

THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ FOUNDATION
THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ INSTITUTE
THE INTERNATIONAL MARTINŮ CIRCLE

MARTINŮREVUE

september–december **2017** / vol.XVII / no.3

**the first production of
the greek passion, H 372/1
in russia**

**martinů & hrůša
at bbc proms 2017**

**string quartets nos 4–7:
new publication of bmce**

obituary: zuzana růžičková





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6 February 2018

> Shibuya Densho Hall, Tokyo, Japan

Concert to honor

**the 1st anniversary of the death
of Mr. Hideo Sekine (1929–2017)**

Sonata for Piano, H 350

Luděk Šabaka (Piano)

Sonata for Cello and Piano, H 340

Nozomi Sekine (Cello)

Yukiko Sawa (Piano)

28+29+30 March 2018

> Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum, Prague, CZ

www.ceskafilharmonie.cz

Symphony No. 3, H 299

Symphony No. 6, H 343

Czech Philharmonic

Jakub Hrůša (Conductor)

operas

19+20+21+22 April 2018

The Greek Passion,

1st version, H 372/I

> Yekaterinburg, Russia

www.uralopera.ru/en/repertoire.php

Director: Thaddeus Strassberger

Music Director: Olivier von Dohnányi

3+11+23 March,

14 April, 17 June 2018

Juliette

(The Key to Dreams), H 253

> Opernhaus Wuppertal, Germany

www.oper-wuppertal.de

Director: Inga Levant

obituary

PROF. VÁCLAV RIEDLBAUCH, Director of the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation, sadly passed away on 3 November 2017 at the age of 70. May he rest in peace!

Václav Riedlbauch was a music manager, composer, pedagogue and significant figure in Czech cultural life. He had served as Artistic Director of Opera at the National Theatre in Prague, Director of the Czech Philharmonic, and Minister of Culture. Riedlbauch long served as a professor of composition at the Faculty of Music, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, leading this department from 1990 to 2004. He also co-founded department of Arts Management at the University of Economics in Prague.

The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation and Institute deeply regret the loss of this long-time promoter of the music of Bohuslav Martinů.



PHOTO TOMÁŠ VODŇANSKÝ

the first production of bohuslav martinů's opera the greek passion, H 372/I in russia

/ ANDREI SHISHKIN

THIS YEAR, the Yekaterinburg Opera and Ballet Theatre, one of the oldest musical theatres in Russia, celebrated its 105th anniversary. The theatre is one with its own deep-rooted traditions, and it concerns itself with both the preservation of the classical opera and ballet heritage and with the introduction of new

berger (Great Britain) is the production director and stage designer of the production. Both production team leaders were nominated for the main theatrical award of Russia, the Golden Mask, for their staging *Satyagraha*. Costumes design for *The Greek Passion* is by the British designer Kevin Knight. The chorus rehearsals will proceed under the supervision of the principal chorus master of the Theatre Angelica

his novel *Christ Recrucified*, and a lecture by specialists in works of this writer. In March 2018, an open presentation of the project will take place at the Czech Embassy in Moscow. An international symposium on the subject "Opera and Religion" is also scheduled for the period of the opening of the opera. At present, work is underway on a production showcase for the opening in the Theatre lobby, on devel-



names and works to Russian audiences. Among the most impressive and outstanding productions of recent years are the Russian premieres of such operas as *Satyagraha* by Philip Glass (2014) and *The Passenger* by Moisey Weinberg (2016). Bohuslav Martinů's opera *The Greek Passion (1st version)* will join this list, with a Russian premiere in Russia being produced by the same team responsible for the operas by Glass and Weinberg. The affinity between these works goes deeper though: they are all characterized by the unifying theme of resistance to evil and victory of mind over circumstances.

The production of the first version of *The Greek Passion* will be directed and conducted by the Theatre's principal conductor Oliver von Dohnányi, who was previously the principal conductor of the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra and the National Opera Orchestras in Prague and Bratislava, and who also continues cooperation with many leading musical companies around the world. Thaddeus Strass-

Grozina. The guest production consultant from the Russian Orthodox Church is Hegumen Veniamin (Rainikov). The Yekaterinburg Theatre has elected to produce the first version of the opera, which will be performed in the Russian language. The opening is scheduled for 19–22 April 2018.

The Theatre found it important to introduce the work of Martinů and Kazantzakis to the Yekaterinburg public well beforehand to prepare them for the premiere. To this end, series of satellite events was conceived that aim to engage the future audience. For example, a symphony concert dedicated to Martinů, including *Symphony No. 4* and cantata *Bouquet of Flowers*, will take place in Yekaterinburg in spring 2018. Within the framework of the project, the Bohuslav Martinů Institute will make a Russian presentation of a complete set of the composer's works, which will be accompanied by recital of his chamber works. The planned events dedicated to works of Kazantzakis include a staged reading of

opment of the project web-site, preparation of a brochure for the premiere, a theatrical leaflet, and on a DVD recording of the performance.

We believe that Martinů's musical drama depicting events from biblical times, with its inimitable melodies, unusual use of rhythm, and its lyrical emotion so close to the Russian heart, will find its enthusiasts in Russia. And the production of the Yekaterinburg Theatre will amply illuminate the musical content and the message carried by the opera.

Realization of the project is possible thanks to the support of several international partners: the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation and the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague, the Czech Republic Embassy in Moscow, the Greek Cultural Centre in Moscow and the International Society of Kazantzakis' Friends in Geneva ■

Andrei Shishkin is general director of the Yekaterinburg Theatre

MARTINŮ REVUE (formerly Bohuslav Martinů Newsletter) is published by the International Martinů Circle in collaboration with the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague with the financial support of the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation.

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Photographs

The Bohuslav Martinů Foundation's
and Institute's archive, collections of the
Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička

Graphic Design David Cígler

Printing Naproma Production, s.r.o.

The Martinů Revue is published
three times a year in Prague.

Cover

Bohuslav & Charlotte Martinů
© CBM



ISSN 1803-8514
MK ČR E 18911
www.martinu.cz

THE PREVIOUS ISSUE



THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ CENTER IN POLIČKA

offers an interesting, inter-actively conceived exhibition on the composer's life and work. The modern display of Bohuslav Martinů's life and work is located in the historical building of the former council school, which Martinů attended as a child. Consequently, the project also comprises a reproduction of Martinů's classroom, complete with period painting and furniture. The centre also contains an audio-visual hall and study room.

Bohuslav Martinů Center
Tylova 114, 572 01 Polička
tel.: +420 461 723 857
www.cbmpolicka.cz



incircle news

—IMC SUBSCRIPTION RATES – ERRATA

THE PREVIOUS ISSUE of the Martinů Revue contained important news about changes to the subscription rates for 2018. Unfortunately, the information listed for our British members was incorrect. We apologize for this error. We are publishing the complete **rates for the two types of membership for 2018** again (see the right column).

Please let us know by **the end of February 2018** which type of membership you require. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact your regional representatives or the IMC secretary at e-mail: incircle@martinu.cz

Thank you very much for your understanding.

—IMC BOARD MEETING

THE BOARD of Delegates will meet on Thursday **29 March 2018** at the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague. The meeting coincides with a performance of Martinů's *Symphony No. 3 and No. 6* at the Rudolfinum, with Jakub Hruša conducting the Czech Philharmonic.

—2018 SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS

WE WOULD REQUEST members to forward their 2018 subscription payments through their usual channels. A list of our international contacts:

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– IMC Paypal account at: www.martinu.cz, section **International Martinů Circle**, subsection **Membership**

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Members who pay their subscriptions via the Dvořák Society should continue to do so.

Those wishing to pay in Czech currency or by cash should contact us at incircle@martinu.cz ■



Jakub Hruša,
President of IMC

Magdalena Kožená,
IMC Patron

International Martinů Circle

GENERAL INFORMATION

Members receive the illustrated *Martinů Revue* published three times a year plus a special limited edition CD containing world premieres, historic performances and archival recordings from the annual Martinů Festival not obtainable commercially.

The IMC is supported by the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation and Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague.

