



JANÁČEK
BRNO 2020

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BRNO 2020

NdBdiva
National Theatre Brno
Magazine

2020

28/9–16/10

7th International
Opera and Music
Festival

*For people, the wish to sing in a new way means composing.
It is not enough to wish to be successful if you want to compose in a new way.
There are many levels to folk composition.
Every variant brings something new, and new types still more.
Out of all that is new, new types can be born.
New means: to resist the spiritlessness of musical forms; it means to have such
a lively mood – one that is enriched with heritage – that it cannot endure any
repetition of expression in the same place.*

*One does not need to bow to the authority of foreign ways of expression.
New and beautiful, though, is the second requirement: we can say that if it is
successful – it is, if not – then it is not.
We are powerless in that arena. I must endure my speech and it must fully satisfy
me. To deliberately go to musical delight, whose patterns are printed in heaps,
or to dissonances – both mean playing.
What is composed must be the flame of the composer's pleasure.
Sometimes you cannot stop the flow of thought, another time it is hard to wake;
you would no longer believe in your talent!*

Leoš Janáček in the afterword to the article *Rozhraní mluvy a zpěvu*
(*The Boundary Between Speech and Song*, 1906, Hlídka 23, No. 4)

7th International
Opera and Music
Festival

JANÁČEK BRNO 2020

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THE FESTIVAL TAKES PLACE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

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The desire to sing in a new way

The unexpected coronavirus epidemic has ended cultural life (and not only that) around the world for several months, and so we are all the more pleased that we can continue with our preparations for the festival and that we have managed to keep the majority of the prepared programme intact. While the 6th year of the festival presented Janáček's stage works in their entirety, this year's Janáček Brno will explore the rapid development in music and art that arose in a whirlwind of ideas and new, yet unexplored possibilities at the turn of the 20th century.

The festival will open with Janáček's fourth opera, *Destiny*. Together with *Jenůfa*, it will offer a unique insight into the composer's creative workshop. After *Jenůfa* with its innovative libretto based on a prose text by G. Preissová, *Destiny* was another step forward for Janáček on his distinctive journey towards the creation of a modern opera. The work, which brings the spa-going high society of Janáček's time to life on stage, alongside autobiographical moments, a deeper use of speech melody as well as a shift in musical language, has thus become something more than just a "Luhačovice novel" in the context of his work. Richard Strauss is a composer who went in a different direction, but just like Janáček, he is one of those that fundamentally shaped the musical language of the new century. His opera *Salomé*, created at the same time as *Destiny*, is an excellent example of a completely different approach to the search for a common goal – the telling of a story in a dramatically truthful way. The series of concerts at the festival will also offer an insight into the artistically turbulent early years of the 20th century and their contrasts through the works of Janáček, Strauss, Schönberg, Stravinsky, Debussy and many others. The opera section will be expanded in comparison to the original programme via the inclusion of the premiere of *The Greek Passion* by Bohuslav Martinů, which had to be postponed due to the COVID outbreak. It was on the

Brno theatre stage that Martinů's early works met Leoš Janáček's final masterpiece operas.

This year's edition of the festival will be marked by a very special event – the return of exceptional director Robert Carsen, who will continue his famous Janáček cycle with a sixth opera production, *Destiny*, created specially for the Brno ensemble. The preparations for the previously announced productions of *Jenůfa* in Bremen and London were unfortunately ended by the pandemic. However, they will be replaced at the festival by the Brno production of *Jenůfa* under the direction of Martin Glaser and Music Director Marko Ivanović. The production will feature an appearance by a uniquely talented portrayer of Janáček's characters, the Finnish soprano Karita Mattila, who will star in the key role of Kostelníčka.

Three weeks and twenty-eight festival events performed by outstanding artists such as Jakub Hruša, Jan Bartoš, Pavol Breslik and Karita Mattila, and by the excellent ensembles Pavel Haas Quartet, Arnold Schoenberg Chor, Hungarian State Opera, Philharmonia Octet Prague and Zemlinsky Quartet promise a unique experience. The proverbial cherry on the cake will undoubtedly be the final concert, which is to be given by the Bamberg Symphony led by their Chief Conductor Jakub Hruša. Czech painter Zdeněk Seydl predicted that "chaos will be the terminology for 20th century art", but out of chaos emerged a series of crystal clear tones that showed the way to future generations of artists. And that is also the aim of the 7th Janáček Brno festival.

Patricia Častková

Dramaturge
of the Janáček Opera,
National Theatre Brno

Jiří Heřman

Artistic Director
of the Janáček Opera,
National Theatre Brno

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28/9–16/10

Opera Productions

28. 9. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre
Ceremonial opening of the festival

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – DESTINY premiere

conductor: Marko Ivanović, director: Robert Carsen
Míla Válková: Alžběta Poláčková / Míla's Mother: Szilvia Rálík /
Živný: Enrico Casari, Philip Sheffield
Janáček Opera, National Theatre Brno

repeat performances **29. 9.** and **14. 10.**, 7 p.m.
echoes of the festival 28. 11. and 29. 11., 5 p.m.

1. 10. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – THE DIARY OF ONE WHO DISAPPEARED premiere of a production based on the author's stage notes

tenor: Pavol Breslik / alto: Štěpánka Pučálková
piano: Róbert Pechanec

JAN JIRASKÝ'S PIANO RECITAL
will take place in the first half of the evening
Leoš Janáček - In the Mists, Béla Bartók - Allegro barbaro,
Kryštof Mařatka - Onyrik, future and exotic tales for piano,
Igor Fyodorovich Stravinsky - Piano Rag Music

2. 10. 7 p.m., Mahen Theatre

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN

conductor: Martin Doubravský, director: Linda Keprtová
F. X. Šalda Theatre Liberec

3. 10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – JENŮFA

conductor: Marko Ivanović, director: Martin Glaser
Kostelnička: Karita Mattila / Jenůfa: Pavla Vykopalová /
Laca Klemeň: Jaroslav Březina
National Theatre Brno's Janáček Opera

repeat performance **5. 10.**, 7 p.m.

7. 10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ – THE GREEK PASSION

conductor: Robert Kružík, director: Jiří Heřman
Manolios: Petr Berger / Kateřina: Pavla Vykopalová
National Theatre Brno's Janáček Opera

10. 10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

RICHARD STRAUSS – SALOME

conductor: Balázs Kocsár, director: Zoltán Rátóti
Salome: Annemarie Kremer
Hungarian State Opera (Budapest)

12. 10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

A STEP BEHIND THE CURTAIN TO THE OPERA DESTINY

15. 10. 7 p.m., Orlí Street Theatre

DANIEL ŠIMEK / OTTO KAUPPINEN – S. A. M. P. O. premiere

conductor: Daniel Šimek, director: Kateřina Křivánková
Chamber opera by the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno

repeat performance **16. 10.**, 5 p.m.

Concerts, recitals, chamber series

30. 9. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG CHOR

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG: VOLKSLIEDSÄTZE (SELECTION)
ARVO PÄRT: NUNC DIMITTIS
JOSEF SUK: TEN SONGS FOR FEMALE CHOIR
JAN NEPOMUK DAVID: VOLKSLIEDSÄTZE (SELECTION)
ARVO PÄRT: VIRGENCITA
JOHANNES BRAHMS: LIEBESLIEDER-WALZER
choirmaster: Erwin Ortner

3. 10. 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Leoš Janáček Memorial
PIANO RECITAL BY JAN JIRASKÝ

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – ON AN OVERGROWN PATH (1ST SERIES), IN THE MISTS

3. 10. 3 p.m., Löw-Beer Villa

ZEMLINSKY QUARTET

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – YOUTH
(TRANSCRIPT BY KRYŠTOF MAŘATKA)
JOSEF SUK – STRING QUARTET NO. 1
ALEXANDER ZEMLINSKY – STRING QUARTET NO. 1

4. 10. 11 a.m., Leoš Janáček Memorial

MATINÉE PERFORMANCE BY THE STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF MUSIC, JANÁČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – ON AN OVERGROWN PATH (1ST SERIES)
RICHARD STRAUSS – ANDANTE FOR HORN AND PIANO
CLAUDE DEBUSSY – PREMIÈRE RHAPSODIE FOR CLARINET AND PIANO
LEOŠ JANÁČEK – SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

4. 10. 3 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

JOSEF SUK PIANO QUARTET

GUSTAV MAHLER – PIANO QUARTET IN A MINOR
LEOŠ JANÁČEK – PIANO TRIO (RECONSTRUCTION BY MILOŠ ŠTĚDROŇ)
JOSEF SUK – QUARTET IN A MINOR FOR PIANO, VIOLIN, VIOLA AND CELLO
ALFRED SCHNITTKE – PIANO QUARTET

4. 10. 7 p.m., Besední dům

PRAGUE PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

LEOŠ JANÁČEK, JOSEF BOHUSLAV FOERSTER, VÍTĚZSLAV NOVÁK – A SELECTION FROM THEIR CHORAL WORKS
IGOR FYODOROVICH STRAVINSKY – THE WEDDING
choirmaster: Lukáš Vasilek
soloists: Jana Hrochová, Lucie Silkenová, Jiří Brückler, Martin Slavík

6.10. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

**RECITAL BY PAVOL BRESLIK
AND RÓBERT PECHANEC**

A SELECTION OF SONGS – CLAUDE DEBUSSY, RICHARD STRAUSS, ALBAN BERG, LEOŠ JANÁČEK, JOAQUÍN TURINA

tenor: Pavol Breslik

piano: Róbert Pechanec

7.10. 7 p.m., Red Church (the Evangelical church
of the Czech Brethren of Jan Amos Comenius)

**FOLK CONCERT – MAGDALENA MÚČKOVÁ
AND DANAJ DULCIMER BAND**

CHURCH SONGS FROM ZNOROVY premiere of a concert programme
for the festival

8.10. 7 p.m., Mahen Theatre

BRNO CONTEMPORARY ORCHESTRA

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG – PIERROT LUNAIRE

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – CONCERTINO

IGOR FYODOROVICH STRAVINSKY – PULCINELLA

conductor: Pavel Šnajdr

piano: Pavel Zemen

soloists: Gun-Brit Barkmin, Václava Krejčí Housková, Jan Hájek, Lukáš Bařák

9.10. 7 p.m., Mahen Theatre

PHILHARMONIA OCTET PRAGUE

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – SUITE FROM THE OPERA FROM THE
HOUSE OF THE DEAD (ADAPTED BY TOMÁŠ ILLE) world premiere

GUSTAV MAHLER – SONGS FROM THE COLLECTION

THE BOY'S MAGIC HORN

ISANG YUN – OCTET

baritone: Christoph Pohl

double-bass: Petr Ries

10.10. 11 a.m., Faculty of Music, Janáček Academy
of Music and Performing Arts

**PROGRAMME COMPOSED BY
STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF MUSIC,
JANÁČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND
PERFORMING ARTS IN BRNO**

10.10. 3 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

BRNO CHILDREN'S CHOIR

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – NURSERY RHYMES

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ – THE OPENING OF THE WELLS

HANS KRÁSA – BRUNDIBÁR

choirmaster: Valeria Mařášová

soloists: Andrea Široká, Jana Hrochová, Jiří Hájek, Ondřej Koplík

reciter: Alois Švehlík

11.10. 11 a.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

PAVEL HAAS QUARTET

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – STRING QUARTET NO. 1

INSPIRED BY TOLSTOY'S KREUTZER SONATA

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ – STRING QUARTET NO. 2

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK – STRING QUINTET NO. 3

viola: Pavel Nikl

11.10. 3 p.m., Villa Tugendhat

**RECITAL BY TOMÁŠ KRÁL
AND MATAN PORAT**

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – SILESIAN SONGS, MORAVIAN FOLK
POETRY IN SONGS (SELECTION), 1. X. 1905

(FROM THE STREET, 1ST OCTOBER 1905)

A SELECTION OF SONGS – CLAUDE DEBUSSY,
GUSTAV MAHLER

baritone: Tomáš Král

piano: Matan Porat

11.10. 7 p.m., the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady (Old Brno)

**BRNO PHILHARMONIC
AND THE CHOIR OF NATIONAL THEATRE
BRNO'S JANÁČEK OPERA**

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – THE ETERNAL GOSPEL

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – GLAGOLITIC MASS

conductor: Dennis Russell Davies, choirmaster: Pavel Koňárek

soloists: Jana Šrejma Kačírková, Jana Hrochová, Peter Berger, Jiří Sulženko

13.10. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

PIANO RECITAL BY JAN BARTOŠ

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – 1. X. 1905 (FROM THE STREET, 1ST
OCTOBER 1905), ON AN OVERGROWN PATH, TEMA CON
VARIAZIONI, A RECOLLECTION, IN THE MISTS

16.10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

Ceremonial closing of the festival

THE BAMBERG SYMPHONY

LEOŠ JANÁČEK – GREAT SUITE FROM THE OPERA THE
CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN (ADAPTED BY JAKUB HRŮŠA)

RICHARD STRAUSS – AN ALPINE SYMPHONY

conductor: Jakub Hrůša

Festival programme subject to change.

Main sales point: NTB Customer Centre, Dvořákova 11, Brno
tel: +420 542 158 120, email: obchodni@ndbrno.cz

Up-to-date information, accompanying programme and
online sales at: www.janacek-brno.cz

LEOŠ JANÁČEK DESTINY



28.9. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre
premiere – Ceremonial opening of the festival

29.9. and 14.10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre
repeat performances

Echoes of the festival 28. and 29. 11., 5 p.m.

CONDUCTOR: MARKO IVANOVIĆ DIRECTOR: ROBERT CARSEN JANÁČEK OPERA, NATIONAL THEATRE BRNO

*"And she was one of the most beautiful ladies. Her voice was like the viola d'amour.
The salty water of Luhačovice in the heat of the August sun.
Why did she walk with three fiery roses, and why did she relate her young life story?
And why was its end so strange?
Why did her lover disappear as if the earth had swallowed him? Totally gone.
Why might a person see a baton as something like a dagger?"*

Leoš Janáček: From the column Moje Luhačovice (*My Luhačovice*)

And a work lamenting only in its tone, only feminine in its words, named Destiny – Fatum.

text: Patricie Částková

World-famous director Robert Carsen returns to Brno

It is a tradition that the festival is ceremonially opened by National Theatre Brno's Janáček Opera ensemble with a new production of one of Leoš Janáček's works. This year's festival will focus on the rapid development in music and art that took place in the first years of the 20th century. At that time, Janáček was also looking for a way to depict a human story with all the emotions hidden within it on stage in a truthful and modern way. One of the groundbreaking works he created on his journey to discover a unique musical language is the opera *Destiny*, which is the work that will have the honour of opening this year's festival. The event will be even more significant due to the fact that one of the world's best opera directors, Robert Carsen, will be returning to Brno for this occasion. Opera lovers in Brno have already had the opportunity to see his staging of *The Makropulos Affair* performed by the Nuremberg opera ensemble at the Janáček Brno 2012 festival, and the Brno ensemble opened the 2016 festival with his staging of *Katya Kabanova*, which had originally been made for the Vlaamse Opera. Now, Robert Carsen has prepared his sixth opera by Janáček especially for Brno and its opera ensemble as a continuation of his extraordinary Janáček cycle, which he started with the staging of *Jenůfa* for the Vlaamse Opera many years ago.

Hailing from Canada, Robert Carsen is an elite director in the world of opera. His productions have been finding success at the most prestigious opera houses for many years, for example at Milan's La Scala, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Glyndebourne festival in England, the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, etc. He has helmed many excellent productions and is one of the busiest opera directors in the world. His productions have their own distinctive poetry and well thought-out



Robert Carsen

dramaturgy, but above all they are emotional, detailed and extremely impressive spectacles. The music is always the most important cue for him: "I'm passionate about music, and I care deeply about the score in doing an opera—otherwise there's no point for me in directing opera. The music completely shapes how the piece is told. The way you feel the work emotionally is conveyed by the music."

Leoš Janáček is one of Carsen's favourite composers, and his productions of the Master's works – *Jenůfa*, *From the House of the Dead*,

Katya Kabanova, *The Makropulos Affair* and *The Cunning Little Vixen* – have all been very highly rated, and have been performed at theatres all over the world.

"Janáček is a school of music all by himself. You can't compare him with anyone and he didn't follow on from something in the way you might imagine with Puccini following on from Verdi and so on. There isn't anything here you can compare him with. What is unique to all of his works is his extraordinary ability, and ultimately opera is always a kind of alchemy, with the intellectuality of the word being tempered by the emotion of the music, and Janáček had a really unique approach. Janáček would often adapt the libretto himself and make radical changes. That's another thing which is amazing about his works. His operas are relatively short, even the three-act ones, and unbelievably powerful. It isn't so important to him whether it's always clearly understandable. For example, in *Makropulos* it was as if the first act wasn't even intended to be clearly understandable, because you can't replicate the entire legal process, nor is that what he wants us to do. The world which he created is amazing. Thanks to his skill as a composer, he can immediately take the audience into the world where he wants us to go. There is no gentle introduction – the doors just open and you're there. And that's always totally riveting. For me there is an almost miraculous equilibrium between the theatre and the music. It's a different energy and a different case for each work, at least for the works which I've had the chance to work on, but there's always this amazing, uncompromising, unpolished approach to composition. It's a very powerful emotional and intellectual reaction to a situation, and it's the reason why I like him so much."

