not only the piece entitled Incantations (*Piano Concerto no. 4*), which was first performed in New York on 4 October 1956 under the baton of Leopold Stokowski, but also the *Piano Concerto no. 2* and the premiere of his reworked version with the CBS Orchestra and the conductor Bernard Herrmann.

THE INSTITUTE has also received a printed score of the *Concerto for Oboe and Small Orchestra* (H.353, 1955) with notes made by the Hungarian conductor Eugene Ormandy.

### THE PENGUIN QUARTET HAS CHANGED HIS NAME!

THE EXCELLENT ensemble of young artists which performed as the Penguin Quartet up to 2005 will continue under the name of the Zemlinsky Quartet from 2006. This quartet's successes include 1st prize in the string quartet category in the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation Competition (2004). The ensemble also played the premiere of the newly discovered *String Trio no. 1* (H. 136) at the 2005 Bohuslav Martinů Days.

The new name symbolises the connection of the ensemble to the composer, on whose legacy the ensemble will also concentrate in future. For more information see [www.zemlinskyquartet.cz](http://www.zemlinskyquartet.cz)

### INTERESTING INTERNET SEARCHES

**ERIK ENTWISTLE'S 200-page dissertation** (Martinů in Paris: A Synthesis of Musical Styles and Symbols) is now available online at [http://www.musicweb.uk.net/classrev/2006/Feb06/Martinu\\_contents.htm](http://www.musicweb.uk.net/classrev/2006/Feb06/Martinu_contents.htm)

**CONCERT HALL IN WIEN** • Database of the performances from 1913 to 2005 is now available at <http://konzerthaus.at/archiv/datenbanksuche/> You can find there 145 concerts with Martinů music. The oldest one is from 18 January 1937, when Pavel Ludikar sang a short piece Saltimbanques from the cycle *Three Songs to Poems by G. Apollinaire, H. 197*.

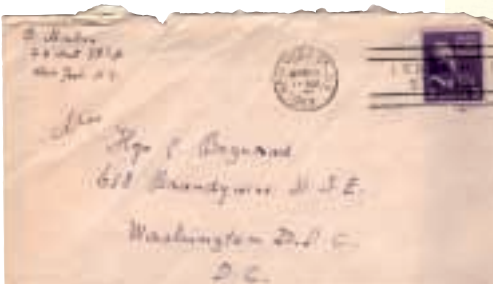
## CORRESPONDENCE

THE BM INSTITUTE has received the following significant addition to the correspondence archive from Mrs Hope Castagnola Bogorad. This involves a 1941 Christmas card from the Martinůs to her parents in Jamaica (NY), with whom the Martinůs lodged from October 1941 to June 1942 at the beginning of their stay in the USA. The card is complete with Martinů's handwritten signature in the form of musical notes. A further piece of correspondence dated 21st March 1953 was addressed directly to Hope Castagnola Bogorad. In the short letter, Martinů expressed his joy, amongst other things, at the renewal of their contact after a long pause and also compared the bustle of New York with the beauty and peace of their house in Jamaica.

### MATERIALS FROM THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

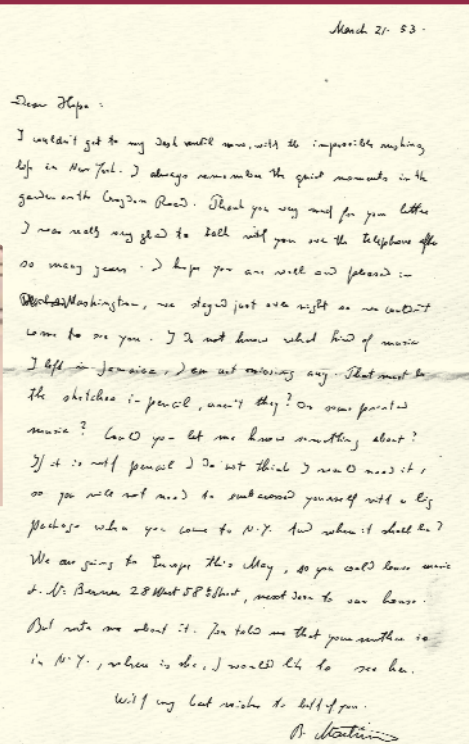
—The New York Public Library has provided the Institute's library with a copy of an important source concerning the genesis and performance of the *Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra* (H. 329) dated 1950. This involves a letter from Martinů to Herbert Weinstock dated 28th September 1951, in which the

composer answered a question concerning his new composition. He described his cooperation with the Beals brothers, to whom the



concerto is dedicated, and also his works for violin up to that time. Herbert Weinstock (1905–1971) was the author of a number of publications about composers and a translator and he also worked as a musical editor.

—We have also acquired for the Institute's library the sketches for the *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano no. 3* (H. 340, 1952) consisting of eleven pages.



—A letter addressed to Marcel Moyse, in which Martinů mentions the performance of his *Concerto for Flute, Violin and Chamber Orchestra*, has also come from the New York Public Library. There is also more on page 10–11.