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION IN 2018

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

> Miriam Roycroft, UK
> Patrick Devine, Republic of Ireland

jakub hrůša's debut with

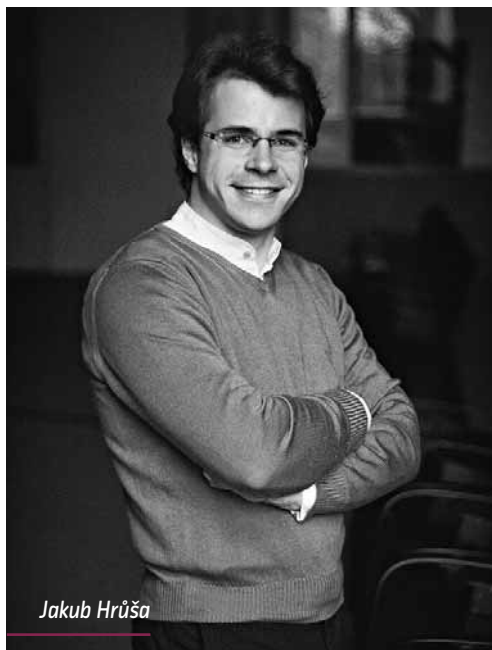
RISING STAR Jakub Hrůša made his BBC Proms debut this year at the Royal Albert Hall on 26 August, conducting an all-Czech programme. The concert featured Bohuslav Martinů's *Field Mass, H 279*, composed on the eve of World War II and dedicated to Czechoslovak volunteers on the French frontline.

Before the concert, Jakub Hrůša, who is also the proud president of the International Martinů Circle, attended a meeting with other IMC members; you can read more about the meeting on page 8)

The concert, in which Hrůša conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra, received many positive reviews. Here's an overview:

[...] In 1938, Czechoslovakia was annexed by Germany, with the implicit approval of Britain in 1938. Bohuslav Martinů's *Polní mše, H 279*, *Field Mass* (1939) was written for Czech exiles fighting with the French against the Germans. Thus the strange instrumentation, with brass and percussion employed to suggest the idea of performance in battlefield conditions. Drum rolls, marching rhythms, trumpet calls and a chorus of male voices. But also piano and harmonium and a part for baritone soloist beyond the scope of an average amateur. Fortunately, in Svatopluk Sem, we heard one of the most distinctive voices in the repertoire. Sem is a stalwart of the National Theatre in Prague, well known to British audiences for his work with Jiří Bělohlávek who transformed the way Czech music is heard in this country. Sem delivered with great authority, imbuing the words with almost biblical portent. His text is based on poetry by Jiří Mucha, who was soon to marry Vítězslava Kaprálová. Her *Military Sinfonietta* (1937) would have worked well in this programme, though it doesn't include a part for choir.

In Martinů's *Field Mass*, the choir acts as foil to the soloist, voices in hushed unison, mass (in every sense supporting the individual. Though their music is relatively straightforward *Miserere*, *Kyrie* and psalm, this simplicity enhances the idea of mutual support, reflecting the relationship between piano with harmonium, voices and soloists surrounded by atmospheric percussion



Jakub Hrůša

and brass. The version we heard at this Prom is the new edition by Paul Wingfield.

Opera Today; Anne Ozorio – Jakub Hrůša: Bohemian Reformation Prom
www.operatoday.com

[...] Jakub Hrůša then turned to the closing two instalments (rarely heard outside the complete cycle) of Smetana's *My Fatherland*, the foreboding of 'Tábor' melding into the heroism of 'Blaník' which emerged as more than usually poetic.

This imposing lineage continued in the second half with Dvořák's *Hussite Overture*, written for the reopening of Prague's National Theatre and its Brahmsian rigour suffused with heady Czech sentiment. The 'Song of the Hussites' from Janáček's comic opera *The Excursions of Mr Brouček* made a fervent though slightly jarring interpolation between this and Josef Suk's Prague, his panoramic evocation of the city in all its triumphs and adversities; culminating with a massive organ-capped peroration that the BBC Symphony Orchestra audibly relished.

The highlight came before the interval with a revival of the *Field Mass* that Martinů wrote for Czech forces in France after the Nazi invasion. Less liturgical service than sacred cantata, its fusion of patriotism and prayer

leaves an impression as singular as its scoring, and baritone Svatopluk Sem impressed in the monologues at the heart of this uniquely affecting concept.

Independent; Richard Whitehouse – Prom 56: Suffused with heady Czech sentiment
www.independent.co.uk

[...] The highlights were Suk's lush, atmospheric orchestral portrait Prague, which mixed the mad fervour of Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* with the suave sensuality of Richard Strauss, and Martinů's weird but gripping *Field Mass*. Written in 1939 to boost morale in the Czech army, it juxtaposed martial trumpets and drums, a wheezy harmonium, an anguished baritone declamation (Svatopluk Sem, masterful) and exquisite close harmony for the male chorus."

The Sunday Times; Richard Morrison – Proms review
www.thetimes.co.uk

[...] These two parts of *Má vlast* (Tábor, Blaník) rendered no memorable melody – these are not tunes one takes home – yet under Hrůša's baton phrases alternated between majesty and pompousness and transmuted conflict into somnolent peace.

This musical picture came apart at the seams with the next work: Martinů's *Field Mass*. Bereft of the majority of instruments that featured in *Má vlast*, Hrůša was left with men's voices, piano, a pump organ, woodwind and occasional percussion. In this nihilistic atmosphere, trumpets dwindled in long drawn-out, lonely phrases. The pump organ played disruptive chords that mirrored sounds of tumbling disassembled homes, rubble and artefacts of war. That Romantic paysage of Smetana's had been swamped with the remains of a fight, namely, the Czechs' plight in World War II. The orchestra became unrecognisable. Baritone Svatopluk Sem performed his vocal line with bold and rigid determination, never allowing any purity of sound to sway. He easily evoked the gut-wrenching ambition of a nascent soldier eager to enlist.

The calm after the storm arrived with Dvořák's *Hussite Overture*. Timpani snaps were measured,

martinů at **BBC** Proms



Jakub Hruša conducting The Bamberger Symphoniker

PHOTO ANDREAS HERZAU

strings strokes were so gentle that they sounded fearful they might wake somebody up. All of a sudden this was twisted into one fortissimo outcry of victory. Compared to Martinů, the little tweets of birdsong on the flutes and melting harmony of brass and strings felt almost disconcerting – in the most impeccable of ways.

Bachtrack; Sophia Lambton – Prom 56:

Jakub Hruša raises Czech music to celestial Bohemian heights

www.bachtrack.com

[...] In the second of his excursions in Janáček's eponymous opera, Mr Brouček is transported back to the 15th century, where he hears the Hussites sing, and this four-minute extract from the opera, although apposite, was perhaps a bit of an extravagant excuse to shoehorn in another Czech composer. Again, the men of the BBC Singers gave a clear rendering against the quietly menacing oboes and timpani, with some lovely clear high tenor notes in the final moments of organ-accompanied glory.

instruments, a harmonium, and small flutes. It is full of the rumble of drums and trumpet calls – clearly a very unusual combination for a mass, but one which was well suited to our purposes. I sent one copy home to Prague, not that they could perform it there, of course, but there will come a time when it will be possible to do so.

Besides that, I wrote a military march for our army, and we had various plans with the other artists still in Paris regarding what we could do for them to uplift them and bring them respite with the abilities we had. We wanted to devise short plays with music, which they could perform themselves; we searched for and arranged folk songs and texts for choir; we worked for them in the radio with programmes dedicated to our boys. I myself prepared a Prague rendition of the Double Concerto, and I had already assembled extensive promotional matter for the occasion, which was to be published in French journals. I also worked to organise a per-

formance of the *Field Mass* in Paris, also with extensive promotion of this manifestation. All of this was cut short by the events of June, which you are aware of and which forced me to abandon Paris and set out on an exodus that – following eight months of uncertainty and constant travel under tragic circumstances – has brought me to American soil, where I have received, both from our own and from my American friends and those who know me by name only, such spontaneous welcome. This was by no means anticipated. It has touched me to the depths of my heart, and invigorated me to proceed with my further plans and with further work for our art and for us all.