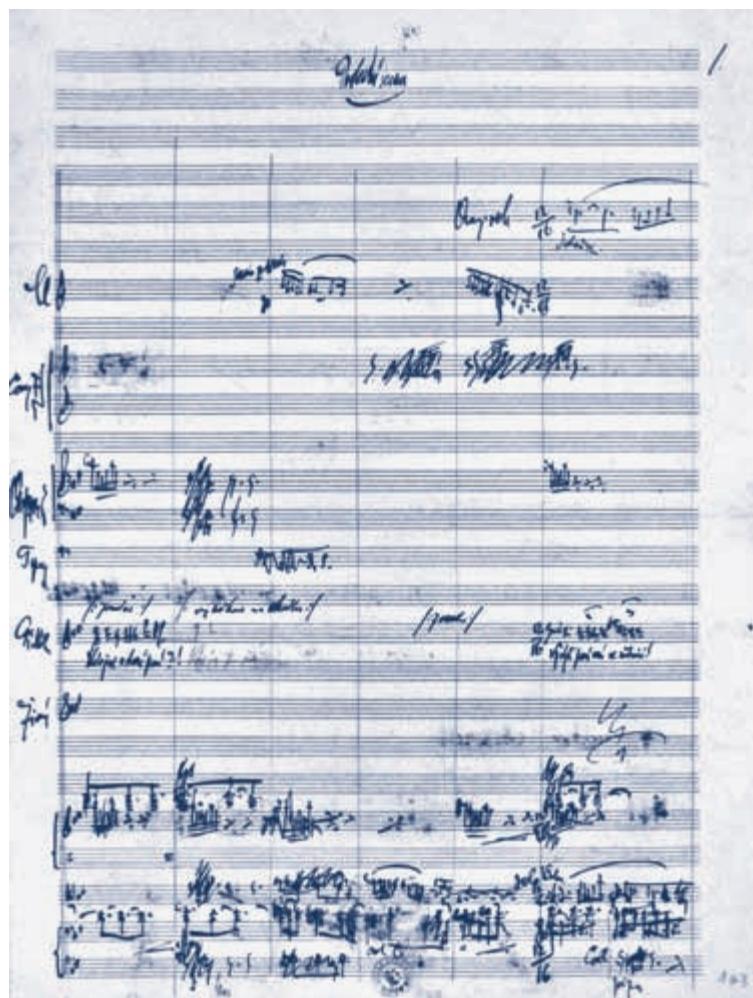
In fact, Robert Carsen's first encounter with Janáček's work happened by chance: "When I came to England as an actor, I wanted to see what Covent Garden looked like. I travelled from Bristol to London and they were performing a curious thing I had never heard of called *Jenůfa*. I was determined to see what the theatre looked like inside and so I bought a ticket and went to the performance, and I was just bowled over by what I saw and heard. It was a big shock to me how amazingly powerful this piece was – as music, as theatre – and I then decided to learn more about Janáček. So I quickly realized that this was a composer

whose work I would love to do. And for me he's one of my top three opera composers, without any question. His theatre is so concise and so poetic at the same time – it's really miraculous. I think one of the reasons why Janáček's operas are so powerful is that they are intellectually and emotionally satisfying. They're challenging to the intellect, trying to understand what is going on and the way in which he questions what it is to be a human being and our desires and our loss and our frustration. So Janáček's theatre puts the human condition, and the difficulty of being happy, very much into question. And, of course, the music is so powerful. The music takes us out of ourselves because it's something which has a directly emotional effect on you."

Destiny – a novel about a child of our time

If the first decades of the 20th century were characterized by a search for new ways of expression as well as means of expression in art, this was doubly true for opera. Janáček had already taken an energetic step in this direction with *Jenůfa*, and his fourth opera *Destiny* represents a musical and dramaturgical conquest of an entirely new area. Paradoxically, the beginnings of the new opera came at a time that was marred by severe blows for Janáček, both in his personal and professional life. In February 1903 his beloved daughter Olga died, and only two months later a message came from the National Theatre in Prague that *Jenůfa* hadn't been accepted for staging. Zdenka Janáčková recalled later: "My husband was sitting at his desk. He grabbed his head and began to cry terribly. In a violent rush of depression, he blamed himself for being unable to do anything." However, despite these setbacks, Janáček started looking around for a subject for a new work, and after thinking about several possible topics, a fateful meeting brought him unexpected inspiration. In the middle of August, Janáček left Hukvaldy, where he had spent the summer, and went to Luhačovice. It was one of his first visits to the spa that would become a place where he stayed regularly. Janáček not only rested there but also took out his notebook to record speech melodies, songs by musicians and discussions with his housekeeper, as well as the cheerful calls of spa visitors. *Destiny* appeared to him in the form of charming Kamila Urválková, whom Janáček met at the spa. She couldn't bear to see Janáček sad and lonely, so she sent a bouquet of red roses to his table. And the mysterious story of the lady named Kamila who inspired Janáček's opera? It was a romance she had engaged in with Ludvík Čelanský, a conductor and composer whose works are now forgotten. In 1897–99 his one-acter *Kamila*, in which the main character was portrayed as a superficial woman, was played in Prague. Did Urválková consider this work to be a personal attack, and did she suggest to Janáček that he should save her reputation with a new opera? Maybe yes, maybe no, but in any case Janáček was enchanted by Kamila's magic and his Luhačovice adventure continued at least via letters after his return. The idea for a new work began to take shape in his head, and in a letter to his co-worker Bartoš, Janáček wrote: "Now I wish for a libretto which is fresh and modern, brimming with life and elegance – a "novel about a child of our time". Oh, but who will write it for me? I would have a lot of details: they say I have mastered the pen – but I am afraid of getting involved with writers of literature." His worries about the difficulty of obtaining a libretto proved justified, so in the end he asked Fedora Bartošová, a young nineteen-year-old teacher and a friend to his deceased daughter Olga, for help. He didn't call *Destiny* an opera, but rather *three episodes of a novel* in which the audience find themselves in a completely new environment in comparison to his previous operas. Right from the first tones of the orchestral waltz, we are taken into the refined company of visitors to a spa, and simple prose is replaced by verse-based language in the style of decadent poets. Here, as in other operas, Janáček drew greatly from his notes on speech melodies, including some concerning Kamila's five-year-old son.

With *Destiny*, Janáček created an opera which was a great musical step in his journey. Aside from the undeniable quality of the music, it also certainly contains a number of autobiographical moments. *Destiny* has one weakness – the libretto by an inexperienced young poet – and the composer didn't live to see it performed; *Destiny* was staged for the first time in 1958, in Brno, adapted by Václav Nosek. Despite this, *Destiny* played an irreplaceable role in Janáček's compositional development and its staging is a challenge in the best sense of the word. That is why a director like Robert Carsen will be in charge of it: "*Destiny* is a tricky opera. This is not an easy piece because of the libretto, which is very strangely composed and sometimes rather awkward. The first act takes place fifteen years ago, ago from when is another question. But it's fifteen



Autograph manuscript of *Destiny*

photo: archiv E. Casari



Enrico Casari

photo: archiv P. Sheffield



Philip Sheffield

photo: Ilona Sochorová



Alžběta Poláčková

years from the third act, which is supposed to be the present day of the opera. Maybe one of the ways to solve this problem, to make it easier for the audience to understand about the past, is to have two singers playing the role of the composer – an older one, who is remembering the entire thing, and a younger one who plays his younger self. The older Živný is composing his opera, which in fact he's supposed to be doing all through the play anyway, and then from his memory comes his younger self, his younger wife, the mother and indeed everybody else. This led me to think that the setting could really be this conservatory where the composer works, teaches and writes."

It is not the chief conductor of the Brno ensemble Marko Ivanović's first encounter with Janáček's work either. He has already directed the music for successful productions of *The Makropulos Affair*, *Jenůfa* and *The Cunning Little Vixen*: "Destiny is a strange opera. It is realistic, and yet it reminds one of a nightmare. The characters speak in a strange, artificial, stylized language. In places they act completely realistically, while the very next minute they make completely irrational decisions. The key to understanding it is the music. The typically Janáček-style language, which is experimental and in many ways searching, introduces us to the composer's intention to portray an "opera within an opera" and penetrate the torn soul of the composer Živný – a strange hero/antihero. Janáček never heard his work performed. It's a pity. He would certainly (just as with his other operas) have changed it in many places, refining it and clarifying its overall tone. As a result, the responsibility for the effectiveness of this work lies with the conductor all the more. Should preference be given to cuts made in 1914, or should one stick to the composer's original version? Should you strictly adhere to the notes on tempo, or give free rein to the latent lyricism with which Živný and Mila's arias are packed? And that's without mentioning the technical issues connected with the score: the sudden need to put a damper on the violin, the dynamic balance, etc. I am very glad that, thanks to Jiří Zahrádka, performers now have a critically revised score. Its beauty is not always self-evident, but it encourages and provokes searching thought. It is always a challenge to conduct Janáček. I believe that, yet again, the director and our ensemble will find a way to produce a convincing interpretation of this remarkable and unique gem of European operatic literature."

In the main roles

The roles of the younger and older Živný will be played by two leading foreign singers who are no newcomers to Janáček's repertoire. Since his debut in 2006, Italian tenor Enrico Casari has been a regular guest at major European theatres such as the Teatro La Fenice, Opéra Royal de Wallonie, Opéra de Monte-Carlo, Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Opéra national du Rhin and Teatro Regio Turin, where he has sung tenor parts from the Italian and international repertoire (*Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Carmen*, *Pagliacci*, *I Puritani*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Salomé*). He has appeared several times in productions of Janáček's opera works directed by Robert Carsen, playing Janek in Carsen's staging of *The Makropulos Affair* at the Opéra national du Rhin and Teatro La Fenice, as well as Kudry-

as in *Katya Kabanova* at the Opéra national du Rhin and Teatro Regio Turin.

A successful career spanning a quarter of a century has taken British tenor Philip Sheffield to opera houses from Buenos Aires to New York and Tokyo, and he has collaborated with many important European ensembles (the Opéra-Comique in Paris, Opéra national du Rhin, La Monnaie de Munt, Teatro Olimpico Rome, Opera Vlaanderen, Teatro alla Scala, the English National Opera, and others). As far as Janáček's characters are concerned, he already has several roles under his belt – he played Tichon in *Katya Kabanova* at Teatro Colon, Brouček in *The Excursions of Mr. Brouček* at Opera North, Rechtor in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and the double role of Cherevin / Shapkin in the opera *From the House of the Dead*. He has worked with Robert Carsen on the production of Bernstein's *Candida* (English National Opera, Théâtre du Châtelet, Teatro alla Scala, Tokyo and Osaka).

The love of Živný's life, Mila Válková, will be played by the excellent Czech soprano Alžběta Poláčková. Brno's audiences have already had the opportunity to see her in excellent form as Krasava (*Libuše*) and Marschallin (*The Knight of the Rose*). Alžběta Poláčková has been a soloist at the National Theatre since 2003, and she has played many roles there (e.g. Pamina (*The Magic Flute*), the Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Mařenka (*The Bartered Bride*), Rusalka, Kristina (*The Makropulos Affair*), Bystrouška (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Jenůfa (*Jenůfa*), and Málinka/Etherea/Kunka (*The Excursions of Mr. Brouček*). In 2015 she debuted at the Opéra national de Paris in Carsen's production of *Rusalka*. She played the Fox in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the 2016 Glyndebourne festival. Together with the ArteMiss Trio, she has recorded a CD featuring Dmitri Shostakovich's *Vocal-Instrumental Suite* with words by A. Blok. She has also contributed a soprano solo to a recording of Janáček's *The Eternal Gospel* with the conductor Tomáš Netopil (Supraphon, 2014).

We'll be broadcasting live all over the world. Be there with us!

The performance of Janáček's *Destiny* on 14.10. at 19:00 will be our third live broadcast within the OperaVision project. The Brno National Theatre joined the project in 2018, and our two live broadcasts of Janáček's productions *The Cunning Little Vixen* (2018) and *Jenůfa* (2019) have been viewed by more than 35 000 spectators all over the world. During the broadcasts and the six months following the appearance of the recording on OperaVision, we were given many lovely reviews not only by viewers from the Czech Republic but also from, e.g. the USA, South Korea, Mexico, Japan and other countries. Czech Television will once again be the broadcasting partner, and will also record the performances for ČT ART.

Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union



THE BAMBERG SYMPHONY

The celebratory conclusion of the Janáček Brno festival will bring together Leoš Janáček and Richard Strauss within a single programme. As the conductor of the closing concert Jakub Hrůša says, it is almost impossible to think of anything else that could give a deeper insight into the differences between their music and personalities. Hrůša's *Great Suite* from the opera *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Strauss's *An Alpine Symphony* have very little in common, apart from the fact that the inspiration for each of them was drawn from nature, but together they form a perfect example of the wide and varied stream of diverse new music that began to flow at the beginning of the 20th century.

Admirable Janáček and the irreplaceable German tradition

Text: Boris Klepal

The Cunning Little Vixen for concert performances

"One of the main things that pushed me to create a new suite from *The Cunning Little Vixen* was my love for the opera and the knowledge that it contains a lot of symphonic music that has remained unnoticed," explains Hrůša, who then points out that two suites from *The Cunning Little Vixen* already exist. One of them was created by Václav Talich and revised significantly by Charles Mackerras, while the second was put together by František Jilek. "When I was preparing *The Cunning Little Vixen* for the opera festival in Glyndebourne, I thought of joining the two existing suites. However, I then had a good look at the whole thing and assembled a completely new sequence, and so a new, autonomous composition was created," Hrůša said, describing the genesis of the *Great Suite*. "The work of conductor Charles Mackerras and musicologist Jiří Zahrádka played a huge role in the creation of my suite. They actually prepared a new edition of the entire opera, so I was able to make use of an absolutely faithful version of Janáček's work."

The Cunning Little Vixen is one of Janáček's most popular operas – conductor Franz Welser-Möst even claims that it is "Janáček's *Parsifal*." According to Hrůša, *The Cunning Little Vixen*'s popularity is logical, even though there are certainly people who prefer works of a different emotional nature. "I like to emphasize everywhere that *The Cunning Little Vixen* takes place in the area around Líšeň where I grew up," confesses the conductor with regard to his personal relationship to *The Cunning Little Vixen*, adding that this opera is unusually remarkable for Janáček as within it he managed to combine a humorous and lighter aspect with a very deep one that is nevertheless presented without sentiment. It is a work that lacks sharp edges but still makes an impression both in terms of the pleasure it brings and the depth of its testimony.

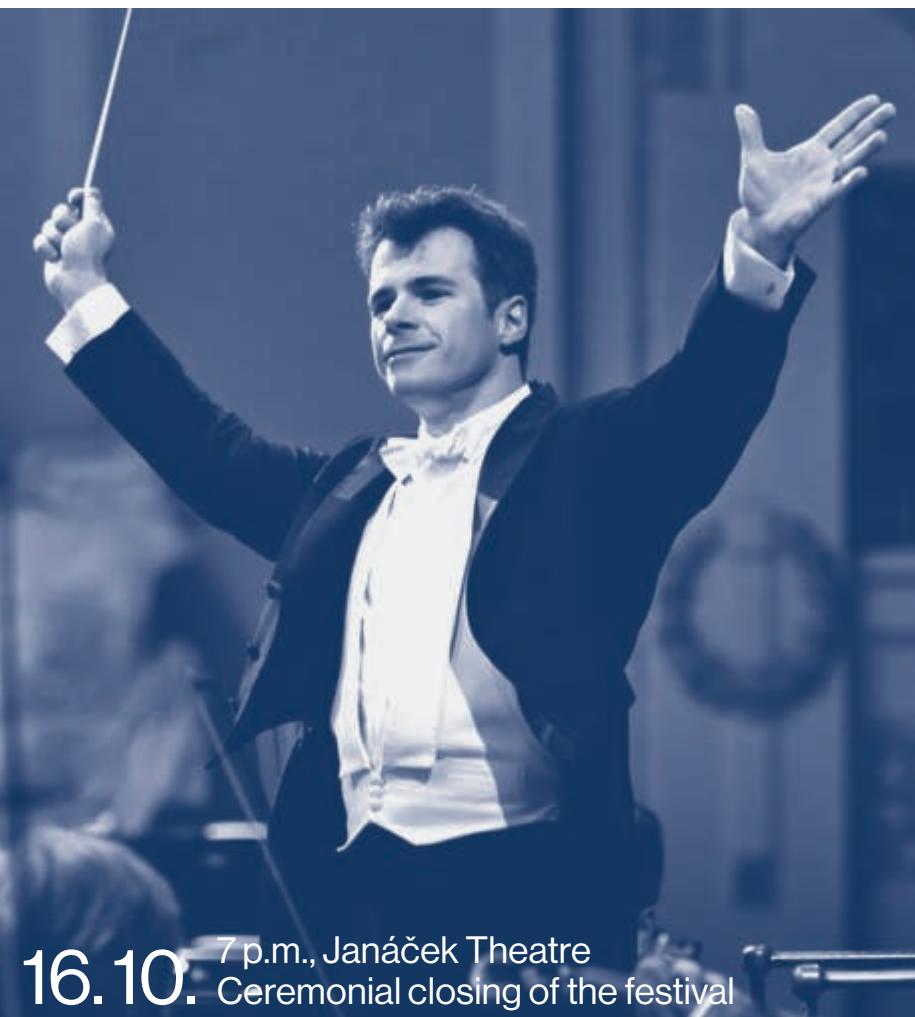
Janáček is sometimes described as an "unclassifiable" composer, and yet – according to Hrůša – he is fairly easy to combine with other music. However, his work still meets with a lack of popularity with the

general public when it's brought to the concert stage. "This is also true in this country, which is something I find hard to deal with," admits Hrůša. "I dream of Janáček becoming one of the most popular composers in the Czech Republic one day. Just like everyone else, I can give you many reasons as to why this isn't the case, but still, it makes no sense to me."