NEWS prepared by Lucie Berná



## NEW CDs IN THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ INSTITUTE



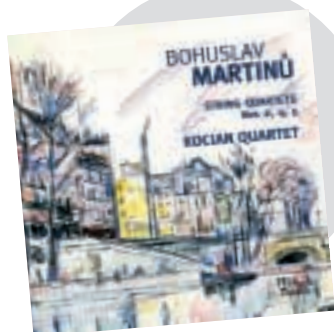
### Dvořák – Martinů

Dvořák:

- **Symphony No. 9**  
From the New World

Martinů:

- **Symphony No. 2, H. 295**  
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra,  
Paavo Järvi – Conductor  
TELARC CD-80616, DSD, TT: 010816,  
recorded 2005, 2005  
Texts in English



### Bohuslav Martinů String Quartets Nos. 2, 4, 5

- **String Quartet No. 2, H. 150**
- **String Quartet No. 4, H. 256**
- **String Quartet No. 5, H. 268**  
Kocian Quartet (P. Hůla, M. Černý,  
Z. Paďourek, V. Bernášek)  
Praga Digitals PRD/DSD 250 205, TT: 010655,  
recorded 2004 and 2005, 2005  
Texts in English, French and German



### Bohuslav Martinů

- **Symphony No. 5 (1946), H. 310**  
World premiere recording,  
recorded 1953
- **Intermezzo (1950), H. 330**  
World premiere recording,  
recorded 1959
- **Concerto for oboe and orchestra  
(1955), H. 353**  
Recorded 1966
- **Estampes (1958), H. 369**  
World premiere recording,  
recorded 1980  
The Louisville Orchestra, Robert  
Whitney, Sidney Harth – Conductors,  
Marion Gibson – Oboe  
First Edition Music FECD 0018, TT: 010554, 2003  
Texts in English



### B. Martinů The Best of: Concertos

- **Concerto for Flute, Violin  
and Orchestra, H. 252**  
R. Hofman – Flute, V. Žuk – Violin,  
L. Markiz – Conductor
- **Concerto for String Quartet  
and Orchestra, H. 207**  
A. Vajnunaite – Violin, P. Kunca – Violin,  
D. Katkus – Viola,  
A. Vasiljauskas – Cello  
Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra,  
V. Fedosejev – Conductor
- **Concerto for Cello and Orchestra  
No. 1, H. 196 (second version)**  
Michail Chomizer – Cello, Moscow  
State Philharmonia Symphonic  
Orchestra, V. Dubrovskij – Conductor  
Levné knihy LK 0335-2, Digital Remaster,  
TT: 006041, 2005, recorded MONO in 1970

## MUSIC PUBLISHING HOUSE EDITIO BÄRENREITER PRAHA ANNOUNCES ITS NEWLY REVISED EDITIONS



## BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ **String Quartet no. 6** / H. 312

Edited by Aleš Březina and Ivan Štraus • To appear in May 2006

- **An informative preface and critical commentary by Aleš Březina and Ivan Štraus** (Cz / Ger / Eng / Fr)
- **A new, practical edition at the forefront of Martinů scholarship**
- **All existing sources consulted**

The String Quartet no. 6 by Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959) represents a distinct step on the journey which the composer characterised as his development from “geometry to fantasy” and for which the almost continuous use of the principle of developing variations, restless harmonic development, the pulsation of minute rhythmic values and inventive work with sound are characteristic. The quartet, which was written in New York in the autumn of 1946, constitutes the beginning of the composer's later works, in which moods freely overflow regardless of any predefined formal layout. The editors of the new edition (based on the composer's autograph) have carefully removed all of the problematic and somewhat arbitrary editorial intervention in the sole existing edition dating from 1950 (actually 1955). With its urtext edition of the 6th quartet, Editio Bärenreiter Praha has continued in its series of new publications of works by Bohuslav Martinů – quartets nos. 4 and 5 have already been published for this instrumental line-up.

► H 7968 (Pocket Score), ISMN M-2601-0373-3 • H 7968a (Parts), ISMN M-2601-0374-0

## BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ **String Trio no. 1** / H. 136

Edited by Eva Velická • To appear in June 2006

- **The first printed edition after the rediscovered autograph score**
- **An informative preface and critical commentary by Eva Velická** (Cz / Ger / Eng / Fr)
- **A practical edition at the forefront of Martinů scholarship**

“ROUSSEL LIKES IT, ALTHOUGH HE OCCASIONALLY SHAKES HIS HEAD”

The fate of Bohuslav Martinů's String Trio no. 1, which dates from the turn of 1923 and 1924 and was lost until 2005, is somewhat remarkable. The trio is the first work which Martinů created in Paris after becoming the private pupil of Albert Roussel. It was probably performed twice in Paris during 1924. It had its Czech premiere in February 1925 and Martinů requested his friend S. Novák to make sure that “they don't lose the scores of the things they played”, because he did not have any sketches or copies. Precisely that which Martinů feared then occurred – the sole existing version of the trio was lost; it was not until autumn 2005 that the autograph of the trio (the score and parts for the viola and cello – the violin part is still missing) was found at the Danish Royal Library in Copenhagen thanks to the searches of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute and it is after this autograph that this edition has arisen.

► H 7965 (Pocket Score), ISMN M-2601-0372-6 • H 7965a (Parts), ISMN M-2601-0377-1



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