Music OHM (Barry Creasy) – Prom 56:
The Bohemian Reformation
@ Royal Albert Hall, London
www.musicomh.com

PROGRAMME OF THE CONCERT

26 August 2017, 7.30 pm

Royal Albert Hall, London

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ: *Field Mass, H 279*

BEDŘICH SMETANA: *My Country – Tábor, Blaník*

ANTONÍN DVORÁK: *Hussite Overture op. 67*

LEOŠ JANÁČEK: *The Excursions of Mr Brouček – Song of the Hussites*

JOSEF SUK: *Praga*

BBC Symphony Orchestra,

Jakub Hruša (Conductor),

Svatopluk Sem (Baritone),

BBC Singers

bohuslav martinů: field mass

THIS WORK is not an ordinary mass but, rather, a proper military mass that must be performed outside in a field, where the same sky and the same clouds would connect those of us in Paris with those at home. I collaborated with Jiří Mucha, whose articles and poems we now read from London. Mucha designed the text and form of the work, which contains alongside lyrical passages – like the memories and longing for home of a soldier on sentry duty – moments of defiance and fiery ensembles from the male chorus, which exhort us to endure with unswerving hope of victory. The work ends with quotations of the psalms. The orchestra comprises only trumpets and percussion

formance of the *Field Mass* in Paris, also with extensive promotion of this manifestation.

All of this was cut short by the events of June, which you are aware of and which forced me to abandon Paris and set out on an exodus that – following eight months of uncertainty and constant travel under tragic circumstances – has brought me to American soil, where I have received, both from our own and from my American friends and those who know me by name only, such spontaneous welcome. This was by no means anticipated. It has touched me to the depths of my heart, and invigorated me to proceed with my further plans and with further work for our art and for us all.

Programme notes written by the composer.

From: Bohuslav Martinů: Domov, hudba a svět. Státní hudební vydatelství, Praha 1966, pp. 281–282

Translated by Adam Prentiss

imc meeting in london

Pre-Concert Conversation with Jakub Hrůša – the President of the International Martinů Circle, and Aleš Březina, member of the IMC Board.

Royal Albert Hall, Proms, London,
26 August 2017

ALEŠ BŘEZINA (AB): It's not your first time doing the *Field Mass*.

JAKUB HRŮŠA (JH): Oh, no! I've done it twice or three times before. It's one of the pieces which are very touching for everyone – even for people who don't have much experience with Martinů. Whenever the piece is brought out of the archive and animated through performance, it's always very powerful. This is not true of every piece by Martinů. With many of his pieces, people unfamiliar with his work may need more time to become accustomed to his language.

But there are exceptions – such as this or *Lidice* – that somehow have a message which transcends the context of their composition. They are somehow more universally communicative. I think the *Field Mass* works beautifully for this program tonight. The work will communicate in an intimate and intensely emotional way, and its emotional world will be highlighted by juxtaposition with the other pieces on the programme, which are a little bit more extroverted.

AB: What are your favourite Martinů pieces? Most performed, most beloved?

JH: I'm very fond of his late period. It is difficult to recall my first encounter with Martinů. It would have been through a gramophone record, very probably something with Jiří Bělohlávek. I'm not sure about that, but it seems that there were quite many LP recordings with him at home that it would have been one of those. I do remember later, closer to my teenage years, there were two pieces that became very special to me, and despite their complexity, elicited deep interest: *Parables* and the *Symphony No. 6 "Fantaisies symphoniques"*. I was struck by the richness and unpredictability and the sound, which was full of fantasy; by the works' sense of humanity; by the drama, which is so clear in the 6th Symphony. All that was very appealing for me. So probably these works. And then I remember also being touched by the *Greek Passion*.

AB: The Czech one?



The members of the International Martinů Circle in conversation with the conductor Jakub Hrůša, London, 26 August 2017

JH: The Czech one. That was also very dear to me. And then I played his piano music, of course. *Kolombína zpívá* was his first piano piece I did, giving me a window into the potential simplicity of Martinů's language. And then came other pieces, step by step. That, roughly, was my journey.

AB: I always love reading your messages about your performances of one and the same piece with various orchestras. Once you described to me quite different experiences with a Toronto Orchestra and a German Orchestra. Could you tell us something about that?

JH: It seems that Martinů's language is sometimes a bit far from what is natural for German musicians. It always takes a longer time for German orchestras to come to appreciate Martinů's music. This may be connected to their different schooling and different inclinations in music, different histories. And to the fact that Martinů, by his aesthetic credo, was actually a bit anti-Germanic. His music was very much connected to Paris, the French school, and to earlier stages in the history of music, rather than to the Romantic 18th, 19th-century canon of German music. So in German-speaking countries, Martinů's symphonic works are perceived as rather something like 'anti-establishment'. On the other hand, in America, if you present a Martinů symphony there, his music can be seen as part of what's was happening there in

the 40's. Of course, it's was never possible to call Martinů an American composer, but his is a language which somehow accorded with the aesthetics of an American symphony orchestra, at least at that time. Toronto especially is closer to Martinů thanks to Ančerl and to what he meant to the Toronto Symphony. Somehow it seems to me that in Germany the orchestras need to first get the reasonable meaning of the piece and then they can become open to it. Whereas in other countries, including here, people are sometimes simply open and then they get the meaning through this openness. It's a generalization, but if I compare my experience performing Martinů in Germany and in the States or in Canada, it was often like that. On the other hand, it doesn't mean that the German orchestra and their process cannot lead to an even better result, but for a conductor it is a bit harder to get the orchestra on your side with Martinů. So that's about it in terms of an approach. But I think the American orchestras are often immediately skilful in reading the rhythms and syncopations and structures, whereas in Germany it sometimes takes maybe a bit more time to get used to them. Again, I speak specifically about Martinů! So his language is maybe closer at first sight to orchestras of English-speaking or French-speaking territories, let's say.

MEMBER OF IMC: Which musicians, conductors, instrumentalists particularly influenced your style?

JH: If you speak about Martinů, then definitely Jiří Bělohlávek in the first place, not only because he was lately my friend and of course my teacher, but because he is so influential in Martinů anyway, and I learned many pieces by Martinů through his readings, so he had to have influenced me. Though to be absolutely honest, lately I've developed a certain independence from it. It seemed to me, earlier, many years ago, that his was the canonical reading which one should follow perhaps even without questioning. And lately, I realized through careful reading what's written in the scores, that his is a powerful, authentic and extremely touching reading, but you can read the music differently, too. And then, I would say, definitely Ančerl. Also Kubelík, with some of his recordings, for instance that of the *Frescoes*. And Sir Charles Mackerras, whose *Field Mass* is a beautiful recording, and somehow very straightforward and very humble. He doesn't insert much of his own personality into it, but maybe because of this, it's very touching. You know, we just talked about Christopher Hogwood, his love of Martinů's sacred music, and his recordings of the late period works. Martinů's *Greek Passion* was an influence. I came to know it through Libor Pešek's rendition, though at the time I was still a student and rather puzzled by the work. I also witnessed Libor Pešek rehearsing a piece by Martinů with the Prague Philharmonia. It was one of the works for chamber orchestra, and he spent the whole rehearsal complaining humorously about how difficult it was for him to tackle the ubiquitous syncopations. He said it's really annoying to be the victim of syncopations all the time. It was his way of not losing his sense of humour, and this was helpful not just for himself.

AB: I recall a conversation about syncopation with Christopher Hogwood. I once asked him, 'Why do few conductors like Martinů?' He replied that maybe it's because if they conduct properly, it might look to the audience as if they are out of sync with the music and they'd seem like idiots. And not everyone likes to look like an idiot.

QUESTION: Are there any works by Martinů that you have not conducted and would particularly like to work on?

JH: Yes, the *Greek Passion*. That's in the first place. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* is another work I've never done, and I'd like to discover that piece for myself. In a way, many pieces come to me somehow without me actively choosing them. On the other hand, sometimes I hear a piece I'd like to do and there's no opportunity for it.

And then, for instance with *Epic of Gilgamesh*, I always thought Jiří was doing it so well that I didn't want to touch it because it's not possible to do it better.

AB: You mentioned the *Greek Passion*. Which of the versions would you do?

JH: I'm inclined to do the original, the first version. There is some discussion in Frankfurt. I'm dreaming of it, so it's likely it will come at some point, I think.

QUESTION: Can you say something about how the programme is put together this evening? Did you choose the pieces? And could you also comment on your work with the composers other than Martinů?

JH: Yes, this programme is, said with some pride, completely my invention. We sat down with Paul Hughes, the director of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, in the interval of the *Cunning Little Vixen* at Glyndebourne, which I did last year. He came to my dressing room, we opened a bottle of champagne, and he said, "So look, the theme of that festival is Reformation, and so what do you think you should do?" At first, I thought maybe I wouldn't just do Czech composers. It seemed a bit black-and-white. But then I thought, if the program is interesting enough, why not?