"It is important to disprove the generally held belief that Janáček and his originality suddenly appeared out of nothing and nowhere, as if he had fallen from the sky," Hrůša claims, pointing out that it definitely didn't happen like that, and that Janáček's luminosity also has another side – an incredibly long period of development which included a great amount of self-criticism. "Janáček wrote many casual compositions whose style he could have developed further, but he probably wasn't prepared to allow this to be his way," explains Hrůša. He needed a deeper, stronger, more straightforward and more novel approach, one that he sought for a long time and urgently. And thanks to the upheavals and setbacks that he met in his life, and also thanks to his loneliness, Janáček did eventually manage to find his life's path." According to Hrůša, Janáček was one of the most knowledgeable of composers, and one well acquainted with traditions, though he also distorted them. He was solitary and peculiar, but also deeply rooted in the traditions that he moved forward.

On opposite poles in music and life

According to Hrůša, the author of *An Alpine Symphony*, Richard Strauss, was the exact opposite of Janáček as he matured very soon. He also was a celebrity, a successful person, and moreover part of the German scene – an element that always posed a challenge for Janáček, or was even a thorn in his side, and he always tried to take a cultural stance against it. At the same time, Janáček at least respected Strauss and kept a careful eye on him. "Strauss was part of an ongoing tradition that



16. 10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre
Ceremonial closing of the festival

progressed from Beethoven to Wagner, and it was exactly this music and tradition that Janáček consciously sought to keep his distance from," Hrůša says, describing the differences between the two composers and adding: "I am sure that this was also the case when he composed a piece about nature."

The German traditions were too heavy in Janáček's eyes, their development too mechanical and without original input. According to Hrůša, it is extremely stimulating to combine *The Cunning Little Vixen* and *An Alpine Symphony*. It enables audiences to realize what is admirable about Janáček, and also what is irreplaceable in the continuously evolving German tradition.

Hrůša also emphasizes the importance of the question of taste for Janáček, and he admits that in this regard *An Alpine Symphony* is skating on somewhat thin ice: "It is an unnatural composition – Strauss kind of uses it to show off, and he presents his qualities there nicely wrapped up on a golden tray. As a pure artist Janáček never agreed with it. I think it will be interesting to experience the different sonic worlds conjured up by Janáček and Strauss when both of them make use of the orchestra's full range of expression."

For Hrůša, *An Alpine Symphony* is also a beginning of a new journey with the Bamberg Symphony, as aside from one song he has never conducted anything by Strauss with them before: "We've done a lot of German music together, from Mozart to Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and Wagner, and also both Mahler and Bruckner very intensively. Now, Strauss is a new area which we want to discover together over the next few seasons."

Hrůša also points out that orchestral musicians – at least in Germany – are very fond of playing Strauss, as his work seems to be written specially for every instrument, making it very enjoyable to play. And this is, according to Hrůša, another difference from Janáček, who didn't concern

JAKUB HRŮŠA (*1981, Brno) is currently the chief conductor of the Bamberg Symphony and also the main guest conductor at London's Philharmonia Orchestra and the Czech Philharmonic. He is a regular guest at the New York Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw orchestra, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and other important ensembles. He has also successfully performed with the Berlin and Vienna philharmonic orchestras. He has been collaborating with the Glyndebourne Festival for many years, and in 2015 he helmed the first production of Janáček's opera *The Makropulos Affair* in the Vienna State Opera.

THE BAMBERG SYMPHONY orchestra was created in 1946. At that time it was largely composed of German musicians who'd had to leave Prague after 1945. The orchestra, whose first chief conductor was Joseph Keilberth, is proud of the "Czech element" that exists in its sound even today. Jakub Hrůša is the sixth chief conductor in the history of the orchestra, whose honorary conductor is Herbert Blomstedt. The recording of Antonín Dvořák and Bohuslav Martinů's concerts which the orchestra produced with Ivo Kahánek and Jakub Hrůša was nominated for the "Recording of the Year 2019" award by BBC Music Magazine.

himself with ease of playing at all. "I have absolutely no doubts that the Bamberger is one of the best ensembles a conductor can have to hand when it comes to Strauss, so I'm looking forward to it a lot," says Hrůša. "I think that we will be able to capitalize on everything we have learned together about German music."

Outside the Bamberg Symphony the conductor has had a lot of experience with Strauss's music. He presented it while guesting in Europe, America and also Japan, where he recorded *An Alpine Symphony* on CD. "I've performed Strauss frequently and often, and I am very particular about it," says Hrůša. "I hate his music played without refinement and structure, with a lot of 'oil' and 'sauce'. I always try to 'purify' Strauss, and that's the approach we've agreed on at the Bamberg Symphony."

Strauss is a home-grown author for the Bamberg Symphony, but they also played Janáček regularly with Hrůša's predecessor Jonathan Nott. "I haven't done many things by Janáček with them, though this is just a coincidence and not a matter of intent," adds Hrůša. "As far as Czech music is concerned, we've recorded Dvořák and Martinů, we've toured with Bedřich Smetana's music... but it just isn't possible to manage everything at once."

To conclude, Hrůša emphasizes that Janáček's work always needs greater care than other music. "Janáček is not easy to deliver, but if they have enough preparation, the Bamberg orchestra never falters – they treat Janáček's compositions as carefully as any other score," says Hrůša. "It is then my task to add the requisite dash of specific zest so that it doesn't make a 'greasy' impression, as Janáček himself used to say with contempt."

LEOŠ JANÁČEK JENŮFA



Photo: Patrik Boreček

3.10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre 5.10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre
repeat performances

CONDUCTOR: MARKO IVANOVIĆ
DIRECTOR: MARTIN GLASER
NATIONAL THEATRE BRNO'S
JANÁČEK OPERA

Text: Patricie Částková

There are many outstanding singers, but only some of them become a real phenomenon. One of them is the Finnish soprano Karita Mattila. Not only the beauty of her voice, but also an innate sense of theatre and the ability to experience what it brings has made her one of the most sought-after singers in the world and a winner of many awards, both for the characters she's played but also her recordings (e.g. Grammy Awards 1998 Best Opera Recording – *The Master-Singers of Nuremberg* and Grammy Awards 2004 Best Opera Recording – *Jenůfa*). Apart from world-famous works such as *Salome*, *Don Carlos*, *Fidelio*, *Tosca*, *Manon Lescaut*, *The Master-Singers of Nuremberg* and others, Czech operas and particularly the work of Leoš Janáček form an important part of her repertoire.

I simply love Janáček's style

International opera star Karita Mattila on stage in Brno as Kostelnička

What made you decide to pursue a career as an opera singer? Who and what had the greatest impact on your work and your life in music?

I did not choose to become opera singer, it just happened. The competition wins in early years encouraged me to believe it could become my profession. Also my singing teachers were very encouraging and supporting.

During your career you have sung your way through an extensive repertoire, from Verdi and Mozart's works through Wagner and Strauss's operas all the way up to contemporary composers such as Kaija Saariaho, who dedicated one of her operas to you. However, you've also covered a lot of important work by Czech composers – you've played the Foreign Princess in Dvořák's *Rusalka*, and Janáček's *Elina Makropulos*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Jenůfa* and *Kostelnička*. How did you find your way to Czech operas, and what attracted you to them?

My singing teacher Vera Rozsa suggested that *Jenůfa* would be a great part for me. And immediately I fell in love with that music. I also found the Janáček's stories – the ones he uses in his operas – very appealing and timeless. I simply love Janáček's style – unique use of rhythm, for example. Full of colours, abruptly changing.

Do you like the characters you sing? Do you feel closer to some of them than to others?

I tend to fall in love with all of my roles, characters. Always I find love or at least deep sympathy, even with characters that aren't likeable to audience – like *Manon Lescaut* or *Kostelnička*. That comes usually naturally, in the process of learning the part and then working on it in the production, with the conductor and director.

When you are on stage, do you play your character or do you become it? How do you prepare for your roles, and what is important for you when working with a conductor and a director?

As a trained professional opera singer I know how to balance the acting and singing. My goal is to own the part, not become something else. It is always me playing the part so my goal is to make it work the best possible way, me serving the character along with the director's concept and our collaboration. My most important part of the work with conductor and director is to find the right balance between singing and acting and serve the mutual goal of the collaboration. We are a team.

photo: Marica Rosengård



Karita Mattila

Part of the work of an opera singer is singing in various languages, but Czech is not one of the most common ones.

Have you got used to it, and do you understand the language at least a little?

I have spent a "fair share" of money hiring excellent Czech language coaches with whom I have studied all my Czech roles. It has been worthwhile, always. It is true that after having done so many Czech parts already I have an idea of some pronunciation rules and learnt a few words of the language itself but, of course, can't speak Czech.

Janáček's *Jenůfa* is one of your most famous roles. You have experienced her story on stage many times – how did that affect the way you see the character of *Kostelnička*?

Jenůfa and *Kostelnička* differ totally, not only characters but also musically. Style is totally different. The whole opera became familiar to me with so many times singing the title role and I had done it with many excellent *Kostelničkas* but learning *Kostelnička* was a unique experience and much more difficult than I assumed and I underestimated the amount of work that is required to master it.

One of the reasons why I like Janáček so much is that his characters are never black and white – *Elina* is not a heartless monster and *Kostelnička* is not a cold-blooded murderer. How do you perceive

Janáček's characters, and especially *Kostelnička*?

Kostelnička, like every other character in Janáček's operas, is a human being, flesh and blood, who makes a mistakes, like mortals sometimes do. And carries consequences. Utterly fascinating part. One of my many favourites in opera literature.

What brings you the most joy in your work?

My most joy in my work is singing, making music. I love everything: working with piano, with orchestra, chorus. Singing together with colleagues, on stage. I also love the process: working with director, the role analysis. Working with conductors who love their collaborators and respect all musicians.

We have now experienced a separation from theatres and concert halls that has lasted much longer than we could ever have imagined, but let's hope that everything goes back to normal soon. So, when things are normal, how do you spend your free time?

The only thing I like less is traveling and living away from home. But happy to have a home in Florida where I can always return – not often but lucky to have a home that I can miss.

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ THE GREEK PASSION



7.10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

CONDUCTOR: ROBERT KRUŽÍK
DIRECTOR: JIŘÍ HEŘMAN
NATIONAL THEATRE BRNO'S
JANÁČEK OPERA

Text: Patricie Částková

The Brno Opera is primarily associated with the works of Leoš Janáček, though another 20th century composer is also very closely connected with the institution – Bohuslav Martinů. The management of the Brno theatre noticed him when he was just starting out as an artist, and over the course of time eight stage works were performed there as world premieres. The first of these, the ballet *Who is the Most Powerful in the World*, even met Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* there on stage one evening. Therefore, even though it wasn't planned originally, it will be beautiful to have the opportunity to compare one of Janáček's first operas, *Destiny*, and Bohuslav Martinů's mature and (unfortunately) last opera work, *The Greek Passion*.

The light and darkness of the soul

A discussion between the director Jiří Heřman and dramaturge Patricie Částková

P. Č.: *The Miracles of Mary, The Greek Passion, The Epic of Gilgamesh* – Bohuslav Martinů is represented in your directorial work more than other composers. Is it just due to a combination of circumstances or is it that Martinů so attractive for you?

J. H.: Bohuslav Martinů's music is the music of my heart, it is a place where I can find myself. It is not only a reflection of man, but also of nature. Specifically, in *The Greek Passion*, he managed to revive the passion plays in a manner that's relevant to a contemporary person. This musical passion drama is filled with music which is in harmony with nature. The music which evokes St. Vasil's spring will purify you as you listen, just like the large scene in the olive grove, where a constant awareness of the uniqueness of creation and the divine presence in all of us and everything around us is awakened. Martinů inspires me with the clarity of his music, which has the power to purify. In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, we can find such a moment in the scene with the apparition of Enkidu, while in *The Miracles of Mary*, there is the Nativity or Sister Pascalina, for example. Martinů often makes me think deeply about our existence, which was the main reason why I decided to stage *The Epic of Gilgamesh* – it was a production whose concept was based on music, and only music. I do not stage Bohuslav Martinů's work by chance, I enjoy discovering the light and darkness of the human soul in his music. How does his music appeal to you?

P. Č.: For me, Martinů was a case of love at first sight when I was studying at grammar school and I saw *The Miracles of Mary* at the theatre for the first time. I have a number of favourite composers but there is something in Martinů's music which has become a kind of subconscious part of me. I enjoy the variety of his operas, they are playful, dreamy, sad... but they always speak about us, about the things which are hidden in people, both good and bad, and they ask questions. The most beautiful thing is that Martinů achieves this in a way that seems almost unintentional – it is like Manolios says in *The Greek Passion*: "God works quietly..." Martinů and his music are like this, they speak to me without great gestures and proclamations, but with a lot of urgency. I would say that this is easy to see in the way he made Kazantzakis's novel *Christ Recrucified* into an opera libretto. You've returned to *The Greek Passion* for the second time in only a few years. What started you off – Martinů or Kazantzakis?

J. H.: It was Martinů that started me off. I experienced my first *Greek Passion* at the Pilsen Opera. During my studies I sang in a choir and I remember the final choral scene, which really bowled us over. We wished to keep it going as long as possible, as did the audience.

Martinů's music is direct and I believe that it always hits every heart, even the toughest one. I got to Kazantzakis later, when I was preparing my concept of *The Greek Passion* for my first entrance exams for the study of opera direction. During the entrance exam, *The Greek Passion* wasn't chosen, but rather the second prepared work, *Tosca*. We had an argument and I left under a cloud of youthful misunderstanding brought about by my artistic ego. It was one of those cases when one doesn't want to listen and understand the other. If I had presented the *Passion*, I think I would have passed without any lacerations to my imagination. For me, Kazantzakis's novel provides beautiful material for the study of the individual characters of the passion plays and their fates, like the main character, Catherine, who plays Mary Magdalene. In Kazantzakis's version her story ends in death, while Martinů elevates it into the transformation of a woman who carries in her heart a message of unconditional love and compassion. In general, all the characters in Kazantzakis's novel, even the seemingly negative ones, also have something good in them, but they have been roughened by their journey through life and have stopped perceiving one another, they have closed themselves off from the world and only concern themselves with their own needs. For me, *The Greek Passion* is a return to human understanding and compassion. The story takes place in Greece, what local traditions can be seen in Martinů's opera?

P. Č.: When he started working on *The Greek Passion*, Martinů agreed with Kazantzakis that it should not be a folk opera. Nevertheless, he still studied Greek music and asked Kazantzakis about details concerning a Greek wedding ceremony, for example. As in Kazantzakis' other works, the book also draws on his childhood memories from Crete, which at that time was still under Turkish rule. However, Martinů left out the Turkish part of the story completely. Greek traditions are in fact associated with the moment which opens the whole story. It is on Easter Sunday, when the older villagers are selecting the cast for the coming passion plays. It is interesting that when I searched for more information, I found that passion plays are not actually performed in Orthodox Greece, but Kazantzakis's native Crete was more under the western influence and so this tradition existed there. And even though Martinů didn't want any folk costumes, hints of Orthodox chants can be heard, particularly in the refugee choruses, for instance. Greek Easter has many beautiful traditions which can appear in the opera – red coloured eggs, the lighting of a new light to symbolise Christ's resurrection... How much inspiration did Martinů find in Greece, and is it also reflected in the artistic concept for the production?

J. H.: The main inspiration comes from Kazantzakis's novel, which captures the Greek environment and customs beautifully. Other inspiration has come from discussions with the stage designer Dragan Stojčevski, who comes from Macedonia and knows the Greek environment very well. The smell of rosemary also spread into the auditorium during our last performance in Essen, where the main motif for us was the infinite wall as a symbol of the building of barriers between people. We will leave the smell of rosemary also in our Brno production, though this time the main motif won't be a barrier but rather the space of the Greek temple, which also contains all the environments evoking the beauty of the Greek countryside and villages, as well as references to southern well-being, poverty and laziness. These are reflected in the signs of unfinished work on the temple, for example. For me personally this temple is a space for our soul, in which Kazantzakis's eternal theme of the internal struggle of a person with God takes place. But it isn't only a struggle – in Martinů's version it is simultaneously a beautiful, touching and inspiring way to attain inner knowledge of the meaning of our existence. Martinů created two versions of the opera; we are preparing the second, which is also connected with the Czech premiere. How is it different?

P. Č.: Originally, the premiere of *The Greek Passions* was planned in London, where Rafael Kubelík worked as a conductor at the time. It didn't happen in the end, but Zurich showed interest in the opera. However, their condition was that it be modified, and thanks to this we now have two equal versions. The first of these, the London one, which was reconstructed by musicologist Aleš Březina, is a bit longer. In the second, Zurich version, Martinů left out certain characters (including the narrator) and the opera ends with the departure of the refugees immediately after Manolios is killed. Personally, I like both forms of *The Greek Passion*. Both are musically beautiful, each of them in a somewhat different way – the second one is tighter, more dramatic, while the London version leaves more space for the development of the characters. Anyway, it is admirable how Martinů managed to transform the event-packed novel into a libretto for a 120 minute opera. I know that you like the whole *The Greek Passion* but if you had to choose a single moment which makes it worth seeing for everyone, which would it be?

J. H.: It is the final scene after Manolios' death, and also the end of Act 3. For me these are the strongest moments of the whole opera which I want to share.



BRNO PHILHARMONIC AND THE CHOIR OF NATIONAL THEATRE BRNO'S JANÁČEK OPERA

The name of world-famous composer Leoš Janáček (and also of his first teacher, Pavel Křížkovský) is closely connected to the choir loft at the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady by the Augustinian monastery of St. Thomas in Old Brno. This year marks the 200th anniversary of his birth. When did these two personalities, who originally came from North Moravia, actually come to Brno?

Leoš Janáček and the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady in Old Brno

Text: Jiří Zahrádka



View of Mendel Square from Křížová Street,
photo Josef Kunzfeld 1896

Augustinian monastery of St. Thomas in Brno. At the time of his arrival the monastery was an important Moravian spiritual centre under the enlightened abbot Cyril Napp. The literary scientist and writer František Tomáš Bratránek, the poet, philosopher and journalist František Matouš Klácel, and the founder of genetics Gregor Mendel all worked there. It was also here that Karel Křížkovský adopted the name of Pavel. After his ordination in 1850, he became a chaplain at the Old Brno monastery parish, where he was placed in charge of music. He was the director of music production at the basilica, he taught music to small wards of the foundation, and beyond the gates of the monastery he even co-founded and led the ensemble Beseda Brněnská. On top of that, he also composed music. It was this Křížkovský who has the lion's share of the credit for Leoš Janáček's move to Brno at the age of eleven. Hukvaldy teacher Jiří Janáček's uneasy family financial situation forced him to approach Křížkovský and ask if he would take the musically gifted boy under his wing at the foundation in Old Brno. Not only did Křížkovský ensure that little Leoš was accepted there, but he also provided him with help and protection, thus repaying Jiří Janáček for his kindness in the past. Little Leoš, as part of his duties as a ward, was involved in activities at the choir loft, where he experienced large figural masses under the leadership of Křížkovský. When Křížkovský was later called to Olomouc in 1872, young Janáček, who was an excellent organist, became his deputy in the function of the director of the Old Brno choir loft. When the Steinmayer organ was newly installed in the basilica, Janáček played Bach's *Toccata and fugue in C major* BWV 564 upon it, and as he knew the instrument perfectly, he published its detailed description in the article *New organ at the Králové monastery in Old Brno* in the same year in September. Janáček concluded his activities at the basilica in Old Brno sometime around the beginning of the 1890s.

At the beginning of the story there is the name of the teacher Jiří Janáček, Leoš's father. He started his first job in August 1831 as an assistant teacher in Neplachovice near Opava. There he noticed a neglected boy called Karel Křížkovský, who was the illegitimate child of a village girl. Jiří Janáček recognized the boy's huge musical talent and took care of his development. Little Křížkovský thus became a ward of the foundation at the parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Opava, and a vocalist there. After finishing grammar school and completing his studies in philosophy and theology, Křížkovský became a novice at the

The composer's *Glagolitic Mass* is also connected with Old Brno and its monastery. The fact that Janáček chose a religious Slavonic text for the composition of the mass isn't surprising. When he joined the Old Brno monastery foundation as a small boy in 1865, he found himself right in the centre of the Cyril and Methodius movement, which was of course strongly interconnected with the efforts to achieve a national revival. The prelate himself, Cyril Napp, was a member of the Matica Velehradská committee, and Pavel Křížkovský even wrote a cantata entitled *St. Cyril and Methodius*. Young Leoš was strongly influenced by this atmosphere,

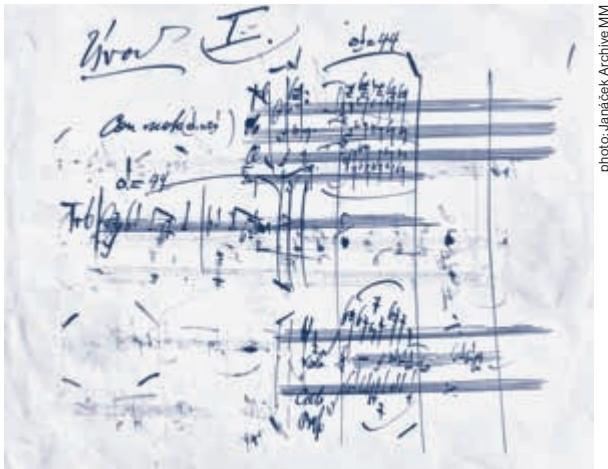


photo: Janáček Archive MM

Autograph manuscript of the Glagolitic Mass

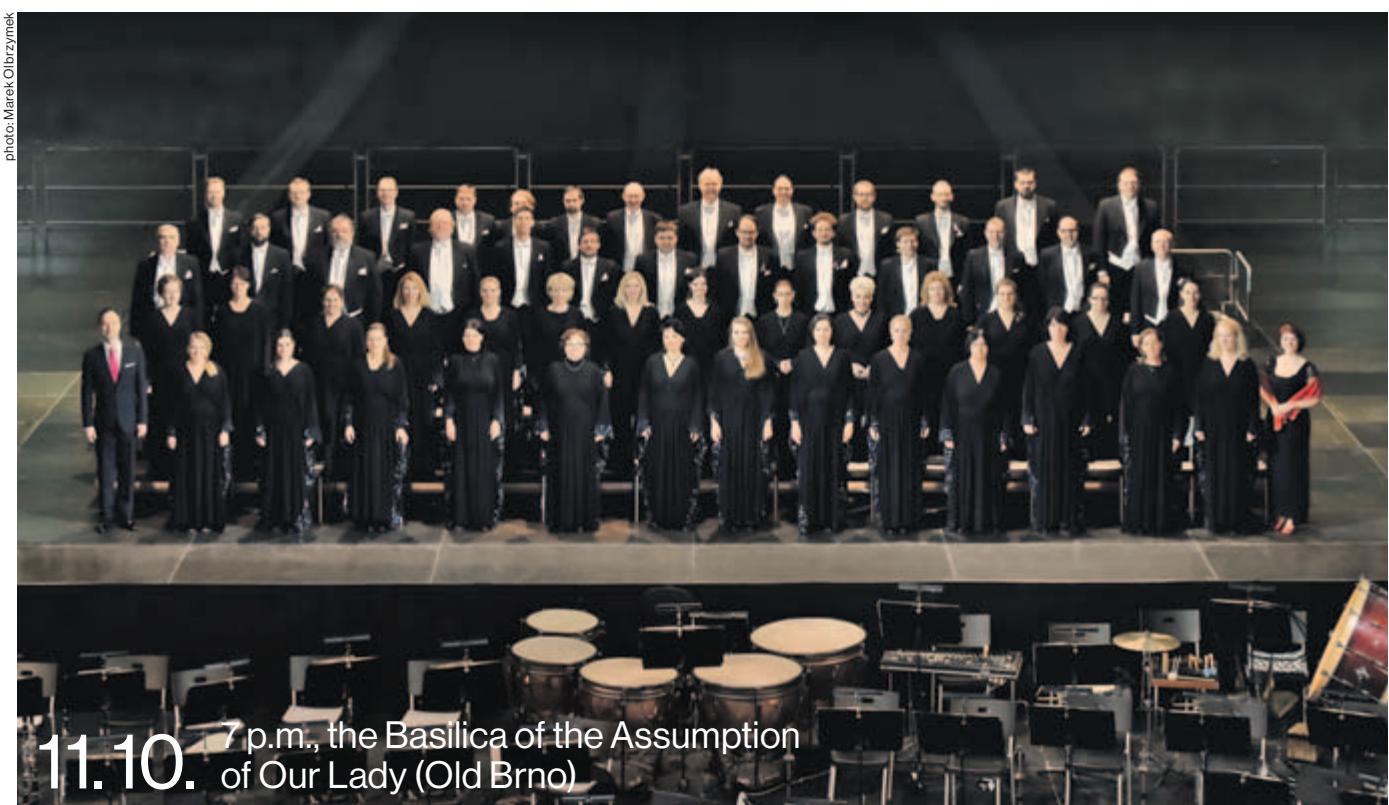
and this was especially true in his last year at the foundation. The year 1869 was marked by festivities to commemorate the thousandth anniversary of the death of one of the two "Slavic apostles" – St. Cyril. At the beginning of the year, Janáček, together with other wards, took part in the celebrations in Brno with the Dominicans and on Petrov Hill. Subsequently, it was decided that the musical side of the Velehrad festivities would be organized by Pavel Křížkovský and the Old Brno wards. Janáček stayed at Velehrad from 3rd to 12th July 1869. A letter to Janáček's uncle, Jan Janáček, from 26th May 1869 shows how strongly this spiritual and revival event affected the fifteen-year-old Leoš: "Dear Uncle, as you already know, a great celebration will take place at Velehrad this year, and Mr. P. Křížkovský has been appointed the singing director, and has accepted the post, and the whole foundation, that's 20 singers with me among them, will be travelling to Velehrad from Brno on 5th June. The journey, food and lodging will be paid for by the most reverend Archbishop of Olomouc. And you don't know how much I'm looking forward to seeing (I am not worthy of walking on it) the sacred ground which, a long time ago, witnessed the presence of the great Svatopluk and the Slavic apostles Cyril and Methodius. And I have one plea for you, my dearest Uncle: Please, buy me some Slavic clothing."

Many years later, in 1920, Janáček was asked by a later archbishop of Olomouc, Leopold Prečan, to compose a mass. At that time the religious Slavic liturgy was again at the centre of attention as the fifth point

of the decree of the sacred congregation of ceremonies that year had allowed the use of religious Slavic language in liturgy. This also awoke an increased interest in religious Slavic liturgical texts, which first were published in magazines and in small publishing runs before later, in 1927, being published in the Slavic missal at the Vatican. Janáček started composing the mass, but then interrupted the work and only returned to it six years later when he finally composed it during a rainy spa stay in Luhačovice in 1926, calling it the *Mše glagolskaja*. The premiere of the work, which was generously designed for soloists, choir, orchestra and organ, was performed by Beseda brněnská with the National Theatre orchestra in Brno on 5th December 1927 under the baton of Jaroslav Kvapil. Today, the work is one of the most frequently performed 20th century spiritual compositions, and it still amazes and enchants with its novelty and energy. Although Janáček dedicated this composition to a high dignitary of the Catholic Church, the Archbishop of Olomouc, Leopold Prečan, the spiritual dimension of the work goes beyond Catholic doctrine and aims somewhere in the direction of Janáček's pantheistic worldview.

The composer also chose a theme that was spiritually close to him in the case of another composition. A legend in verse called *The Eternal Gospel – Legend 1240*, which was written by Jaroslav Vrchlický and included in the 1891 collection *Frescoes and Tapestries*, is inspired by the teachings of the medieval monk Joachim of Fiore (1132–1202), whose interpretation of history culminates in the period of the Holy Spirit, i.e. the love of all mankind for all creatures. It is somewhat symbolic that Janáček set this message to music shortly before the outbreak of World War I. We do not know exactly when the composition was created, but the first evidence of the existence of the already completed work is from May 1914. In Janáček's *The Eternal Gospel*, Joachim de Fiore's prophecy is divided into four parts, with an emphasis on the tenor part and the choir. Not only in terms of instrumentation, *The Gospel* is closely linked music-wise to the opera *The Excursions of Mr. Brouček*. The premiere took place on 5th February 1917, when it was staged by the Prague singing association Hlahol and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, led by the conductor Jaroslav Křička.

These two important works by Janáček will be performed in a truly authentic environment – the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady in Old Brno. They will be played by the Brno Philharmonic and the excellent Janáček Opera Choir. Jana Šrejma Kačírková and Peter Berger will perform along with Jana Hrochová and Jiří Sulzenko, and the concert will be led by the chief conductor of Brno Philharmonic Dennis Russell Davies and choirmaster Pavel Koňárek.



11.10. 7 p.m., the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady (Old Brno)

National Theatre Brno's Janáček Opera Choir

Dennis Russell Davies, who has two seasons behind him as the Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Brno Philharmonic, performed for the first time with “his” orchestra in Brno – at the time still as a designated Principal Conductor – at the Easter Festival of Sacred Music 2018. It was at a concert in the basilica in Old Brno, where he directed (among other things) Janáček’s Glagolitic Mass. For the Janáček Brno 2020 festival Davies is returning with the same ensemble to the same place to reprise that very composition (and also Janáček’s Eternal Gospel). However, he has been living with Janáček’s music since his student years...

It seems to me that Brno audiences strongly identify with Janáček’s music

Text: Vítězslav Mikeš



Dennis Russell Davies

photo: Andreas H. Blöschl

honored to open the Janáček Festival in Brno some years ago with the *Sinfonietta* together with the Bruckner Orchester Linz.

During my Juilliard years I had the opportunity to hear Rudolf Firkušný perform the Concertino on several occasions; unforgettable!

What other works by Janáček have you conducted during your career? What is your experience with people's reactions to Janáček's music?

Prior to coming to Brno, I have conducted major productions of *Jenůfa* (Jurij Ljubimov and David Alden), *The Cunning Little Vixen* (André Engle, Matthias Davids) at the Opera de Paris (Bastille), Houston Grand Opera, Opera Bonn, and the Landestheater Linz. With the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra I often conducted my arrangement for string orchestra of Janáček's *Kreuzer Sonata*. The orchestras, singers, and directors seem to be challenged and motivated by the beauty and technical challenges of these great scores.

You performed the *Glagolitic Mass*, which you will conduct as part of the Janáček Brno festival, in the basilica in Old Brno with the Brno Philharmonic more than two years ago. Are you planning to change your approach to the Mass based on this experience (with regard to the acoustics in the basilica etc.)? And have you already had the opportunity to conduct *The Eternal Gospel*, which will be performed together with the *Glagolitic Mass*?

That performance that you have described was also my very first experience with the *Glagolitic Mass*. Now that I have gained a bit of perspective regarding the music and the Basilica's acoustics, I look very much forward to studying this beautiful work again. *The Eternal Gospel* will be new for me. Very exciting!

Janáček's scores are problematic for many reasons, and the question as to whether this or that version should be performed is constantly discussed among musicians and musicologists. As a former chief conductor of the Bruckner Orchester Linz, you were certainly confronted with a similar question in the case of Anton Bruckner's symphonies...

The issues surrounding musical notation are very complex. During my career I have conducted and performed literally hundreds of new or recent works by composers both well-known and unknown, and have come to understand how difficult it can be for a composer to translate the sounds he hears in his mind and heart to paper. A very recent trend in publishing has been to give us, as much as possible, the composer's original text without editorial comments by other musicians. This is helpful for those of us who understand the traditions and context in which the music was created, but there is always more to the story. The archives and library of the Brno Philharmonic contain a rich collection of scores used by my predecessors like Břetislav Bakala and František Jilek which contain notes and comments reflecting direct suggestions, corrections, and reflections of Janacek himself. The orchestra here understands this tradition and celebrates it in rehearsals and performances, an enormous help to me as I explore much of this great repertory for the first time. I also sense that the audiences in Brno identify strongly with Janáček and his music, understand it, and are proud of this legacy. This is personally very inspiring.

If I am not mistaken, your first experience with conducting Leoš Janáček's music was *Sinfonietta* at The Juilliard School when you were still a student. Is that so? What are your memories of that?

As a young conducting student in the class of Jean Morel at The Juilliard School (other students in these years: Leonard Slatkin, James Levine, James Conlon, John Nelson, Yoav Talmi) I was entrusted with the Juilliard Repertory Orchestra, and because the school had excellent brass players I was able to program Janáček's *Sinfonietta*, a great learning experience for all of us. It is a work I have revisited many times since then, and I was especially



BRNO CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Janáček festival also considers the needs of the smallest of its visitors. It has already become clear over the last few editions that the best way to approach them is via a programme featuring performances from their peers in the Brno Children's Choir.

Milky porridge for little Francis

Text: Patricie Částková



The choir, which was founded in 2004, has embarked on a mission to teach children to love and respect music. The excellent performances from the children in many productions by National Theatre Brno's Janáček Opera are proof of the fact that the choirmaster Valeria Maťašová is doing things right, and is also managing to make music entertaining for the children involved. It doesn't matter if they are orderly Pioneers in the contemporary opera *Monument*, cheeky kids in *Carmen* or that bunch of likeable rascals in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* – they always display a full commitment to singing, acting and professionalism which even adult singers would be proud of. Of course, they don't just restrict themselves to opera. They regularly perform not only in concerts at the Janáček Brno Festival, but also at Smetana's Litomyšl, Bach's Organ Autumn and other events. They have also been successful in international choral singing competitions – when the choir was only in the third year of its existence, it was awarded a silver medal in the absolute position at the International Choir Competition (8th Internationaler Chrowettbewerb) in Bad Ischl, Austria. Other successes followed in Poland and Austria, and most recently in 2018 in Neerpelt, Belgium, where they received two gold medals at the 66th European Music Festival for Young People. They have also been involved in the creation of several CDs: for example, last year they cooperated with the Miloslav Ištvan Quartett to record František Domažlický's *Czech Songs op. 17* for children's choir and string quartet for Czech Radio Brno.

The easiest way for young listeners to discover the magic of Janáček's music is by listening to his cheerful and playful *Rhymes*, which are among his works that were inspired by *Lidové noviny* – in this case the children's supplement, where folk rhymes were published with drawings by Ondřej Sekora, Josef Lada and Jan Hála. During the holidays in 1925, Janáček set just eight texts to music, intended for three female voices, clarinet, piano and drum. However, a year later there were already eighteen of them and the number of singers and instrumentalists had grown as well. Janáček also wished to project the original pictures together with the musical *Rhymes*, but this wasn't achieved until 1948, thanks to Josef Lada's cartoon directed by Eduard Hofman. This film will also be shown to festival visitors. Folk customs connected with the welcoming of spring were also behind the creation of one of Bohuslav Martinů's most beautiful cantatas *The Opening of the Wells*. At the festival, the Brno Children's Choir will be joined by soloists Jana Hrochová, Andrea Široká and Jiří Hájek, as well as the actor Alois Švehlík, as they present this piece. As far as works created for child performers are concerned, the children's opera *Brundibár* by Hans Krásá will be also be featured at the concert.

RICHARD STRAUSS SALOME



photo: Set design

10.10. 7 p.m., Janáček Theatre

CONDUCTOR: BALÁZS KOCSÁR
DIRECTOR: ZOLTÁN RÁTÓTI
HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA

That Salome excited me. At first I couldn't recognize almost anything in the stream of sound from the orchestra, but after a while I was easily able to follow the striking melodic motifs, for example a military one, of which there aren't that many in opera... The musical part of Salome's dance. It is the greatest of the whole score. And I also recall the musical illustrations that accompany John's tragic death. They made an indescribable impression on me.

Janáček, in an interview for Dalibor magazine, discussing Strauss's *Salome*, which he saw on 22nd May 1906 at the National Theatre in Prague.