AB: We are about to publish one of the next volumes of Martinů complete edition: the First Cello Concerto. We'll issue all three versions. Only the third is known; the first has been published; and the second exists only as a manuscript. So we will publish all three because they are three different works, with basically the same solo part, but with totally different orchestral parts. It's a fascinating piece.

JH: Indeed! The first piece I conducted by Martinů was, in fact, the First Cello Concerto. I realized at that point, very, very clearly, that the intricate language, those syncopations and changes of meter and so on, in a way don't match the easiness of listening to the music. It seems very natural to the ear, yet it is not at all easy to put it together. So, it was not easy, the first experience, but each subsequent one was easier. What I love about Martinů is that he somehow was very much in touch with what was currently happening. In a way, he was reacting with his all activity and creativity to what he witnessed at the moment. He was not in some stage of idealistic visions of what art could be in an eternal sphere but was really contributing to his time, and yet with pieces which were not overloaded with unnecessary heaviness. It's really interesting.



AB: He seemed to absorb everything he heard. I will never forget when we did the world premiere of the first version of the *Greek Passion* in Bregenz. We had an Afro-American Andonis, the barber, and he started to sing the part, and all of a sudden we stopped because it sounded like a musical. If it's sung by an American singer, then all of a sudden it can seem like a moment from one of the best musicals in the tradition of West Side Story, for example. But just these few bars, and then it goes in a different direction. So really, he wasn't closed to influences from outside. He was a very inclusive composer.

JH: It's a point of criticism among some of the people. They say it's eclectic, too many things at once. But I never saw this as a problem, rather as an advantage. It's very interesting. What would he have liked to hear next to his piece on tonight's programme? What would have ignited Martinů's interest? Maybe not Smetana or Dvořák. Smetana emotionally, perhaps. Suk would be going too far, I would say.

AB: I would say Janáček.

JH: Janáček.

AB: He once wrote an monograph about composers he liked, and the final sentence of the work reads, 'Janáček, always well-liked.' Without saying that he himself liked him. 'Janáček, vždycky líbil.' No, he adored Janáček. For his originality. I mean, he's amazing in terms of his originality.

Thank you very much for our conversation. Enjoy the evening.
(abridged)

zuzana růžičková

“The First Lady of Harpsichord” prof. Růžičková has passed away at the age of 90. She was closely related to the music of Bohuslav Martinů whole life, recorded, for example, his Concerto for Harpsichord and Small Orchestra, H 246 (released by Supraphon) and her husband Viktor Kalabis was a long-time chairman of the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation and, basically, the founder of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute.

ZUZANA RŮŽIČKOVÁ was born 14 January 1927 in the city of Plzeň in western Bohemia. Her musical ability and predilection for Bach were apparent from an early age, and she prepared for admission to Wanda Landowska’s classes at Saint-Leu-la-Forêt near Paris. The opportunity to study abroad soon became an impossibility with the German occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1938, and in January 1942 she and her family were interred at the Terezín ghetto. After the death of her father and grandparents at Terezín, she was sent to Aushwitz along with her mother. In 1944 they were both sent to Hamburg as forced laborers, and later spent the final days of the war interred at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Upon her recovery she was determined to resume her musical education and studied piano in Plzeň. From

1947–51 she attended the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague where her professors included pianists Albín Šíma, František Rauch and harpsichordist Oldřich Kredba. At this time she decided to specialize in the interpretation of early music and gave her first harpsichord recital in 1951. In 1956 she won the ARD International Music Competition in Munich and accepted a scholarship from jury member Marguerite Roesgen-Champion to continue her harpsichord studies in Paris.

Her success at the Munich competition marked the beginning of an international career. She performed regularly throughout Europe and made repeated visits to Japan and the United States. She performed at Bach Festivals in Leipzig, Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Ansbach, Frankfurt, Schaffhausen, Bath and Oregon. In 1962 she co-founded the Prague Chamber Soloists with conductor Václav Neumann and in 1963 formed a very successful duo with violinist Josef Suk. Other chamber music partners included János Starker, Pierre Fournier, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Aurèle Nicolet and Maxence Larrieu, and she worked with noted conductors including Serge Baudo, Paul Sacher, Herbert Blomstedt, Libor Pešek, Neville Marriner and Helmut Rilling. Her recorded repertoire is vast, spanning works by the English virginalists



Zuzana Růžičková at the wedding photo, 1952

through contemporary composers including Martinů, Poulenc, Falla and Frank Martin. The music of Bach, however, always remained central to her art, culminating in an integral edition of his solo harpsichord music published in 1975 by the French label Erato. Several composers dedicated works to her, among them Jan Rychlík’s *Hommage gravicembalistici* (1964), and she premiered compositions by Emil Hlobil, Hans-Georg Görner and Elizabeth Maconchy. For 54 years she was married to composer Viktor Kalabis (1923–2006), a union which inspired him to compose several significant works for harpsichord: *Six Two-Voice Canonic Inventions* (1962), *Aquarelles* (1979), *Preludio, Aria e Toccata* (1992) and the magnificent *Concerto for Harpsichord and Strings* (1975). Her career as an educator began at the Academy of Performing Arts in 1950, but only after the fall of communism in 1990 did she finally receive the title of professor. She also established a harpsichord class at the Music Academy in Bratislava where she was guest professor from 1978–82. For twenty-five years she gave master classes



Zuzana Růžičková & Viktor Kalabis, around 1955

14.1.1927 – 27.9.2017

in Zürich, with additional classes taking place in Stuttgart, Kraków, Budapest, Riga and Tokyo. Her many students include Jaroslav Tůma, Giedrė Lukšaitė-Mrázková, Anikó Horváth, Borbála Dobozy, Sylvia Georgieva and Monika Knoblochová.

She retired from performing and teaching in 2006 but remained active in Czech musical life, serving as vice-president for the Prague Spring International Competition Committee and on the advisory boards of the Czech Chamber Music Society and the Concertino Praga

International Competition. She did not forget her war experiences and actively supported the Hans Krása Initiative and, as a participant in the Terezin Initiative, often spoke publicly of her internment and recovery. She was also instrumental in establishing a memorial for Fredy Hirsch, the young man responsible for saving the lives of countless children at Terezín and Aushwitz.

The awards for her accomplishments are numerous. Her recordings of music by Bach and



Sviatoslav Richter & Zuzana Růžicková, 1975



Zuzana Růžicková & Viktor Kalabis in the seventies

Benda have won the Grand Prix de L'Académie Charles Cros and her Purcell recital was awarded the Diapason D'Or. She has received the Supraphon Golden Disc, signifying sales of more than 300,000 recordings. In the Czech Republic she was awarded the titles Artist of Merit in 1968 and National Artist in 1989. In 2003 she received two important honors: the title Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from the French Minister of Culture, and the Medal of Merit, one of the Czech Republic's

highest state distinctions. In 2007 she received the Czech Music Council Award, which is conferred annually for lifetime achievement by the Czech branch of the UNESCO International Music Council. She was an honorary member of several musical organizations, including the Neue Bachgesellschaft, Britain's National Early Music Association and the Dvořák Society for Czech Music. ■

www.jsebestyen.org/ruzickova/
www.kalabismusic.org

bidding farewell to zuzana růžicková

ON 11 OCTOBER 2017, the globally celebrated harpsichordist Zuzana Růžicková was bidden a last farewell at the crematorium in Strašnice, Prague. Following a brief illness, she passed away on 27 September at the age of 90. Roman Bělor paid tribute to the "First Lady of the Harpsichord", whose remarkable achievements included 35 brilliant gramophone records of the works of Johann Sebastian Bach.

In his funeral oration, Bělor bade farewell to the artist on behalf of the Prague Spring festival and the Czech music institutions that had promoted her mastery and hosted her concerts in our country. He pointed out that from 1958 on, over a period spanning 47 years, Zuzana Růžicková had given

23 performances at the Prague Spring alone. "She was one of the wisest and most cultured persons I have ever met," Bělor added.

The funeral also saw speeches by Tomáš Kraus, the Secretary of the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic, and Jiří Hlaváč, who represented the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts. "She did not consider education to be a document enabling one to join the elite of society, serving instead to enhance the dominant trait of her nature – her ability to communicate," Hlaváč said.

Those who came to bid farewell to Zuzana Růžicková included Frank Vogl, her cousin, who lives in Washington, DC. He highlighted her global renown, adding that her passing away was widely reported by the international media.