People say that love is so bitter...

Text: Patricie Částková

As the theme of this year's Janáček Brno festival is the rapid development of opera, and the search for new directions and forms for that genre, the opportunity to compare the works of Leoš Janáček and Richard Strauss provides an ideal example of different approaches. Although Janáček and Strauss were close to each other generation-wise – Janáček was born but ten years earlier – their background and careers couldn't have been more different. Strauss was a renowned continuator of the new

German school, a composer conducting his own works around the world with leading orchestras, while Janáček was a distinctive pioneer of an entirely original style, a composer who spent most of his life waiting for the recognition of his works and his greatest creative heyday. Two prominent personalities of modern music, and yet such different views on the musical language and dramatic concept of stage works – one as expressive and decadent as can be, and the other preferring to adhere to realism.

The symphonic and opera work of Richard Strauss was certainly well known to Czechs at the turn of the 20th century. In Brno it was particularly popular with the German cultural community, at whose events Strauss's music was performed regularly. The composer also visited Brno in 1902 and 1911. Janáček had the opportunity to hear Strauss's work in Prague, where it was performed by the Czech Philharmonic and the National Theatre. He also saw the production of Strauss's opera *Salome* there in 1906.

Richard Strauss became acquainted with Oscar Wilde's play of the same name in 1902, when the Austrian poet Anton Linder sent him a copy of the text, which is based on a story from the New Testament, along with an offer to rewrite the play for Strauss in the form of an opera libretto. However, Strauss first took more of an interest in November 1902, when he visited a performance of *Salome* in Berlin. He was captivated by Hedwig Lachmann's translation, and thought that it would be possible to set a German translation of Wilde's play directly to music. In December 1905, *Salome* had its world premiere in Dresden. It was a tremendous success, and although shocked church representatives pointed out that the opera was immoral, the work spread quickly to other German theatres. After seeing *Salome* in Vienna, Gustav Mahler wrote to his wife: "It is certainly the work of a genius, very strong and certainly one of the most important works of our days. A volcano living under a heap of cinders, an underground fire – not just fireworks!" With this opera, Richard Strauss definitively joined the ranks of the world's leading members of the musical avant-garde. *Salome* was a clear step forward compared to his previous stage works. Its speech is much more adventurous and its characterization is stunning: it is still considered one of the masterpieces of twentieth century opera even today.

Janáček was working on the opera *Destiny* when he saw *Salome*, and Strauss's work caught his interest. This is clear from his statement in an interview for *Dalibor* magazine, but also from the fact that he seems to have obtained the libretto for *Salome* at that time, as well as an interpretation of the opera by Otto Roesse. However, it is not the only work by Strauss in Janáček's possession. He didn't like absolutely everything in the opera, which is confirmed by his critical remark aimed at the very large number of players in Strauss's orchestra: "They come with a new banner. They cut out the motif straight from themselves; they constantly show it from the pose of one who suffers. They wring it out using all their instruments to create an unusual roar. In the end, it shrivels up in a raised, trembling hand, monstrous and desiccated (Richard Strauss and others)."

Strauss also had the opportunity to get to know Janáček's work. During his visit to Prague in the middle of October 1916 he visited the second half of a performance of *Jenůfa*, and the composers met after it ended. The fact that Strauss recommended that *Jenůfa* be performed at the Berlin Opera two years later shows that Strauss's praise of the originality of Janáček's work was honest. It is not important whether both composers found inspiration in each other's works, or just the knowledge that they were on different paths. Diversity of approach and of opinion on various matters is an important foundation for art, and both of the masters set off on a new journey which was fundamental for the works to come in the 20th century.

Strauss's *Salome* will be presented to festival visitors by the Budapest opera ensemble, and it will really be a new sensation as its premiere at its home theatre will take place only two weeks before the festival performance.

It is interesting that the beginnings of the opera ensemble in Budapest, today's Hungarian State Opera, lie back in the same period as the beginnings of the Czech theatre in Brno. In 1884 an opulent building was opened at Adrássy út. It housed the Hungarian Royal Opera at that time, which had 34 soloists, 81 ensemble members and 75 orchestra players. Important artists appeared there from the very beginning, e.g. from 1888–91 it was led by Gustav Mahler. Today, Hungary's premier opera house employs hundreds of people in three ensembles, including a children's choir and the only classic ballet ensemble in Hungary. This isn't the first time the Budapest ensemble has come to the festival, as in 2010 it successfully presented Janáček's *Jenůfa* here.

The music director of *Salome* is the chief conductor of the ensemble, Balázs Kocsár, whose artistic career started at the National Theatre of Szeged and the Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra in 1991. Over the following years he has successfully cooperated with opera houses in Frankfurt, Milan, Florence, Rome, Hamburg, Leipzig, Geneva and other places. He has produced more than 80 operas, ranging from Baroque to contemporary works, and he has taken part in the creation of many DVDs and CDs. In 2017 he was awarded the title of Meritorious Artist.

The director of the production is the leading Hungarian actor Zoltán Rátóti. After engagements at theatres in Kaposvár and Szolnok, and at the National Theatre in Budapest, he became the director of the Kaposvári Csíky Gergely Színház theatre in Kaposvár. Apart from the theatre, he is also involved in film acting and dubbing, and currently has over thirty films and thirty-five television roles under his belt. He began directing drama works in 2000; Strauss's *Salome* is his first opera production.

One inspiration for the new production of *Salome* was the many years of work by a team of Hungarian archaeologists led by Prof. Győző Vörös on excavations at the fortress of Machareus in Jordan. It was Herod's palace around 30 BC, and it was there, according to historical sources, that the birthday party of tetrarch Herod Antipas was supposed to have taken place – the party at which Princess Salome danced and St. John the Baptist lost his head. The name Machareus means sword in Greek, and the unique location of the fortress on a hill offers a view of Jerusalem, Masada and Jericho, and all the way to Alexandreion.

Thanks to the excavations led by the Hungarian historian Győző Vörös, the reconstruction of Herod's original palace can finally be visualised. What better place to tell the story of *Salome* if not at its original location? Architect and Set Designer Tamás Dobrosi has not only created a set for the production; he also unveils the details of the legendary palace to the public – for the first time in history. The effects are complemented by the costumes designed by Hajnal Tordai, who has been working with the Opera for close to 55 years and who is responsible for the designs used in more than 500 theatrical and opera productions.

The title role of *Salome* will be played by Dutch soprano Annemarie Kremer. Her singing and acting abilities have been recognised many times, particularly her portrayal of complex female characters. She was nominated as Singer of the Year 2012 by the magazine Opernwelt for her interpretation of Norma. She has recently achieved great success as Manon Lescaut at Deutsche Oper Berlin (conducted by Sir Simon Rattle), Turandot at the Theatro Municipal in São Paulo, Isolde in *Tristan and Isolde* in Linz, Ursula in Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* at the Semperoper in Dresden, and Elisabeth in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* at the Opéra de Monte-Carlo. She isn't appearing as Salome for the first time: it is one of those roles with which she has celebrated success at many theatres, e.g. in Moscow, in São Paulo and Bélem in Brazil, in Hong Kong, Naples and Hannover. The other main roles will be divided up among the Hungarian State Opera's excellent singers: Attila Fekete, Károly Szemerédy, and Gyöngyi Lukács, who has performed at the Scala in Milan, the New York Metropolitan, and Covent Garden in London.



Annemarie Kremer

PAVOL BRESLIK RÓBERT PECHANEC

The tenor Pavol Breslik is one of a number of excellent Slovak singers who have established themselves as performers on leading international stages. At the Janáček Brno 2020 festival, he will perform in the most intimate and difficult singing discipline there is, giving two song recitals.

In the first of them, the singer will perform Janáček's cycle *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* together with pianist Róbert Pechanec. In the second, the cycle *Six Folk Songs (which Gabel Eva sang)* will be joined by songs by Claude Debussy, Joaquín Turina, Alban Berg and Richard Strauss. Janáček will thus be presented both in the context of exceptional romantic impulses as well as surrounded by some of the excellent composers of his time.

Pavol Breslik: I asked myself what I had done

Text: Boris Klepal

This year, the forty-one-year-old Breslik's festival recitals also serve as a presentation for his new recording – *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* and *Six Folk Songs* were released by Orfeo in January this year. However, this wasn't Breslik's first meeting with Janáček. The tenor himself said in an interview about his new CD: "I grew up with Janáček's arrangements of folk songs at music school, which in my case eventually led to the opera. In Berlin, I sang Kudrjás in *Katya Kabanova* and I hope that my voice is mature now."

This modest attitude to his own voice is perhaps exaggerated in Breslik's case. His international career began with an award for "The Most Promising Singer of 2005" from Opernwelt. The influential German magazine had already noticed Breslik when he was a member of the Berlin State Opera, where he sang lyrical roles such as Tamina in *The Magic Flute*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and also Yurodovy in *Boris Godunov*.

Breslik developed the combination of singing technique and the ability to depict a character on such prestigious world-class stages as the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Glyndebourne and Aix-en-Provence festivals, the Bavarian State Opera, and others. He also takes advantage of his skills as an excellent song interpreter. In 2019, he recorded Schubert's cycle *Winter Journey* for the Orfeo label, and after that great German classic he turned to the peculiar and completely different Janáček.

"I asked myself what I had done," said Breslik with a smile. "Some of these songs seem to me to be written like a piano concert accompanied by singing. It is really difficult to find the right interval when you are standing near a piano from which a stream of sound is coming. In contrast with this, the vocal part has only a few notes, and until you are hundred percent sure which piano tone is the correct one it can be very complicated."

The distinctive treatment of musical material is definitely not an end in itself. *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* is one of Janáček's top compositions, and is also a perfect example of how the psychological states of a person torn by passion and uncertainty can be captured accurately via unusual means.

"I think that Janáček was sixty-three when he fell in love again," said Breslik, recalling the circumstances around the origin of *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*. "It was at that time that he also found poems in the local newspaper which inspired him to create a song cycle. He managed to write into music just how passion develops within an individual in an incredible way, as well as how those that experience this feeling struggle with themselves, what their parents have to say about this and also how they can find liberation."

For a long time there were only speculations concerning the author of the poems which Janáček discovered in the Lidové noviny newspaper and set to music. Today it is known that it was Ozeb Kalda (1871–1921), who was among other things also the author of the libretto to the opera *Ogaři* by the composer Jaroslav Křička. Kalda's cycle of poems in the Wallachian dialect about the love of a village boy for a Romany girl named Zefka was a perfect fit for Janáček, and it appeared at the same time as his fresh love for Kamila Stösslová.

Janáček made the cycle "more complicated" in a purely musical sense by the fact that he also added parts for a mezzo-soprano and a small ensemble of three female voices to the major tenor part. However, this allowed him to reinforce the dramatic aspect, which makes the cycle an attractive subject for a theatre production.

"My dream is to present *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* on a theatre stage," said Breslik. "I don't want it to become a director's mas-



Štěpánka Pučálková

The magic of the human voice! It trembles under the direct force of a beating heart, and stops under the pressure of the will. It ripples with sweet melody when one flatters, and proudly tightens its motifs when it wants to repel. It decreases to a whisper when souls are getting to know each other; it disappears with tears and laughter.

Leoš Janáček: From the column *Moje Luhačovice* (*My Luhačovice*)



1.10. and 6.10. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre
(Mozart Hall)

Róbert Pechanec and Pavol Breslik

terpiece, because for me as an opera singer the music remains the alpha and omega of the whole thing. But I would like to offer a theatrical experience to the audience."

Visitors to Breslik's recital on 1st October 2020 at the Reduta will have the opportunity to assess the musical and theatrical qualities of *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* for themselves – and at the very same place where Janáček's cycle had its world premiere ninety-nine years ago. The tenor will perform the cycle according to Leoš Janáček's original stage directions.

"The Slavic repertoire is incredible," Breslik concludes, adding a personal confession. "My soul sings with me when I listen to music, or make it myself. The most important thing is, of course, to show your own, pure emotions."

The theatrical production of *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* will be preceded by a recital from pianist Jan Jiraský in the first half of the evening. Apart from Janáček's cycle *In the Mists*, it will also feature music by Béla Bartók, Kryštof Mařatka and Igor Stravinsky.

Breslik will give another recital at the Reduta Theatre with a programme that will guide listeners through the songs of the beginning of the 20th century. Alongside the tenor, the pianist and excellent specialist in cooperation with singers Róbert Pechanec will also perform at both evenings. Breslik will be joined by mezzo-soprano Štěpánka Pučálková for *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*.

TOMÁŠ KRÁL MATAN PORAT

If an opera is a great mosaic, then songs are those tiny stones which change their colour depending on how the light hits them. Only the human voice can capture and express their story and all the emotions hidden in them – not for nothing is it said that the song is one of the highest forms of performance art. Song recitals in the unique environment of Villa Tugendhat have already become a beautiful festival tradition – this time, spectators can look forward to an excellent programme delivered by the baritone Tomáš Král and Israeli pianist and composer Matan Porat.

The song is a mirror of the soul

Text: Patricie Částková

Tomáš Král is a singer who regularly performs early music. He collaborates with ensembles such as Collegium 1704, Collegium Vocale Gent, Doulce Mémoire, Musica Aeterna, Red Herring, L'Aura Soave Cremona, Cinquecento, Vox Luminis, Holland Baroque orchestra, B'Rock Gent, and others. However, he is also not one to avoid the opera stage, and apart from early music he has also played the role of Stárek in Janáček's *Jenůfa* in Caen, France. He regularly cooperates with broadcasters in the field of radio (ČRo, France Musique, Radio Clara) and television (Mezzo, Arte, Czech Television). His close relationship with songs is demonstrated by his excellent recordings of songs by Bohuslav Martinů and *Moravian Folk Poetry in Songs* by Leoš Janáček, which were created in cooperation with the soprano Martina Janková and the pianist Ivo Kahánek.

He says himself: "As vocalists, we are the luckiest musicians, because we have a text and the message is clearer than for other musicians. Instrumentalists are always jealous of that. The composer is able to deliver the idea through the words. In general, however, I try to deliver the feelings that lie behind the words, and to make it very personal. I have to view it from a personal perspective, so other people can see the picture, or at least imagine their own picture, albeit one based on our same shared human experience and the emotions it contains."

The recital will present the songs of three composers who had an unforgettable share in the rapid development of music at the turn of the 20th century. Mahler's *Songs on the Death of Children* (1901–04) were created for texts selected from a collection dating from 1833–34 by Friedrich Rückert, who wrote them in an attempt to come to terms with the deaths of his two children. This climactic cycle from Mahler's song compositions encompasses a hugely impressive range of emotions ranging through suffering and resignation up to reconciliation.

Debussy's *Trois Chanson de France* was created in 1904 out of love and admiration for the singer Emma Bardac. The composer, himself a lover of the good old days, chose two texts by the 15th century poet Charles d'Orléans and one from the 17th century by Tristan l'Hermite. Janáček was interested in folk music all his life, and it is no wonder that his most extensive song cycle is *Moravian Folk Poetry in Songs*, which conveys the composer's distinctive perspective on our folk heritage. The concert will also feature piano compositions – Janáček's sonata 1. X. 1905 (*From the Street, 1st October 1905*) and Debussy's *Ballade slave*, performed by Matan Porat.

Leoš Janáček, Gustav Mahler and Claude Debussy were all members of one generation, and their works that are to be performed at the

concert were created within only a few years of one another, at the turn of the 20th century. Despite that, they display great variety and document the search of each composer for their own musical language. Each of them is from a different world, yet they are connected by the art of narrating a story through that miniature gem that's called the song.



11.10. 3 p.m., Villa Tugendhat

Tomáš Král



Stravinsky: Pulcinella
Janáček: Concertino
Schönberg: Pierrot lunaire

BRNO CONTEMPORARY ORCHESTRA

Three major 20th century works

Text: Jiří Zahrádka

There are only a few pieces in the international music repertoire that demonstrate so clearly how enormous was the need to find new ways of composing in the first two decades of the 20th century. These trends were not halted even by the events around World War I. The concert will feature two representative works from the history of music which were created within 7 years of each other and formed the basic antipoles of the paths that 20th century music took from that time on. The third piece is a brilliant autonomous work that came into existence completely independent of the trends in music at the time.

Pierrot lunaire (Moon Pierrot), Op. 21 was composed by Arnold Schönberg for a reciter, flute (piccolo), clarinet (bass clarinet), violin, viola, violoncello and piano based on the texts of 21 poems by Albert Giraud. Written with tonal and harmonic freedom using classical forms, this dramatic, tense masterpiece by Schönberg is the absolute peak of expressionist music. The composition consists of three groups of seven short "melodramas" and is written for a specific style of spoken declamation in which the reciter must follow exactly defined musical notation, often oscillating between singing and speaking. It is also interesting that Giacomo Puccini was surprisingly fond of this demanding work.

Igor Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* stands at the opposite pole. The author of the famous "scandalous and musically brutal" ballet *The Rite of Spring* created extremely tender music for his sung ballet *Pulcinella*. It appeared in 1919, commissioned (like *The Rite of Spring*, *Petrushka* and *The Firebird*) by Diaghilev's Russian Ballet. At the end of the 1920s there was a change in Stravinsky's work. Instead of unrestrainedly rhythmic "barbaric" scores, he produced works with more chamber orchestration, which meant a turn towards neoclassicism. The ballet *Pulcinella* is founded on unfinished and unreleased pieces by the 18th century Italian master G. B. Peroglesi. No wonder this ballet remains one of the most charming neoclassical works even today.

Both of the authors fundamentally influenced the subsequent development of music with these compositions. Arnold Schönberg's expressionism and subsequent dodecaphony, just like Igor Stravinsky's neoclassicism, influenced the work of several generations of composers.