The catafalque was adorned with wreaths sent by the Czech President Miloš Zeman and his wife, the Ministry of Culture, the Czech Philharmonic,

the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Radio, Supraphon, the Czech Music Fund and the Czech Chamber Music Society, among others.

At the request of Zuzana Růžicková, Bach's song *Komm, süßer Tod* was performed, with the Markéta Cukrová singing to the accompaniment of Giedrė Lukšaitė-Mrázková. The artist was accompanied on her final journey by the strains of the Goldberg Variations and three Suites in F minor that she had recorded and played all over the world with the violinist Josef Suk.

Zuzana Růžicková was a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres. She had received the Medal of Merit for Arts and Culture of the President of the Czech Republic, several Grands Prix du Disque de l'Académie Charles Cros, Supraphon Gold and Platinum Discs, and a plethora other accolades. ■

ČTK, 11 October 2017

...with **jan edlman, anthony** on the czech premiere screening of the

ON 25 MAY 2017, Bohuslav Martinů's home town of Polička, hosted a truly extraordinary event. Those visiting this year's Martinů Fest saw the first Czech screening of the film *Music of Exile*, released in the UK back in October 1967. The unforgettable evening, organised by the Tyl House, the Our Martinů Society and the Polička town management, had a festive, yet intimate atmosphere, evoking the time when Bohuslav Martinů himself used to perform at the very venue that screened the movie. *Music of Exile* is particularly attractive in that it captures the places as they were known to Martinů, since the filming took place just a few years after his death.

The screening was followed by a panel discussion, which was attended by the film's director, Anthony Wilkinson, the musicologist Brian Large, and the two actors who had portrayed Bohuslav Martinů in the film: Jiří Navrátil, who at the time was a skinny little boy, scarcely able to climb the stairs, and Josef Váša, who played Martinů as a student wandering through the streets of Prague. The panel was guided by Jan Edlman, who was largely responsible for finally getting the film premiered in the Czech Republic. The audience at the Tyl House were thus afforded the opportunity to learn about the thrilling background to the filming. Some of the panellists answered a few questions the Martinů Revue had asked them.

JAN EDLMAN / translator

You are the main initiator of the film's Czech premiere. What did you have to do to get it screened in Polička?

The idea to show the film in Polička came to me quite by chance: in October 2016, my wife and I joined the local Our Martinů Society and when I mentioned this film at a meeting, I was surprised that no-one knew about it. I offered to contact its creators and ask them if it would be possible to show the film as part of the 2016 Martinů Fest. I found the e-mail address of the film director Anthony Wilkinson and he kindly sent me a copy of the film for translation into Czech. Later I asked him if he would be able to



Brian Large, Jan Edlman and Anthony Wilkinson at the Polička tower

come to Polička and attend the Czech premiere, and he was very excited at the prospect of returning after 50 long years! Then I contacted the musical adviser of the film, the famous musicologist Brian Large who now lives in Vienna, and he also welcomed the idea of returning to Polička for the premiere. It sounds incredible, but in the end, both of them came here, stayed in Polička for three nights and took part in a very lively Q&A session after the screening of the film. They were visibly touched by the standing ovations in the local theatre and by the attention given to them by everybody – the Mayor of Polička, the staff of the local Bohuslav Martinů Centre and other cultural bodies, and above all the members of the Our Martinů Society who took them to several places connected with Martinů in the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands. Our guests also visited the birthplace of Martinů in the church tower and his grave at the local cemetery.

In what manner did you collaborate on the film's shooting back in 1966?

In 1966 I was a student of English at the university in Prague, and during my stay in

Polička in the spring of 1966 I was told about a BBC crew coming to my hometown to make a film about Bohuslav Martinů. Of course, at that time there were not many people speaking English, so I was asked to assist the crew as an "odd-job man", mostly interpreting and organizing things during the shooting of the film. For a young student like me it was a wonderful experience! Some friends of mine took part in the film – as folk dancers, for instance – and the overall atmosphere was simply exhilarating and unforgettable...

Did any of Martinů's contemporaries, people who had known him in person, work on the film?

One of those who helped tirelessly was indeed Marie Pražanová, who had known Martinů personally. She was nearly 70 when the film was shot in Polička but every day she climbed the 192 steps in the tower to Martinů's birthplace, where several scenes from his childhood were shot. She also personally took care of the boy who played the "little Martinů". I think she was the only person who still remembered Martinů and who assisted the crew in Polička in 1966...

wilkinson & brian large

film music of exile

Did you have to overcome any obstacles during the filming in Polička?

Luckily enough, the film was shot during the short period of political thaw in Czechoslovakia and as far as I know, the creators had no problems with the authorities. It is true there were some technical troubles, like finding a herd of cows for one scene near Polička and getting them to that spot through a forest. By the way, one of the cowgirls had quite a nasty incident when a cow stamped on her foot but she “survived” and later she told everybody proudly that she would never forget this experience!

Did the translation of the Czech subtitles go smoothly?

During my long stay in the UK I did lots of Czech translations of subtitles for DVDs, but then I always got a film with English subtitles

Bohuslav Martinů Centre or from the Our Martinů Society. Then I converted the final version to a DVD which was shown first to the members of the Society in order to “catch” possible mistakes. Their applause was the best reward for my work...

ANTHONY WILKINSON / director

What was the impulse to create a movie about Martinů? Was it an assignment from someone else or was it your own idea to choose this theme?

I had been planning to make a short film about the Danish composer Carl Nielsen for a BBC TV Music magazine program called Music International. I was fascinated by his beginnings in poverty on the island of Funen, by the fact that he heard his first music as a young child of 5 when gypsy musicians came to the island –

more visually engaging, more dramatic than Nielsen. I think by the end of the evening my mind was made up to make a film about Martinů. Brian guided my listening and I soon became convinced that not only was the story worth telling, but this wondrous musical gift, overlooked in the Sixties, was worth championing.

I quickly persuaded both my colleague on Music International, and Humphrey Burton (Head of Music and Arts), and a budget was arranged. Because of the recent failure of a film using actors, we were advised not to film with actors... BUT, it seemed obvious to me [and Brian who was fully supportive] that seeing a little boy playing, living at the top of the tower, and being carried down and up for violin lessons, experiencing the country, folk dances, and customs – that all this was much better than pretty camera shots and overlaid documentary commentary.



From left to right: Jan Edlman, Brian Large, Milan Kocourek and Anthony Wilkinson



Josef Váša & Milan Kocourek – two actors who portrayed Bohuslav Martinů in the film

which I simply overwrote on my computer with the Czech text. However, this film was completely different – I received a DVD with the film and English commentary (which was quite fast in some places!), and first I had to prepare timing of the subtitles using the Subtitle Edit program. Then I had to listen to the commentary and translate it without losing any of its meaning. Sometimes I had to look for musical terms or names of Martinů's compositions on the internet, or consult with people from the

and of course his development as a talented violinist (like Martinů), who was to become Denmark's most important composer, conductor and Director of the National Opera.

I was talking to my BBC colleague about Nielsen's extraordinarily humble beginnings one evening, and he told me that he had been researching a book on Bohuslav Martinů. As soon as he told me about his birth at the top of a church tower, my director's mind went into over-drive and I thought this could be even

When we arrive in Polička the local priest had done all the casting for us. A six-year-old boy who looked the spitting image of Martinů as a young boy, who also played the violin!

A ready-made folk band... It was all there. Voilà!

You were making a film in other countries too. Where did you spend the most time? Have there been complications anywhere?

The majority of the film was shot in Czechoslovakia (as, of course, it was then). About six days in and around Polička. A long trip in the mists to the Tatras to get a short sequence of Martinů and his wife crossing the Pyrenees on his way to America.

Then we filmed for three days in Prague. This was during the Prague Spring, but the Russians were still around. I remember we were set up by the river with horse and carriage, and just as we were about to turn over, a Russian film unit arrived, set themselves up for an interview right between our camera, and our action. They stayed there – just to show their muscle, I think, for nearly three-quarters of an hour.

Another story I remember is the scene with the cow girls. There was a huge shortage of cows at the time, and only 4 cows were known locally. We went to visit a small hamlet about three or four kilometers away, which was accessible only via a dirt road through the forest with impassable pot-holes. We thought about having to carry heavy filming equipment there and back... but when we arrived to film three days later, the road had miraculously been repaired. We learned later that the hamlet was so pleased to welcome a BBC film unit in those troubled times that the men had taken a cart to the next commune, 'borrowed' their building material, and levelled the road to greet us. It was a story I wrote for the Times newspaper on my return.