A generation older, Janáček did not have such ambitions. He created his own unique and inimitable music which still amazes with its originality. This is certainly the case with 1925's *Concertino*. It is likely that this is the strangest piano concerto ever made, being intended only for the piano, two violins, viola, clarinet, French horn and bassoon, and mainly featuring a dialogue between a single instrument and the piano. This is an approach which is miles away from the late romantic pomp and intellectual concepts of the 20th century. The theme of the composi-



8.10. 7 p.m., Mahen Theatre

Gun-Brit Barkmin

BRNO CONTEMPORARY ORCHESTRA was founded in 2011 as an ensemble specialising in the interpretation of contemporary music. During the nine years of its existence it has earned a respected position among European orchestras with a similar focus. The demanding programme will be arranged and led by the orchestra's permanent conductor Pavel Šnajdr. The piano part will feature an outstanding young pianist, Pavel Zemen, who has collected many prizes for his performances. Václava Krejčí Housková, Jan Hájek and Lukáš Bařák appear in the solo roles. Pierrot is played by the exceptional German soprano Gun-Brit Barkmin!

tion is even stranger: "In the first movement, a hedgehog is angry that the entry to his den in an old linden tree was closed. The second movement is about a squirrel which used to jump around in the treetops but then danced in a cage to please some children. In the third movement, the eyes of a little owl, another owl and other critical denizens of the night gaze conceitedly into the piano strings, and in the fourth movement it looks as if everyone is arguing about a penny – like in a fairy tale." It needs to be added that the work became a sensation at international festivals of contemporary music, where Janáček, despite being the oldest there, created the youngest sounds.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG CHOR PRAGUE PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

Two choral concerts featuring pieces by 20th century Czech and European composers will complement and bring diversity to this festival devoted to Janáček's many works. After four years away from the event, both the Austrian Arnold Schoenberg Chor and Prague Philharmonic Choir will return. The Mozart Hall of the Reduta Theatre and the Besední dům hall will be replete with the sound of male and female voices in mutual harmony as the two ensembles put on an impressive and distinctive vocal display.

Choral concerts at the Janáček Brno 2020 festival

Text: Dominika Volfová

Arnold Schoenberg Chor

Vienna's prestigious mixed choir, the Arnold Schoenberg Chor, performs music from the Renaissance period up to the present. For their festival evening they have created a repertoire that focuses on 20th century works, though there is some overlapping into both neighbouring centuries. The evening will start with a selection from the cycle *Drei Volksliedsätze* by Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951). The composer completed these three folk songs in 1948, making them one of his last choral works, composed in his final period of expanded tonality. This fact, together with inspiration from the melodic forms of the 15th and 16th centuries, distinguishes these harmonically likeable polyphonic chorals from the atonal and dodecaphonic compositions that form the majority of Schoenberg's works.

Two works by one of today's most significant composers, the Estonian Arvo Pärt (1935), will also be presented. His oeuvre, which ranges from neoclassicism through serialism and aleatoricism up to spiritual minimalism, largely consists of choral compositions. *Nunc dimittis* is a 2001 composition for a cappella choir based on a Latin text, *Simeon's hymn*. This work, translated as the "Song of Simeon", is one of the three New Testament canticles (together with *Magnificat* and *Benedictus*) found in the *Gospel of Luke*. The spiritual power of the gradually evolving minimalist composition is complemented in its rich harmonic consonance by hints of rhetorical figures – for example, the climax and the ascending melody, which here specifically expresses the text "lumen ad revelationem", i.e. "light for enlightenment". Pärt's second composition is *Virgencita*, a sober a cappella composition created in 2012 for the Mexican people. It was inspired by the invitation of the composer to Mexico for an important international festival. The urgently escalating composition, thickened with second consonances, is performed with selected verses of prayers in Spanish, and is dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico.

The female part of the choir will perform the cycle *Ten Songs for the Female Choir* by Czech composer Josef Suk (1874–1935). The poetic compositions with the subtitle "set to Slavonic folk songs" contain Mora-

vian, Silesian, Polish, Slovak, Serbian and Kashubian lyrics, and are accompanied by a tricky but impressive score for piano four hands. Reminiscences on the successful stage music for *Radúz and Mahulena*, whose suite was also composed by Suk at that time, are also evident.

The choir will also present a selection from the cycle *Zehn Volksliedsätze* by an Austrian composer who is not very well known in our country, Johann Nepomuk David (1895–1977). He is known mainly for his organ pieces, which he created drawing from his experience as an organist. Apart from these, David is also the author of eight symphonies and other instrumental compositions. It is this cycle of folk songs, completed in 1949, that stands out amongst his choral works.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) divided his *Liebeslieder* between two opus numbers. One of them was given to the *Liebeslieder Walzer*, a set of 'love song waltzes' accompanied by piano four hands. The compositions feature all the complexity and popular style one expects from Brahms. Even though they are a common piece in the choral repertoire today, the composer originally intended them for gatherings in domestic lounges rather than concert halls.

The choir will perform under the leadership of its founder and choir-master Erwin Ortner, with whom it has staged many major choral and opera works and won many awards since it was founded in 1972, including in particular the 2002 Grammy Award for the recording of J. S. Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in cooperation with the conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt.

Prague Philharmonic Choir

The works of Leoš Janáček and two of his Czech contemporaries, crowned by Igor Stravinsky's *The Wedding*, are being prepared for the festival by the Prague Philharmonic Choir. This ensemble with an eighty-five-year tradition, which cooperates with important orchestras and conductors from Europe and beyond, focuses mainly on a cappella, cantata and oratorio works from the classical period up to the present day. At the

concert in the Besední dům, under the leadership of Lukáš Vasilek, they will mainly focus on the modern Czech musical style, featuring composers who had a significant impact on Czech and Moravian choral music at the beginning of the 20th century.

Josef Bohuslav Foerster (1859–1951), who is sometimes considered to be a forerunner of modernism, left behind an extensive legacy of vocal and instrumental works, of which almost a third are songs and chorals. *Die Weihe der Nacht* (*The Consecration of the Night*) is a composition for a female choir and orchestra, or a piano, as will be the case with the Brno performance. His *Abendlied* (*Evening Song*), this time for a male choir, was created only a little later, as is indicated by the opus numbers of the two works (op. 87 and op. 89). The text in German is due to the author's life in Hamburg and Vienna, thanks to which both chorals were published by the prestigious Universal Edition publishing house.

In addition, two works by Leoš Janáček (1854–1928) will be performed by the ensemble, which will divide itself into female and male sections for the works. *The Wolf's Trail* for soprano and tenor solo, female choir and piano is based on a text by Jaroslav Vrchlický. Together with other chorals from the time of the First World War, it is a lyrical counterpart to the setting to music of more dramatic poems by Bezruč. In this period, Janáček's dedication to female choirs has a purely practical explanation – after the departure of many men to the front, there weren't enough male singers left to form viable ensembles, and it was thus necessary to expand the amount of works available for female choirs. *The Wandering Madman*, for soprano, tenor and baritone solo and male a cap-

pella choir was created in Janáček's peak post-war period, i.e. together with the *Sinfonietta* and the *Glagolitic Mass*. The composer took inspiration from a poem he had heard recited by the Indian poet and philosopher Rabindranath Thákur, whose work made a great impression on him. The composition is a reflective look back at his difficult journey through life.

The third of the representatives of Czech modernism is Vítězslav Novák (1870–1949), who initially composed under the influence of his teacher Antonín Dvořák, and was later influenced by the Wallachian and Slovak folklore that is characteristic of his masterpieces. *Four Poems by Otakar Březina for mixed choir* is one of the composer's early yet most remarkable choral works.

The Wedding, a famous work by Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), will be performed at the end of the evening to provide a contrast to Czech modernism. Originally a Russian composer, Stravinsky became more successful in Europe, and especially in Paris, where *The Wedding* was his first premiere after several years (1923). It portrays a traditional Russian country wedding in a theatrical dance format, with Russian rhymes and chants. Its similarity to the composer's most important work, *The Rite of Spring*, is evident – the compositions were created at the same time and they share in particular an unnatural sounding approach to rhythm and accents.

Both richly varied concerts will offer festival visitors a more intimate programme in contrast to the planned opera productions, providing a colourful cross section through Czech and foreign choral works interpreted by high-quality guest performers.



Arnold Schoenberg Chor

photo: Marek Olbrzymek

30.9. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre
(Mozart Hall)

Arnold Schoenberg Chor
Schönberg: Drei Volksliedsätze Op. 49
Pärt: Nunc dimittis
Pärt: Virgencita

Prague Philharmonic Choir
Janáček: The Wolf's Trail, The Wandering Madman
Stravinsky: The Wedding



4.10. 7 p.m., Besední dům

Prague Philharmonic Choir

LEOŠ JANÁČEK THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN



2.10. 7 p.m., Mahen Theatre

CONDUCTOR: MARTIN DOUBRAVSKÝ
DIRECTOR: LINDA KEPRTOVÁ
F. X. ŠALDA THEATRE LIBEREC

"In The Cunning Little Vixen you have to bite through layers and topics, and above all – it differs from other operas, as (though this is probably also typical of Janáček) it does not deal with a large, monumental and often quite unlikely theme. The opera is about 'ordinary human things.' And when I say 'ordinary things', I mean things which are 'important' for people. And that is what is essential, important and touching for me personally about the work. When I am with it every day, constantly and intensively, I feel like The Cunning Little Vixen is Janáček's way of providing us with some kind of therapy."

Linda Keprtová in an interview for KlasikaPlus

About 'ordinary human things'

text: Patricie Částková

Each of Janáček's operas is an original, and this is also true of *The Cunning Little Vixen*, where the worlds of humans and animals intertwine. It is lyrical and melodic; it sparkles with humour, and is both kind and prickly at the same time, as is typical of Janáček's inimitable style. It fascinates the viewer through its earthiness and gentle philosophical approach to the eternal cycle of life and death. The tale about a cunning lady fox has its origins in a regular cartoon series commissioned by the Brno editorial office of the *Lidové noviny* newspaper from painter Stanislav Lolek with text by the writer and journalist Rudolf Těsnohlídek. Janáček's household were regular readers of *Lidové noviny* and Janáček was fascinated by the cartoons. During his holidays in 1921, he started sketching out a script and working on the libretto for a new opera about Vixen Sharp-Ears. Těsnohlídek's story ends with a wedding between Sharp-Ears the vixen and Gold-Spur the fox, but Janáček decided to make a significant change in contrast with the original and let the main character die. As a true dramatist, he felt the need for catharsis. He thus made the story more than a charming portrayal of First Republic life, transforming it into a reflection on the eternal cycle of existence.

Even though Janáček's opera *The Cunning Little Vixen* is inseparably connected with the city of Brno, this time at the festival it will be presented by the opera ensemble of the F. X. Šalda Theatre from Liberec, which premiered it in December 2019. It is the work of Linda Keprtová and her production team: chief conductor Martin Doubravský, scenographer Michal Syrový and costume designer Tomáš Kypta. The Liberec ensemble has recently gained the attention of spectators and reviewers alike through a number of interesting productions – *Jenůfa* (2017), Rossini's *Cinderella* (2018) and Foerster's *Eva* (2015), among others – and it was no different in the case of the last Janáček piece they performed. Festival visitors can thus look forward to seeing a young director's fresh interpretation of one of Leoš Janáček's most popular works.

Linda Keprtová is one of the most sought-after artists of the young generation, and has a special directorial language all of her own. Her productions have twice won the Opera Festival's Critics' Award – for *Don Quichotte* (2013) and *Eva* (2015) – and her work with the Košice opera ensemble was similarly rewarded when she earned the Best Director prize at the DOSKY Awards for the production *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (2013) and the award for the Best Production of the 2015/2016 opera season from Slovak reviewers for Händel's *Alcina*. She says about her attitude to Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*: "Why? Because we can still recognize ourselves within it. A proposition which became the starting point in my personal journey to *The Cunning Little Vixen*. In my personal search, which never ceases to surprise me because I keep on discovering what is 'only' an ordinary person, I find the greatest value that we have lies in opera, an art form that is so detached from ordinary worries. It amazes me again and again how easily each of us can become such a Forester, and how many Schoolmasters, people tormented by love, people for whom there is no way back, we commonly meet without noticing them. And how many of us have let ourselves be grasped by such a Vixen, one whom we have supported right from the start, keeping our fingers crossed for her, projecting our own dreams and wishes onto her, and how many of us have kept on asking like the Forester's wife. Janáček writes about things which are common to the human experience. About the topics which accompany the ordinary days of our existence, and so become unusual. He writes about an order in which new things compete with old, in which every being fights for the possibility to exercise free thought. He writes about those desires which are and will always be the strongest motivation. He writes about all of us. He writes but does not judge, because who knows who we are?"



"The director does not describe, but rather presents her thoughtful reading of images from Janáček's opera cartoon in context. It's a very specific reading, based not only on the score but also upon possible connections. (...) Pavel Vančura plays the Forester as an adept man; he also has long known what Janáček's opera and his part is about. Moderate in speech, he presents all that's essential in detail, with a well-thought-out singing part. He is dressed in ordinary, somehow workaday clothes – he doesn't show anything that's merely impressive to look at, or "nice". And this is what's most beautiful about it. In the end it needs to be emphasized that the whole thing mainly works on an emotional level, that all of it evokes the feelings and experiences of those who will see their own lives reflected in the opera."

On family happiness – *Divadelní noviny*,
Josef Herman, 20.1.2020

"Linda Keprtová can create dramatic situations and is able to work more than skilfully with actors, particularly those who are already used to her. Vixen Sharp-Ears and Gold-Spur are masterful creations in the hands of Livia Obručník Vénosová and Alžběta Vomáčková. They demonstrate spontaneous immediacy in a relationship that matures with time. Seventeen baby foxes – now that is a decent number."

Liberec's *Cunning Little Vixen* – an attempt at understanding, *Harmonie*, Olga Janáčková, 23.12.2019

PHILHARMONIA OCTET PRAGUE

One of the top chamber ensembles that is to appear at the Janáček Brno 2020 festival is the brass-focused PhilHarmonia Octet Prague. One of its founders, Vilém Veverka, gave more details about the ensemble and the repertoire it will present at the concert.

Is there a story behind the foundation of the PhilHarmonia Octet?

Yes, there is a real story behind the formation of the "PhilHarmonia Octet" that can be sought and found. It is a story of real musical friendship, it is a story of a great desire to overcome current musical barriers and clichés and perhaps do something that has never been done before. To show that the brass instrument platform has unprecedented musical potential on the basis of a standard (or slightly expanded) octet. We influenced one another during our studies and what we gained has remained to this day; we feel a constant need to develop the thoughts we share, to move on, and not to stagnate. PhilHarmonia Octet is a proud representative of the contemporary Czech, or rather European brass school. Moreover, I have a feeling that now, after more than ten years of activity on the European scene, we are following our own, i.e. authentic path, and fulfilling the criteria we have set. One proof of this is, for instance, the performance of Gustav Mahler's cycle, and in fact the whole programme we're going to present during the Janáček Brno festival.

The idea to combine the human voice, in this case German baritone Christoph Pohl, with the sound of a brass octet in the song collection *The Boy's Magic Horn* by Gustav Mahler, is beautiful. How did it come?

The simple answer is that if the oboe is the closest instrument to the human voice, we are de facto already halfway to fulfilling our bold intention to perform a baritone and brass octet version of Gustav Mahler's cycle *The Boy's Magic Horn*. It is only bold ideas that push forward the frontiers of human endeavour, and the same applies in art. As an ensemble, we would like to continue to develop, to seek and find new ways of creating and interpreting music. We also want to partially demarcate ourselves with regard to the discipline that is – originally – chamber music. Another of our ambitions – and not the only one – is to realize projects that balance on the borderline between chamber and orchestral performance. Mahler is an excellent example of this, with the combination of the baritone and the customary double bass. If a listener should ask why, I only answer that we have a clear need to offer more. And so this year Mahler has become an integral part of our repertoire and a step into the next era of the PhilHarmonia Octet.

To fully bring out all of the myriad possibilities of music

Text: Patricie Částková

At the festival, PhilHarmonia Octet will present an adaptation – specially created for you – of a suite from Janáček's opera *From the House of the Dead*. What was so attractive for you about this suite that you chose it from amongst all of Janáček's many compositions?

This was a really big topic, a process of reasoning and discussion, which took place even with many real Janáček specialists. I admit that I do not know all of the scores by Leoš Janáček well enough to be able to judge the suitability of the choice. That's why I turned to Jiří Zahrádka, a friend of the conductor Jakub Klecker. I discussed this with him and the material from *From the House of the Dead* seemed to be optimal for this occasion. The suite performed at the festival will actually be a world premiere. And additionally, both of the other compositions we are to play will be performed in Brno as a Moravian premiere. Without exaggeration, this is a programme which deserves the label "maximalist". And this

is the real philosophy of the ensemble, to fully bring out all of the myriad possibilities of music.

The Korean composer Isang Yun and his Octet – is it a trip to another world or can you find a connection with Janáček's music there?

We could surely speculate as to whether and to what degree Isang Yun, who is one of the absolutely most important composers of Asian origin, and one who influenced the post-war European avant-garde, knew Leoš Janáček's music. There is no doubt that he at least encountered Janáček's music simply because Yun was an opera composer himself. Janáček was an innovator who conceived an absolutely specific musical language and means of expression. And Isang Yun's work can certainly be seen in a similar light! His combination of Asian musical aesthetics with post-war European influences produced a unique musical style. Let's not look primarily for a connection, but rather for a similarity in thinking as such, or musical continuity.



photo: Daniel Havel

9.10. 7 p.m., Mahen Theatre

PhilHarmonia Octet Prague



JAN BARTOŠ

*I don't look for the painter behind a picture, but
I do look for the composer's soul in a piece of music:
the work is nothing else but a reflection of the soul.*

Leoš Janáček

Janáček's music has infinitely many aspects

Text: Patricie Částková

"Sonata 1.X. 1905 is one of Janáček's most boldest and most searingly intense works, and Bartoš unerringly captures its painful immediacy with playing of thrilling earthiness coupled with a formidable technique..."