The other memory would be feeding the film crew. At the time, the best of the available food was in the form of palačinky. Slow to prepare and cook for a large party. As director, I sat and watched the sun sink below the horizon!

Further filming:

When we set out to make the film it was intended to be a short 20-minute piece for a magazine programme. When we saw the rushes and cut them together, it was clear that we had the makings of an exceptional film. The Head of Department quickly recognised this and doubled our budget so that we could film in Paris, and New York to span the life of Martinů. We also built some sets at the BBC Ealing Studios. But remember we were also able to benefit from some excellent Czech footage of *The Opening of the Wells* and some material

from the Imperial War Museum of preparations for the Second World War, and the Germans' own coverage of the tragic story of Lidice.

One of the main challenges was to try and find some continuity and matching of the various actors who portrayed Martinů at different moments of his life.

How was it received by British audience following the premiere in 1967? Was the film also screened in other countries?

I'm pleased to say that the reception was exceptional. It had a high audience viewing figure. The major BBC Review of the Year programme called it 'the most remarkable film of the year.' The Sunday Times called it 'an engrossing film...' The Sunday Telegraph: 'A magnificent example of film making at its best.' The Times: 'Mr Wilkinson's direction found a vivid and often beautiful narrative style. His handling of city scenes in Prague, Paris, and New York is splendid.' I believe it was sold for screening in 13 countries around the world, but evidently not in Czechoslovakia.

What was your impression when you were watching the film after 50 years in Polička?

It was a wonderful experience to be able to view the film surrounded by an audience in Martinů's home town, and a thrill to receive a spontaneous standing ovation. This was the first time my colleague Brian Large had seen it in fifty years, but I had seen it when it was screened during a Martinů weekend at the Barbican in London. And about three years ago I was invited to show the film and talk about it at the Martinů Festtage in Basel.

I think that because it is in black and white, it held up better than it would have done had we filmed (as we nearly did) in colour. Actually, it was at this time that BBC Television was introducing colour TV, and this film was scheduled to be the first film production in colour (which would have been a nice piece of TV history), but I have always found it works well in black and white.



Studying autographs in the Polička museum

You prepare a music festival in Wimbledon today. Do you also present Martinů's music there?

I am actually quite a champion of Martinů. I wrote a radio version of the story, largely based on the film script (with wonderful narration by the celebrated writer Anthony Burgess – author of *Clockwork Orange*). At the Wimbledon International Music Festival I try to programme at least one work of Martinů every year. We have had the *Three Madrigals*. Last year the Škampa performed the 5th String Quartet, and the Evening Standard reviewer thanked me in his review for introducing him to Martinů and convincing him that the 5th Quartet is a masterpiece. At an earlier festival, the Wihan Quartet performed String Quartet No.3 to a standing ovation. Next year I have the Martinů Piano Trio coming the Festival to perform the Second Piano Trio, and the Martinů Oboe Quartet will also be featured as guest artists. Last night someone asked me to suggest a Martinů listening list for him. So I hope in my small way I am increasing the number of people who love Martinů's music.

BRIAN LARGE

You are known as an expert in Czech music. How did you get to know Martinů's music?

The first time I heard Martinů's music was on the radio in England. It was a performance of the *Fifth Symphony* which fascinated and captivated me. After the performance I wanted to find out more about this composer and his music. I decided to write to his music publisher, Boosey & Hawkes, to see if I could find a score of his *Fifth Symphony*. I found one, and the more I studied it, the more I became fascinated

by his music and his style, and decided to discover more. This is many years ago, when there was not as much music published or as many recordings available. But the more I discovered, the more enthusiastic I became. In 1961, I decided that I wanted to write a book about Martinů. I already knew a lot about Czech music but I wanted very much to discover more about him, so I decided to do some research. It was in 1961 that I first came to Czechoslovakia. It was a period of another political era, a communist period, and it was not easy for a Western person like me, with a British passport, to come to Czechoslovakia. But I did, and I eventually spent some considerable weeks in

And I remember you also mentioned Zdenka Podhajská after the screening in Polička.

Yes, indeed. She was the connection to Charlotte Martinů. I made contact with Zdenka Podhajská. She had known Martinů personally in Paris, where he had played piano for her ballet classes, and we became very close friends. We have always remained in contact since then – not only in the period when I was writing the book, but also afterwards once she had moved to Vienna for her retirement.

What was your role in making the film *Music of Exile*? Were you working for the BBC at the time?

I was able to guide him and to give him important information to write the script, tell him about locations and, in fact, open the doors for him.

Was it easy for you to select the Martinů works for this film? Or did it take a long time to find the right music?

Well, I alone decided on the musical aspects of the film, and it was for me very easy to say: "This is the music we want, we want the *Sixth Symphony*, we want the *Frescoes*, we want *Kytice*, we want this, we want that, we want this quartet..." Anthony did not know about this in the kind of detail I was able to give.



From the film *Music of Exile*

Polička. I did not speak Czech, but I did speak German and some other languages. I managed to find support in the museum to discover all his music, and also I met František Popelka and Maruška Pražanová there. Her family had known the Martinů family so I was able to get a lot of information first-hand from people who had known Martinů. This is how it began. When I came back to England, I decided that I wanted to get to know Charlotte Martinů, so again I made contact with her. She lived in Vieux-Moulin, France, and I decided to go and meet her and spend time with her, researching and talking about her husband and his music. She very generously invited me to Vieux-Moulin, I stayed in her home and she gave me complete access to Martinů's manuscripts and his letters. So the idea of writing a book came long before the idea of making a film.

I had joined the BBC and I had always talked about the music of Martinů when I was there. I remember one evening I talked to Anthony Wilkinson about Martinů. He was in a different department from me: I worked in the music performance department and he was in the film department. He didn't know Martinů even by name, but I told him about it and the idea came that perhaps this could be a film about Martinů's life. Besides other things, I told him about my experiences in Polička and in Prague, and he decided that this might be a subject for a film biography. And so it was.

I believe that you chose the music?

Yes, of course, but I actually guided Anthony through every aspect of it because he had not been to Polička nor Czechoslovakia, and he didn't know the story of Martinů. I think that

So I think that I was able to point him in the right direction and to provide the music – excerpts that would form the basis of his filming.

Did you follow the BBC team also to other places where the film was created? I think it was also filmed in Prague, Paris and New York...

No, I only came to Prague with the BBC team and I was involved in all the shooting, as well as in all the sessions in Polička and the Vysočina – all those areas that we filmed in. I did not go to New York for the filming there because I was engaged with other projects, but I was definitely involved in all the stages of the conception wherever filming took place. ■

Prepared by Lucie Jirglová and Marek Pechač

the forgotten bohuslav martinů, or what men live by

JIŘÍ NEKVASIL, director of the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre in Ostrava (CZ), was kept quite busy during the theatre's holidays this year. In August he directed the filming of the Czech Television production of one of Bohuslav Martinů's more obscure operas, *What Men Live By*, H 336.

Why did you choose a little-known opera by Bohuslav Martinů, one which is not generally staged in theatres here? Can you describe the work to our readers?

The composer wrote the libretto for the forty-minute one-act opera *What Men Live By* himself, on motives from the eponymous short story by Leo Tolstoy; he termed it an "opera-pastoral". The remarkable work, which is practically unknown to Czech audiences, was composed in New York in 1952. It was also premiered in the US. The theatrical version has only been staged twice on Czech soil – in Pilsen and in Brno. The most recent domestic rendition (the first to use the original English lyrics) was a concert performance at the Rudolfinum in Prague in December 2014, with the Czech Philharmonic conducted by Jiří Bělohlávek.

You had already filmed some of the composer's other works in the past...

Yes, this project follows on from my film adaptations of three of Bohuslav Martinů's stage works, which were produced by Czech Television in 1998 and 2000. The compositions in question were the operas *Tears of the Knife* and *The Voice of the Forest*, and the mechanical ballet *The Amazing Flight*. At the time, the adaptations were well received at several international television festivals.

It was also intended as the beginning of an extended, loose cycle, which aims to present the remarkable and rarely performed short and medium-length stage works of Bohuslav Martinů in the format of musical films. The adaptation of *What Men Live By* is the next part in this series, albeit after the lengthy break of seventeen years.