Europadisc, Disc of the Week

"Jan Bartoš draws you closely in to Janáček's compelling sound world, music both exposed and yet somehow personal, lines and details delivered from the very beginning with imagination and deep thought."

Gramophone

"His piano tone is beautifully pellucid, yet with plenty of warmth. [...] Bartoš's runs in the quiet passages are ravishing, reminding one of a string of pearls. [...] Having been the last pupil of Ivan Moravec [...] he makes a good alternative to Firkušný."

Leslie Wright, MusicWeb International

An edition of the Janáček Brno festival without any of the composer's piano pieces is impossible to imagine. They are performed here by leading Czech artists and foreign stars such as Julius Drake and Thomas Adès. This year will also see the presence of a distinctive personality among young Czech pianists, Jan Bartoš. Already an internationally renowned performer, Bartoš is described by the foreign press as "one of Europe's best pianists" and a "sensitive and refined performer". His busy concert programme is not restricted to the works of Leoš Janáček; this year, for example, he will perform five Beethoven piano concertos at the Rudolfinum.

He has a great love for Janáček's work, saying in an interview for Harmonie magazine: "I have been carrying Janáček's music within me for almost my whole life. I started playing his piano compositions when I was a teenager. I had the great fortune to be able to study his music with all my teachers. Each of them had a different view of him. I also gradually became acquainted with his operas and orchestral works, and I have read his correspondence, essays and columns. It took me quite a long time to find the right balance between spontaneity and order. Janáček is sometimes played either too strictly or too loosely. Overly ostentatious drama and passion should also be avoided. Janáček's music has infinitely many aspects – it is often introspective, pensive and mysterious. He was an extremely complicated person and his music had many layers."

Last year, Jan Bartoš recorded Janáček's complete piano works for Supraphon and the CD was immediately met with great acclaim. It earned the prestigious Editor's Choice award from Gramophone magazine along with a place among the 10 classical albums of the decade



13.10. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre
(Mozart Hall)

Jan Bartoš

from America's National Public Radio, whose nomination came with the words "Czech pianist Jan Bartoš, with his own singular voice, has found a way into the composer's head."

At the festival piano recital, Jan Bartoš will present a cross-section through Janáček's piano oeuvre from the early compositions *Thema con variazioni* (also known as the *Zdenka Variations*), which Janáček himself labelled his opus number 1, all the way up to his last great piano work *In the Mists* from 1912. The poetic cycle *On an Overgrown Path* and the sonata 1.X. 1905 ("From the Street, 1st October 1905") will also be performed.

ZEMLINSKY QUARTET JOSEF SUK PIANO QUARTET PAVEL HAAS QUARTET

The concert programme of the Janáček Brno Festival will include string chamber concerts (quartet and quintet). The late 19th and early 20th century was a crucial period for these traditional instrumental ensembles. Composers were exploring new directions for them in terms of sound and techniques, and also with regard to the message of the works themselves. Janáček's work will always be presented at the festival concerts in contrast with composers whose work Janáček knew, and who presented him with interesting possibilities during his remarkable journey of musical development. The performers will be excellent ensembles such as the Zemlinsky Quartet, Josef Suk Piano Quartet and Pavel Haas Quartet.

Leading chamber ensembles with major works from the beginning of the last century

Text: Jiří Zahrádka

The concert by the Zemlinsky Quartet will feature compositions by Leoš Janáček, Josef Suk (Janáček's friend, and a man whose work he admired) and Alexander Zemlinsky, one of the most respected artists in central Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. Early works by these authors, as well as their masterpieces which remind one of youth, will be performed here.

People say that "Janáček has one major flaw – he didn't write more." It is true that we are limited to a relatively small number of opuses if we wish to play and enjoy his unique and beautiful music. Understandably, this has caused instrumentalists, composers and conductors to adapt his works for different instruments. This is the case with the brass sextet *Youth*, composed in 1924, in which Janáček remembers his childhood. The composer Kryštof Mařatka has adapted it for a string quartet, producing a result that sounds surprisingly good. The adaptation presents a cheerful Janáček, unburdened by deeper content, in a composition for the string quartet – in other words, something completely unusual and new. *String Quartet No. 1 in B major* is a work by the young Josef Suk in which we may still observe the influence of his beloved teacher Antonín Dvořák, yet at the same time perceive the hallmarks of Suk's unmistakable compositional style. Alexander Zemlinsky was also influenced by the late romantic tradition, which he connected with some aspects of the Second Viennese School. *String Quartet No. 1 in A major, op. 4* is, like Suk's composition, an early work, but it is considered to be

one of the most important quartet compositions of that period, i.e. before the Second Viennese School rose to prominence.

The concert by the Josef Suk Piano Quartet, an important Czech chamber ensemble, will perform works by leading musicians of the late 19th and early 20th century, and it will also present 'lost' works which have been reconstructed by other composers. The concert will thus feature the *Piano Quartet in A minor* by Gustav Mahler, which is the only surviving chamber work by this great master of symphonic music. The composition was created during his studies at the Vienna Conservatory and was only partly preserved. As it only saw three performances in the year of its creation, it is unclear whether the composition even had a different, more sophisticated form. It was completed many years later (in 1988) by Alfred Schnittke, a distinctive composer of the second half of the 20th century. Based on the preserved 24 bars from the Scherzo, he created a very distinctive piece which is by no means a mere attempt at reconstruction but more of a "remembrance of what was left unfulfilled".

The situation is similar with Janáček's *Piano Trio*, composed in 1908, and now lost in the mists of time. It had its premiere at Brno's Club of Friends of Art in 1909, and was last performed in 1922. It is almost certain that the Trio was destroyed by Janáček himself before later transforming parts of it into a work for the string quartet. The mystery of this 'lost' composition as well as a certain curiosity as to how it would sound with the original instrumentation has led many composers to



3.10. 3 p.m., Löw-Bier Villa

Zemlinsky Quartet

reconstruct the piece on the basis of a reverse transformation from the *Quartet inspired by L. N. Tolstoy's "Kreutzer Sonata"*. Each adaptation brings a different vision, a different perspective. We will enjoy the version by Miloš Štědroň here at the concert.

The third concert will be performed by the world-famous Pavel Haas Quartet, which constitutes one of the Janáček Brno festival's resident ensembles. This year, their programme will be exclusively devoted to Czech composers.

B Bohuslav Martinů's first undisputed masterpiece in the area of chamber music is the *String Quartet No. 2* from 1925. At the time of its creation the composer was already being influenced by his stay in Paris and the musical culture of that city. On the one hand, the quartet represents a continuation of the romantic and impressionist traditions, but it is also something completely new amongst Martinů's chamber works; there are signs of the objective factuality with which he became acquainted in Paris via some works by Stravinsky, for example. The exact opposite of objective factuality is the emotionally charged *Quartet inspired by L. N. Tolstoy's "Kreutzer Sonata"* by Leoš Janáček from 1923, into which the composer placed material from the previously mentioned *Piano Trio* from 1908. Janáček dedicated it to the famous Czech Quartet, which performed its premiere on 17th October 1924. The author, who was seventy at that time, celebrated great success with this work. For example, in 1925 it was performed at the International Society



4.10. 3 p.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

Josef Suk Piano Quartet



11.10. 11 a.m., Reduta Theatre (Mozart Hall)

Pavel Haas Quartet

for Contemporary Music (ISCM) Festival in Venice.

Another work premiered by the Czech Quartet (and Josef Suk on viola) was Antonín Dvořák's foremost chamber composition, the *String Quartet No. 3 in E♭ major*. Unfortunately, it is rarely heard in concert. Dvořák wrote it in 1893 during his stay in America. The piece was composed at around the same time as the *String Quartet in F major* during Dvořák's holiday in Spillville. Janáček admired Dvořák's work immensely and was its great promoter.

THE FACULTY OF MUSIC OF THE JANAČEK ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS

It has become traditional for the Chamber Opera of the Faculty of Music of the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts to cooperate with the Janáček Brno 2020 festival. Just like at the last festival, they will present a contemporary opera work specially created for the occasion. Daniel Šimek, who is also a graduate of composition and a student of orchestra conducting at the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts, was entrusted with the project once again. He will present his production S.A.M.P.O. this year as a world premiere, not only as the author of the music but also as a conductor.

The Faculty of Music of the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts at the Janáček Brno 2020 festival

Text: Markéta Ottová



photo: Marek Olbrzymek

- 4. 10.** 11 a.m., Leoš Janáček Memorial Matinée
10. 10. 11 a.m., Faculty of Music, Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts Composed programme

The opera S.A.M.P.O., the title of which is an abbreviation whose full form can be translated as “*Special Inorganic Medium that Projects Images*”, is the result of cooperation between the abovementioned composer Daniel Šimek and librettist Otto Kauppinen, who is a doctoral student at the Theatre Faculty of the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts. He built the story on a set of Finnish – Karelian myths called the *Kalevala*. The plot of the story is purely contemporary (if even a little ahead of the present), but the characters and their relationships are based on mythology, and sometimes even intertwine with the original text of this northern tale. Generally speaking, the opera is rather intimate in scope. There are only four characters: Väinämöinen, Louhi, Ilmari and Aino, members of a broken up family of scientists working in the pharmaceutical industry. The piece is no less remarkable when it comes to music: the author of the score has

also included electronic devices among the more traditional instruments. He says about the contents of the opera: “Thematically, our work deals with issues concerned with life in an “unrealistic world” (the media in general), the hunt for power and money and their impact on people.”

The story of the opera mirrors a Finnish myth about a mythical mill called *Sampo*, “which could mill an infinite amount of anything for its owner”, and which only the blacksmith Ilmarinen, one of Ilmari’s ancestors, could create. Ilmari himself is a reflection of the blacksmith in the present day, as he is the only scientist who is able to develop S.A.M.P.O. – an extremely rare substance that can reveal a person’s authentic ancient story. However, the question is whether a person is prepared to know the raw truth about their origin. S.A.M.P.O. can thus be as dangerous as it is beneficial, and it becomes the subject of competition between two

pharmaceutical companies named after two mythical warring regions: Kalavala and Pohjola. The intertwining and similarity of the story with its mythical model are increasingly striking as the tale progresses, and they are difficult to separate at the end.

Otto Kauppinen writes: "A distinctive feature of the characters of the Kalevala is that they aren't black or white – none of the heroes is absolutely good, and their decisions are often motivated by negative emotions, lust and greed. This makes the Kalevala story very relevant to contemporary society. That's why the opera S.A.M.P.O. takes the Kalevala as a source of inspiration and updates some of its motifs and characters to create a story from the near future in which one can find parallels with contemporary society."

Otto Kauppinen's role does not end with the creation of the libretto. As a theatre dramaturgy graduate, he will also have the role of the dramaturge in this production, which is a novelty for the Chamber Opera of the Faculty of Music. It has been operating since 1954, but its latest incarnation is connected with the opening of the Orlí Street Theatre in 2012. This place, which is also known as the "Musically Dramatic Lab", offers space exclusively for students' work. The local productions by the Faculty of Music are created by students of singing and instrument playing, and also by opera direction, conducting and music management students. The Theatre Faculty uses the premises mainly for its musical performances, but it's not unusual that students of drama, scenography or musicals also visit the opera.

The Faculty of Music creates one production every semester. The whole rehearsal process takes place in parallel with the academic year, and therefore students involved in the production have to manage everything during their standard study programme, which is extremely demanding. The autumn production usually has its premiere at the end of November, and the whole process, including rehearsals with individual singers, starts before the summer holiday. As the premiere of S.A.M.P.O. is to take place at the Janáček Brno festival on 15th and 16th October, i.e. a month and a half earlier than is common at the Chamber Opera, the whole rehearsal process needs to be sped up. It will thus – and most unusually – take place during the later months of spring, so that the "open dress rehearsal" can take place on 25th June. The summer break will definitely make an impact, both in the positive and negative sense of the word, and so a fast "dusting off" process will take place from September to ensure that the opera is ready for its real premiere at the festival.

As has already been mentioned, the author of the music himself, Daniel Šimek, will be the conductor, and this production will be his debut in the position of conductor at the Chamber Opera. His assistant will be his colleague Patrik Červák, who has one more year of experience. Kateřina Křivánková (maiden name Reichová), a student in the third year

of opera direction, who has already had several successful productions under her belt, is to direct the opera. She says about her new task: "I am both fascinated and frightened by the fact that our children (or the children of our children) could theoretically be the characters in our stories. I have never worked alongside a dramaturge and it will be a new, very precious experience."

Naturally, the students are working under the supervision of their teachers from their main study specializations. Behind all these stands the artistic director of the Chamber Opera, Tomáš Krejčí, who manages the whole musical production, along with the production manager, Zdeňka Vlachovská, who trains the music management students so that they are able to realize the whole project from that angle.

Matinée

Even before the performance of this premiere, the students of the Faculty of Music will present themselves to the festival audience at two matinées, on 4th and 10th October. At the first of these, festival visitors can look forward to a morning concert at the Leoš Janáček Memorial in Brno, while the second one will take them straight inside the Faculty of Music.

The programme at the Memorial will be in the care of students studying the piano, horn, clarinet and violin, accompanied by experienced accompanists and teachers from the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts. Traditionally, Janáček's works will be heard: the first series of the piano cycle *On an Overgrown Path* will be performed by Adam Závodský, who won 3rd place at the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation Competition last year, and Miroslava Vážanská, accompanied by Libuše Pančochová, will conclude the concert with the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. Meanwhile, students from the brass department will perform compositions by Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy. *The Andante for French Horn and Piano* by the first-mentioned composer will be performed by Chisako Bunya, and Debussy's *Première Rhapsodie for Clarinet and Piano* will be performed by Aleš Tvrďík, both with piano accompaniment by Jana Goliášová, the Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Music of the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts.

The matinée on 10th October will take the form of a musical excursion around the faculty building. Visitors will be accompanied by short musical performances while walking through the building – in the individual halls, specialized classrooms and in the corridors themselves. This is not the first time the Faculty of Music has chosen to provide this form of musical experience and the event is very popular among visitors. This year, it will once again be directed by Jana Tajovská Krajkovičová, an opera direction student, who linked the themes of the individual pieces very successfully last year through the reading of letters written by Janáček to his wife Zdeňka. What will she come up with this year? – Let's wait and see!



Authors of S.A.M.P.O. Otto Kauppinen and Daniel Šimek

JAN JIRASKÝ

Jan Jiraský and Janáček's piano

Text: Patricie Částková



1.10. 7 p.m., Reduta Theatre
(Mozart Hall)
3.10. 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.,
Leoš Janáček Memorial

Festival visitors can look forward to visiting places connected with the life and work of Leoš Janáček in Brno, but not only these. The Leoš Janáček Memorial hides a unique bonus in the form of Janáček's 1876 Ehrbar piano, which the composer received as a wedding gift from his father-in-law. Not every pianist would love this instrument with its now-superseded traditional Viennese action, but upon playing it Jan Jiraský realised he'd found 'his piano'.

An outstanding performer and teacher, Jan Jiraský has drawn attention not only as a performer of Janáček's compositions but also through other interesting projects such as the concert performance of J. S. Bach's complete *Well Tempered Clavier* and F. Chopin's complete concert etudes.

As a soloist and chamber musician, Jiraský performs both at home and abroad (Prague Spring, Concentus Moravie, Vienna, Lisbon, Vincenza, Beijing, etc.)

In 2004, he was involved in a unique Czech Radio project in which he recorded Janáček's solo piano compositions on the composer's piano where it stands in Janáček's study. He recalled the creation of the recording while appearing on the Telefonotéka programme: "The atmosphere of Janáček's house, the knowledge that you are sitting at the piano on which *On an Overgrown Path* and the *In the Mists* cycle were created, that Janáček played all of these there. The sound is completely different – it is very close to the dulcimer, which is in fact yet another link to the inspiration drawn by Janáček from Moravian folk music, where the dulcimer has a privileged position. Music-wise, this piano conceals a great many more things that inspire."

Janáček has always been a permanent part of Jiraský's repertoire, and also his studies, as his interpretation of the composer's works is based on the examination of historical resources and manuscripts. He spoke about his approach on the Klasika D-dur programme: "As a performer who interprets the thoughts of the composer, and when it is such a thoughtful composer as Leoš Janáček, I always try to get to the sources of his work. This, of course, requires a certain degree of analysis. I was very surprised when I scrutinized some of his compositions as

photo: Marek Obrzynek

far as I could go, looking at the way they make use of, e.g. prime numbers, various hidden codes and various motifs (for example from *Zdenka Variations*), at how extremely interlinked all his compositions are. I have to say that I discovered many things which would probably have remained hidden to me if I hadn't concentrated on Janáček's piano works from a compositional point of view as well as from the interpretational perspective."

Jan Jiraský's Janáček recitals on the composer's piano are a regular part of the festival. This year, apart from an excellent performance our visitors can also look forward to hearing a renovated instrument, which had its premiere at the festival concert preview in November 2019 after extensive repairs. The Gert Hecher Klavier-Atelier in Vienna was in charge of the demanding restoration. During the work it was found that repairs made in the 1970s did not respect the age of the piano or its Viennese action. This time, all of the parts were replaced by original parts and the piano was thus returned to its original form.

Jan Jiraský will perform at the festival not only at concerts at the Leoš Janáček Memorial but also at a recital which is part of the production of Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* at the Reduta Theatre. The programme composed of Janáček's cycle *In the Mists*, Bartók's *Allegro barbaro*, Stravinsky's *Piano Rag Music* and Mařatka's composition *Onyrik – future and exotic tales for finely de-tempered piano* will offer an interesting insight into the composer's folk music-inspired work.