Can you tell us who collaborated on the television film?

I am working with core members of the team from the first three films, namely, cinemato-

grapher Miro Gábor, editor Boris Machytka, lead producer Ilona Jirásková, and producer and script editor Radim Smetana. This time the team has been bolstered by set artist and designer Jakub Kopecký, costume designer Zuzana Krejzková, and choreographer Dana Gregorová.

What is the message of the film, which targets the more discerning viewer, and who can we expect to see and hear in it? That is, if there will be singing in the opera?

The idea of the musical film is to present this magnificent and practically unknown yet original opera to the widest possible audience. Opera programmes in theatres rarely consist of multiple one-act operas in a single performance, for understandable reasons, but I think that short one-act operas are perfect for the opera film format. We can afford to use richer imagery, the short duration of the opera is a better guarantee of focused reception, even in front of a TV set. Our film adaptation of *What Men Live By* is based on the recording made in December 2014 at the aforementioned concert at the Rudolfinum.

The protagonist is sung by Ivan Kusnjer. I decided on a different approach to that in the previous two adaptations. The actors in the film are not identical to the soloists in the recording and they do not play the roles of the soloists – that is, there is no attempt at lip-syncing. Instead, we create imaginative situations in response to the music, and lip-syncing is used only occasionally. It is a new form for me, and something of an experiment, but it corresponds to the epic, almost oratorical manner of the work. The main character in the film is played by the excellent Slovak actor Csongor Kassai. The audio and the video are connected in the



Jiří Nekvasil

persons of the tenor Jaroslav Březina, in the role of narrator, and the members of the chamber ensemble Martinů Voices, who perform their roles both in the recording and in the film itself.

When can we expect the television premiere?

The film should be ready by the end of February 2018, but it has not yet been scheduled for release by Czech Television [*probably in December 2018, editor's note*].

Moravskoslezský deník, 7 September 2017

www.moravskoslezsky.denik.cz/kultura_region/zapomenuty-bohuslav-martinu-aneb-cim-lide-ziji-20170907.html

Translated by Adam Prentiss

bohuslav martinů complete edition

We would like to share with our dear readers quotes from the review that was printed in the German musicological journal *Musikforschung*, No. 4 (2017), on pages 420–421.

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ: Gesamtausgabe.
[Symphony No. 4, Epic of Gilgamesh, Chamber Music for 6–9 Instruments]

His life story was similar to that of Igor Stravinsky: a 20th-century Slavic composer who as a consequence of historical events passed through a number of countries, encountered a number of cultures and languages, and left behind a cosmopolitan legacy encompassing numerous works, scattered among numerous publishing houses. Yet, unlike Stravinsky, Martinů's

œuvre is being presented in a complete critical edition. [...] It is an audacious task, but one for which the best possible conditions are in place: the work on the edition has been led by the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague and its director, Aleš Březina; the editorial board is largely made up of Czech and German researchers, who have paid a great deal of attention to Martinů, and Czech music in general, and have participated in other complete editions. The fact that the edition has been undertaken by Bärenreiter Kassel and its office in Prague, which over the long term has focused on Czech music, ensures publishing continuity. [...]

The quality of print and paper, and the linen binding of the volumes are just as exquisite as the font of the texts and the layout of the sections containing the scores. [...] The meticulous editorial work of Sharon Choa, who devoted many

years to *Symphony No. 4*, is particularly praiseworthy – not least for her highly informative and thorough preface, which provides a comprehensive account of Martinů's late penchant for symphonic music [...]. In the edition of the oratorio *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Aleš Březina presents a mature work of Martinů that presented serious editorial challenges. [...] His preface gives a detailed description of the complex and protracted genesis of the piece commissioned by Paul Sacher. The ephemeral staging suggestions and the history of the work's performance during Martinů's lifetime are exemplary indeed, as are the comments on the numerous pages of the facsimile, documenting a variety of editorial problems arising from the composer's autograph [...].

The foundation has been laid. And it is solidly in place.

CHRISTOPH FLAMM

festive launch of the 4th volume of the bmce and the book dear friend bureš

On October 9, 2017, two publications connected with Bohuslav Martinů were officially launched at the National Theatre Brno (Mahen Theatre). The first is a new critical edition of Martinů's chamber cantatas on the texts of Miloslav Bureš, which was published as the 4th volume of the extensive project Bohuslav Martinů Complete Edition, prepared by Bohuslav Martinů Foundation, Bohuslav Martinů Institute, and published by Bärenreiter. The volume includes *Opening of the Springs*, *The Legend of the Smoke from Potato Tops*, *A Dandelion Romance* and *Mikesh from the Mountains*. The first volume of the BMCE project (*The Epic of Gilgamesh*) won the prestigious prize of the German publishers *Best Edition 2016*. The project was also positively reviewed by the magazine *NOTES*. The editor of the 4th volume is Vít Zouhar, who, together with Gabriela Coufalová, is also the editor of the book of letters by Bohuslav Martinů to Miloslav Bureš entitled *Dear Friend Bureš*, which was presented as well at the Mahen Theatre.

"Martinů traveled between France, America, Switzerland and Italy, and in all of these places his works were scattered. When he died, his wife Charlotte also gave away copies of some of his



▲ The 4th volume of Bohuslav Martinů Complete Edition (BMCE)

works. The most demanding of the whole work was to trace information in historical documents, to collect them and then to evaluate the relevant sources. It is very important for the Complete Edition, in which I try to get closer to the author's intention," Vít Zouhar described his work.

The festive launch of both publications took place on October 9, 2017, at the Mahen Theater, just before the production of Alfréd Radok's *Opening*

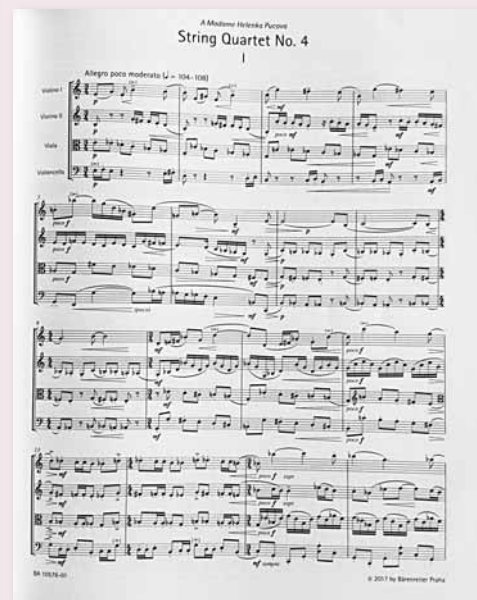


of the Wells, to which Vít Zouhar composed music. It was presented by Jaroslav Miller, rector of Palacký University, Aleš Březina, director of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute, Jan Antonín Pitínský, director of Alfréd Radok's *Opening of the Wells*, Petr Francán, dean of the Faculty of Theatre at the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts (JAMU) in Brno, and Jiří Heřman, opera director and artistic director of the Opera of the National Theatre Brno.

the latest volume of the bohuslav martinů complete edition

STRING QUARTETS II (Nos 4–7), series IV/3/2, ed. Aleš Březina et al., Prague, Bärenreiter 2017, BA 10576-01.

With his eight string quartets Bohuslav Martinů is an important twentieth century proponent of the genre. Several of these works were premiered by leading European and American chamber ensembles. This **first critical edition of his last four string quartets** offers the composer's last authorised versions in the main musical text, the Appendices also include parts of the works as they appeared before their revision for the first printed edition. Detailed preface and critical commentary by the editor is both in Czech and English. The well-endowed Facsimiles section includes, among others, all extant drafts of the works.



new recording of the epic of gilgamesh by the czech philharmonic

On 20 October 2017, Supraphon released the premiere recording of the oratorio *The Epic of Gilgamesh* in its original English version. The captivating recording of the work, which is scored for soloists, narrator, mixed choir and orchestra, features the Czech Philharmonic conducted by Manfred Honeck. The new performance of *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, H 351, is based on the critical edition that has been prepared by the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague. Along with top-notch soloists – the soprano Lucy Crowe, the tenor Andrew Staples, the baritone Derek Welton and the bass Jan Martinů – the album features as the narrator the

British actor Simon Callow, who made his screen debut in Miloš Forman's film *Amadeus*. The chorus plays an essential role, fulfilled on the recording by the internationally renowned Prague Philharmonic Choir. All the performers were hand-picked for the concert and the album by the late principal conductor of the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiří Bělohlávek, who for health reasons ultimately entrusted the oratorio's live performance in January 2017 to his brilliant Austrian colleague, Manfred Honeck. Honeck, who currently serves as the musical director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, voiced his regret that Bělohlávek had to cancel his engagement, since he knew that his colleague greatly admired the oratorio.