Gert Hecher and Jan Jiraský
with Janáček's piano

photo: Marek Obrzynek



MAGDALENA MÚČKOVÁ AND DANAJ DULCIMER BAND

The Danaj dulcimer ensemble, with its art manager Magdalena Múčková and first violinist Jan Gajda, is one of those groups that preserve the richness of our folk heritage and reteach it to today's generation via uniquely composed projects. The last festival featured one of these, *Love Herbs*, in which the group presented folk songs from Leoš Janáček's collections in collaboration with the male vocal quartet Q VOX.

Church songs from Znorovy

Text: Patricie Částková and Magdalena Múčková

This time, Danaj is returning to the festival with a new programme prepared specially for Janáček Brno 2020. It is dedicated to church songs from the village of Vnorovy (historically known as Znorovy). Magdalena Múčková explains the background to the creation of the project: "An integral part of Janáček's interests was the support and collection of songs that I call sacred, popular or folk spiritual. Janáček chose to collaborate with (among other people) Hynek Bím in his research into folk songs. Bím's task was to map western Moravia, and it was Bím who got hold of a collection of old church songs during his repeated collections in the village of Vnorovy. He paid a lot of attention to them despite the fact that they were only a small part of the total number of songs he recorded (as evidenced by the sixteen letters of correspondence between him and Janáček in which he deals with this topic). After all, it was in Vnorovy that Janáček found refuge with his uncle Jan Janáček (who worked as a pastor there from 1870–1878) after his father's untimely death in 1866. He probably got to know the local spiritual songs in person, as he played the organ at the Vnorovy church gallery during his time there."

The focus of the songs is directly linked to the church year. Some of them can be found in the hymn book *Slavíček rájský* by Jan Josef Božan from 1719, which was the basic comparative material still used at the Vnorovy parish church services at the time of collection in 1911. Bím wrote down (and partially also recorded on a phonograph) songs for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and the celebration of the saints, as well as songs whose content is related to events in Christian life.

The programme 'Church songs from Znorovy' will reveal this still undiscovered pearl of folk music culture which until now has remained



7.10. 7 p.m., Red Church (the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren of Jan Amos Comenius)

Singers from the Danaj Dulcimer Band

off the radar for folk music lovers. The selection of songs will allow us to look back one hundred years at a repertoire deeply rooted in the musical and pious environment of this village in the Slovácko region. Selected singing soloists, as well as choirs from the village and its surroundings, perform with an organ, chamber instrument or a capella accompaniment."

12. 10. 2020

A Day with Janáček

A festival can be so much more than just visits to opera performances and concerts. Walk in the footsteps of Leoš Janáček through Brno and discover the places where he created his works, and which inspired him. Take a look behind the theatre stage and experience the opera house from a normally unavailable perspective. Simply experience one day with Janáček!

Walk in Janáček's footsteps through Brno

The experience begins in the morning, with a walk around the places where Janáček lived and worked, where he experienced his successes or just met with friends. The guided tour will also include, exceptionally, a tour of the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady in Old Brno, the Leoš Janáček Memorial and the Mahen Theatre. Route: Mendel Square – Vegetable Market – Česká – Solniční – Žerotín Square – Smetanova – Malinovsky Square. Length: approx. 3 hours; starting point: in front of the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady in Old Brno.

9.30 a.m. in Czech, guide Jiří Zahrádka
10 a.m. in English, guide Jan Špaček

Tickets can be bought at:

ticbrno.cz/predprodej/titul-po-stopach-leose-janacka
ticbrno.cz/predprodej/titul-in-the-footsteps-of-leos-janacek

Those wishing to go for a walk around Brno on their own will not miss out on the opportunity to visit the Leoš Janáček Memorial and enjoy the atmosphere of the Master's study and see the new exhibition, as it will be open specially for the festival on Monday, 12th October from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

After such a walk, one needs to go for lunch, of course. What did the most frequently performed Czech opera composer enjoy eating? Selected Brno restaurants and cafés will offer a menu composed of the Master's favourite food or a dessert based on a recipe from Janáček's housekeeper.

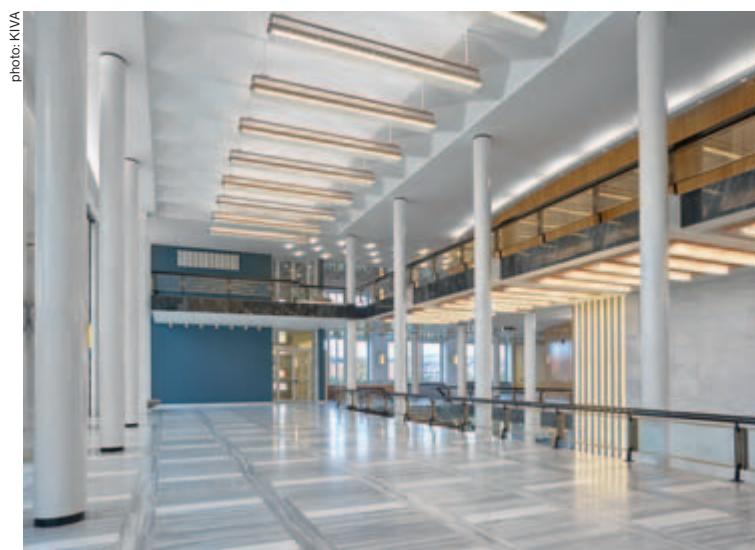
Check out www.janacek-brno.cz and www.leosjanacek.eu.

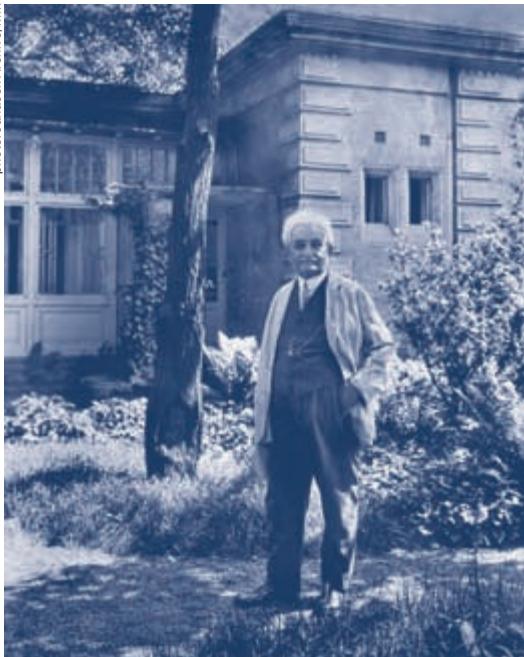


Open House with Janáček

The Janáček Theatre will come alive straight off in the morning, too. The festival is also intended for children and students, and the opera house as well as Leoš Janáček's music will belong to them before noon. As part of the Open House with Janáček, an unconventional tour of the theatre will be prepared for such younger visitors, with a programme in which not only members of the opera ensemble will take part, but also students from the Brno Conservatory.

The programme begins at
2 p.m., 2.30 p.m., 3 p.m. (in English) and 3.30 p.m.
Each tour lasts approximately 60 minutes.
Tickets are available at www.janacek-brno.cz.





Leoš Janáček in the garden in front of his house, which today is his Memorial.



A step behind the curtain with L. Janáček's opera *Destiny*

The highlight of the whole day's programme will be the popular Step Behind the Curtain event, which is devoted to Janáček's opera *Destiny*. Do you want to know how Janáček found the inspiration to create *Destiny* and why Act 1 takes place in Luhačovice? And find out exactly who Kamila Urválková was, and understand the role played by red roses in the opera? Then take a step behind the curtain with us and set off on an interactive, adventurous and – most importantly – entertaining journey into the heart of this opera production with the soloists, choir and orchestra of the Janáček Opera, National Theatre Brno. Our chief conductor, Marko Ivanović, will be your guide.

Tickets at www.janacek-brno.cz.



photo: Marek Olbrzymek

Janáček's world comes alive in Brno

You can walk in the footsteps of the great composer and experience Brno's cultural life over the following festival days as well. The best way to start is to visit a certain website dedicated to Janáček and his work. You can discover many interesting facts there, as well as a list of Brno institutions associated with the composer. Just type www.leosjanacek.eu. It is good to combine theory with practice, and the best thing for that is to go for a walk before a performance or concert. Brno's Tourist Information Centre has prepared a trail through Brno that connects the locations and buildings in which Janáček lived and worked. The 5.6 km route allows you to link Janáček's works with the places that were an inspiration for them, and where they were created. You can find more information at www.leosjanacek.eu/stezka/

Be sure to visit the Leoš Janáček Memorial – a small house at 14 Smetanova Street, in the garden of the former organ school. Janáček moved there in 1910 with his wife Zdeňka and housekeeper Marie Stejskalová. Janáček spent the last eighteen years of his life there, and it was the place where all the works of his creative peak were composed. Music experts can access a study room at the Department of the History of Music at the Moravian Museum in the former organ school. The building also contains the Leoš Janáček Archive, a collection listed in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. You can find the manuscripts of all Janáček's compositions and librettos there. More information at www.mzm.cz/pamatnik-leose-janacka/

The Augustinian monastery in Old Brno is connected with Janáček's youth, and houses two exhibitions dedicated to the composer. The Janáček in Brno exhibition in the entrance hall of the Augustinian Abbey in Old Brno at Mendel Square is open every working day from 7 a.m.–6.30 p.m. There is also Leoš Janáček and the Music of Brno's Augustinians, an exhibition on the premises of the Old Brno Abbey Museum. It presents the history of music-making at the Brno Augustinian monastery, as well as the composers connected with it, particularly Pavel Křížkovský and Leoš Janáček. You can also go for a one-day trip to see Janáček's home town, Hukvaldy, or his favourite spa, Luhačovice. These trips can be booked, including transport and a guide, from Brno Day Trips.

And, of course, you must not miss Brno's world-famous functionalist monuments, such as Villa Tugendhat. Festival concerts take place there, just as they do at the Löw-Berl Villa. However, there is much more to see in Brno, and you can find a comprehensive and well-arranged list of things that can be experienced here at the city's official tourist portal, www.gotobrno.cz. Everything is easier for you if you get a BRNOPAS – a tourist card which offers discounted entry to tourist attractions and includes a ticket for use on public transport in Brno.

JANÁČEK BRNO 2020

Information

Venues

Janáček Theatre
Rooseveltova ul. 7

Mahen Theatre
Malinovského nám. 1

Reduta Theatre
Zelný trh 4

Orlí Street Theatre
Orlí 19

MF JAMU
Komenského nám. 6

Villa Tugendhat
Černopolní 45

Leoš Janáček Memorial
Smetanova 14

Löw-Beer Villa
Drobného 22

Besední dům
Komenského nám. 8

Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady
Mendlovo náměstí 1b

Red Church (the Evangelical Church of the Czech
Brethren of Jan Amos Comenius)
Komenského náměstí 4

NTB Customer Centre

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tel: +420 542 158 120
email: obchodni@ndbrno.cz

Online advance sales: www.janacek-brno.cz
Tickets can also be purchased at the venue one
hour before the performance.

Leoš Janáček Memorial

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Red Church

MF JAMU

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 Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady
Mendlovo náměstí



OFF PROGRAMME

Introductory Lectures

Always 45 minutes before the beginning of the opera performance, with the lecturers Prof. Miloš Štědroň and Assoc. Prof. Jiří Zahrádka.

Act of Piety at Leoš Janáček's Grave

11.10.2020, 1 p.m., Central Cemetery Brno
Czech Academic Choir, choirmaster Michal Vajda

International Musicological Colloquium

Keeping the Music Alive: Preserving Musical Manuscripts

12. – 14.10.2020, Masaryk University,
Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts
The Institute of Musicology invites you to the International Musicological Colloquium "Music and its memory: care for musical resources" which is being held on the occasion of the founding of the Music Archive of the Moravian Museum (today the Department of the History of Music) and the 99th anniversary of the establishment of the Seminar for Musical Science at Masaryk University (today the Department of Musicology). The conference will focus on the activities of music museum institutions engaged in collecting activities and the scientific processing of collection funds. Contributions regarding the history of institutions and their role in the creation of specific musical and cultural circles are welcome. This topic also includes issues concerned with the storage, registration and cataloguing of musical sources and relics, their processing and the options for their further use in musical practice (catalogues, critical editions, etc.).

Leoš Janáček: The Wood Spoke

29.9.2020, 5 p.m., Reduta Theatre
Brno Conservatory

Three stories about love, life and death selected from Leoš Janáček's works.
Conductor/Music director: Tomáš Krejčí
Choreographer: Ladislava Košíková
Director and dramaturge: Hana Mikolášková

Exhibition at the Moravian Museum for the International Festival Janáček Brno 2020

Exhibition devoted to Leoš Janáček's opera Destiny

28.9. – 16.10.2020, Janáček Theatre foyer
The exhibition in the foyer of the Janáček Theatre will be devoted to Janáček's fourth opera *Destiny*. It will mainly show pictorial material related to the opera as well as basic information about its creation and the problems with the first production. The exhibition will also feature memories from the performance of *Destiny* in Brno.

A new exhibition at the Leoš Janáček Memorial and an exhibition of pictures by Christian Macketanz

8.10. – 16.10.2020, vernissage on 8.10. at 5 p.m.
At the festival, a new, permanent chamber exhibition will be opened at the Leoš Janáček Memorial. It will be devoted to the composer's work and events he experienced in the house in the garden of the organ school, into which he moved in 1910. The exhibition will be accompanied by a short-term exhibition of works by a leading middle-aged German painter, Christian Macketanz, who is known (among other things) for his unique portraits of prominent figures from world history.

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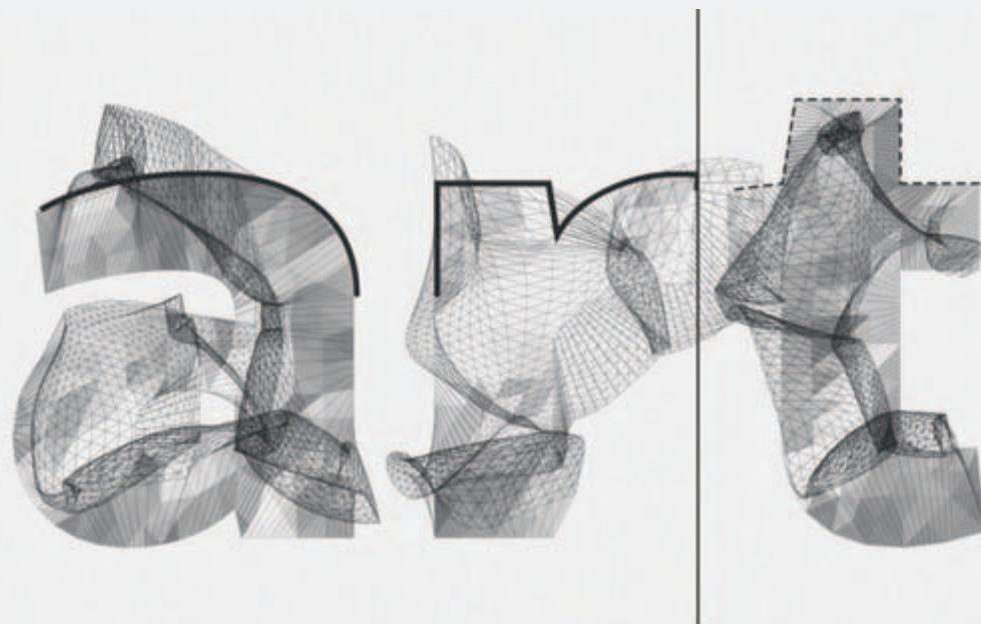
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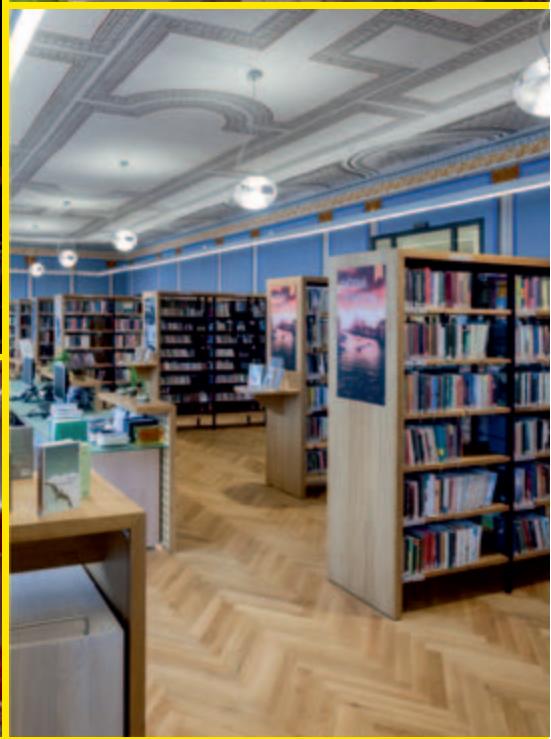


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The author of the main visual concept for this year's Janáček Brno Festival is the painter Jakub Špaňhel, who, at the instigation of graphic artist Robert V. Novák, created a portrait of Leoš Janáček. A video spot of the work on the portrait was created – an official trailer for the festival.

Jakub Špaňhel (*1976, Karviná) is a leading Czech painter of the middle generation. From 1995-2002 he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (Prof. Jiří David, Prof. Milan Knížák). He has had many solo exhibitions both in the Czech Republic and abroad (National Gallery Prague; Prague City Gallery; Václav Špála Gallery; the Gallery of Fine Arts in Ostrava; the Frameless Gallery, London; Bleibtreu Galerie, Berlin; and others). He has taken part in important exhibitions of paintings from his generation (e.g. Galerie Rudolfinum; Wanneck Gallery; Hangar-7, Salzburg; Power Station of Art, Shanghai; Kunstforum Ostdeutsche Galerie, Regensburg, etc.) He created an altar painting and diffusing glass windows for the Church of the Holy Spirit in Ostrava-Zábřeh.