The music Martinů created during the last decade of his life demonstrates his penchant for religious and spiritual texts. The idea of setting

the epic, depicting the adventures of the Sumerian King Gilgamesh, matured in the composer for 15 years. Though it differs significantly from the avant-garde of the 1950s, it is an utterly modern piece that reflects Martinů's intense interest in Baroque music and the Notre Dame school. The oratorio, which premiered on 23 January 1958 in Basel, was a tremendous success. Its performance in Prague in January 2017 – by the Czech Philharmonic and a superb international team of soloists conducted by Manfred Honeck – revived the work's English version, based on Reginald Campbell Thompson's translation. The recording, featuring a unique constellation of performers, renders the spiritual profundity of Bohuslav Martinů's work with an exceptional emotionality.

Text: SUPRAPHON

the greek passion for the first time in sweden

The Wermland Opera in Karlstad, Sweden, presented a new production of Bohuslav Martinů's *The Greek Passion*, H 372 I. This opera was seen in its first version. It had its Swedish premiere on September 14 (in English with Swedish subtitles). Another 9 performances took place in Karlstad during September and October 2017. A member of the Royal Opera in Stockholm, Nikoli Björling Rygert, sang the title role Manolios.

www.wermlandopera.com/evenemang/the-greek-passion

14 September 2017

> Wermland Opera, Karlstad, Sweden

Bohuslav Martinů: *The Greek Passion*, H 372 I
Wermland Opera Orkester, Wermland Operas Kôr, Johannes Gustavsson (Conductor), Mira Bartov (Stage director), soloists: Priest Grigoris, Marcus Jupither; Archon, Johan Wällberg; Captain/Commentator, Peter Kajlinger; Kostandis, Anders Larsson; Manolios, Niklas Björling Rygert; Yannakos, Carl Ackerfeldt; Michelis, Hallvar Djupvik; Panait, Johannes Held; Lenio, Anna-Maria Kra

"The audience can come to the performance totally relaxed. They do not need to be afraid that there will be a moral pointed finger at them. This is about humanity, about conflicts that we all have to go through."

Mira Bartov (Stage director)



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brian large awarded a bohuslav martinů foundation medal

Author of a Martinů biography, Brian Large was awarded a Bohuslav Martinů Foundation Medal for his efforts in promoting Martinů's legacy. He is known for his directing of New Year's concerts of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the legendary concert of the Three Tenors (Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras) during the FIFA World Cup in Italy in 1990.



PHOTO ZDENĚK CHRAPEK

Large is a British television director specializing in opera and classical music broadcasts. Born in 1939, Brian Large studied at the Royal Academy of Music and the University of London where he obtained doctorates in Music and Philosophy. Postgraduate work took him to Prague. His biography of Martinů was conceived after several years of research spent in Czechoslovakia and France, where he worked closely with Charlotte Martinů.

He joined the British Broadcasting Corporation as a producer with responsibility for opera and music programmes for the then new BBC2 television channel. BBC2 also produced a documentary on the life of Martinů which helped to bring about a greater awareness of the composer in the UK. Brian was an advisor for this documentary, entitled "Music of Exile", which many still recall with affection. Written by Anthony Burgess and produced and directed by Anthony Wilkinson in 1967, it was last screened this year in Polička.

For an interview with Brian Large see pages 14-15.

Texts on this page are prepared by Vojtěch Jouza

the greek passion at the international festival of orthodox music

The 8th Archaion Kallos International Festival of Orthodox Music in Prague featured a concert to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the death of Nikos Kazantzakis, whose novel *Christ Recrucified* was used by Bohuslav Martinů for the libretto of the Greek Passion, H 372 in 1957. A concert on October 6 at the Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Prague offered the Byzantine hymns used in the famous opera of B. Martinů, sung in their original form as well

the greek passion received the preis der deutschen schallplattenkritik

A CD with an opera by Bohuslav Martinů *The Greek Passion, H 372 I*, received the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik ("German Record Critics' Award") for the recording of last season's production at the Oper Graz. 158 jury members in 32 categories chose award winning recordings from 288 nominated albums of the last quarter. This prize was established in Germany in 1963.

Oper Graz's *The Greek Passion* has already won the Österreichischer Musiktheaterpreis (Austrian musical theatre awards) for the best overall production, direction and male supporting role.

The opera was recorded in its first version, reconstructed by the director of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute Aleš Březina in 1999 for the festival in Bregenz.

Recorded in English with German subtitles.

two pieces for piano trio and string orchestra performed by pkf – prague philharmonia

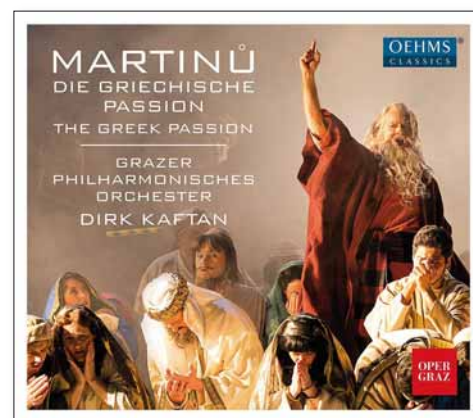
Immediately following his debut with the San Francisco Symphony, Jakub Hrůša, former chief conductor of the PKF – Prague Philharmonia, returned to his orchestra. The program at the Dvořák Hall of Rudolfinum on 22 October 2017 offered works by Ludwig van Beethoven, Bohuslav Martinů and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Dvořák trio (Ivo Kahánek – piano, Jan Fišer – violin, Tomáš Jamník – violoncello) performed two pieces by Bohuslav Martinů (*Concerto for Piano Trio and String Orchestra, H 231* and *Concertino for Piano Trio and String Orchestra, H 232*) which are rarely to be heard live in a single evening. The genesis of

as in the form given by Martinů in the opera. Related lectures discussed the newly discovered Martinů manuscript on Byzantine Octoechos, as well as Greek influence in the opera.

6 October 2017

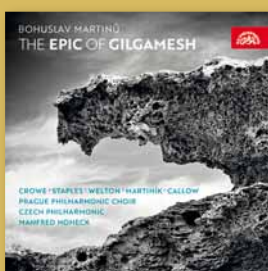
> Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Prague
Martinů Voices, Lukáš Vasilek (Choirmaster)
Philokallia Ensemble & Choir of the Cathedral of Ss Cyril and Methodius, (Conductor, Choirmaster)
Achilleas Chaldaiakis (Protopsaltis), Katerina Asfoura (Psaltria), Akropolis ensemble, Children's choir Angel, Igor Angelov, Radek Seidl, Lucie Wollnerová (Choirmasters), Children Choir of Archbishop Grammar School, Igor Angelov (Artistic director)



Grazer Philharmonisches Orchester, Dirk Kaftan (musical director, conductor), Lorenzo Fioroni (director), Annette Braun (costumes), Bernhard Schneider (choirmaster), Rolf Romei (Manolios), Manuel von Senden (Yannakos), Dshamilja Kaiser (Katerina), Markus Butter (Fotis), Taylan Reinhard (Panait), Wilfried Zelinka (Grigoris), Dariusz Perczak (Kostandis), Tatjana Miyus (Lenio)

these two works is closely connected, as Jakub Hrůša explains:

'The first piece was composed by Martinů in the same year as the second one. The Concerto was sent back to him by the Schott publishing house for revision. Martinů put down the composition and wrote a completely new piece – Concertino, which was then accepted without objections. It will be extremely interesting to compare these two works composed in the same year with the same intent, and to reflect on the composer's impulses to transform the same concept in such a short time. Was the publisher right?'



Bohuslav Martinů
The Epic of Gilgamesh
 Crowe / Staples / Welton / Martiník / Callow
 Czech Philharmonic / Manfred Honeck

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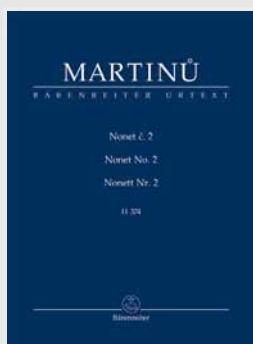
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