

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

# MARTINŮREVUE

september—december 2013 / vol. XIII / no. 3

essay on the opera ariane

opera alexandre bis

martinů on wagner

new publications

events / news



# bohuslav martinů days 2013



**1 December 2013**

7.30 pm | HAMU Prague | Martinů Hall

**CONCERT OF THE WINNERS  
OF THE BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ  
FOUNDATION COMPETITION**

**9 December 2013**

7.30 pm | HAMU Prague | Martinů Hall

**CONCERT ON THE OCCASION  
OF 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY OF VIKTOR KALABIS  
(in memoriam), composer  
and past president of the  
Bohuslav Martinů Foundation**

*Viktor Kalabis*  
*String Quartet No. 2*

*Viktor Kalabis*  
*String Quartet No. 6 „Homage to Bohuslav Martinů“*  
*Bohuslav Martinů*  
*String Quartet No. 5 / H. 268*

**Martinů Quartet**

**11+12+13 December 2013**

7.30 pm | Praha | Rudolfinum | Dvořákova síň

*Bohuslav Martinů*  
*Double Concerto for Two String Orchestras,  
Piano and Timpani / H. 271*

*Anton Bruckner*  
*Symphony No. 9 D minor*

**Czech Philharmonic Orchestra**  
**Kent Nagano** Conductor



NADAČNÍ FOND  
A. DVOŘÁKA  
pro mladé interprety



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**into the Martinů Center  
in Polička**  
*LUCIE JIRGLOVÁ*

## operas

**Mirandolina / H. 346**

**5+16+29 January 2014**

**5+15 February 2014**

**19+25 March 2014**

**1 June 2014**

> Antonín Dvořák Theatre, Ostrava, CZ

[www.ndm.cz](http://www.ndm.cz)

Robert Jindra (Conductor)

Jiří Nekvasil (Director)

Daniel Dvořák (Stage Designer)



**Mirandolina / H. 346**

**30 April 2014 / premiere**

**2+3+9+11 May 2014 / additional performances**

> Cuvillies-Theater, Munich, Germany

[www.bayerische.staatsoper.de](http://www.bayerische.staatsoper.de)

The Opera Studio of the Bavarian State Opera

Alexander Prior (Conductor)

Mária Celeng / Elsa Benoit (Soprano)

adaptation for chamber

orchestra by the Dutch

composers Anthony Fiumura

and Bart Visman

BAYERISCHE  
STAATSOPER

**The Soldier and the Dancer / H. 162**

**25 January 2014**

> J. K. Tyl Theatre, Plzeň, CZ

[www.djkt-plzen.cz](http://www.djkt-plzen.cz)

Petr Kofroň (Conductor)

Tomáš Pilař (Director)

## ballets

**The Strangler / H. 317**

**24 January 2014 / 7+11+21 March 2014**

**7 May 2014 / all performances start at 6.30 pm**

> Jiří Myron Theatre, Ostrava

[www.ndm.cz](http://www.ndm.cz)

Jakub Žídek (Music Arrangement)

Nataša Novotná (Choreographer)



**Who is the Most Powerful  
in the World? / H. 133**

**14+15+16 January 2014**

/ 9 am + 10.45 am

> Šimon and Juda Church

[www.prazskykomornibalet.cz](http://www.prazskykomornibalet.cz)

Prague Chamber Ballet

Hana Polanská Turečková

(Choreographer and Director)

## concert

**Concerto for Violoncello**

**and Orchestra No. 1 / H. 196**

**20 March 2014**

> Congress Center Zlín, Zlín, CZ

[www.filharmonie-zlin.cz](http://www.filharmonie-zlin.cz)

Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic Orchestra

Michaela Fukačová (Violoncello)

Stanislav Vavřínek (Conductor)



FB  
FM  
Filharmonie  
Bohuslava Martinů

# jakub hrůša conducting martinů's works in spring 2014

**Toccata e due canzoni / H. 311**

**14 March 2014**

> Köln, Germany

WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln

WDR®

**19 March 2014**

> Ottawa, Australia

National Arts Centre Orchestra



NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE  
CENTRE NATIONAL DES ARTS

**Concerto for Violoncello**

**and Orchestra No. 1 / H. 196**

**2 May 2014**

> Helsinki, Finland

Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Sol Gabetta (Cello)

**23 May 2014**

> Wien, Austria

Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Johannes Moser (Cello)



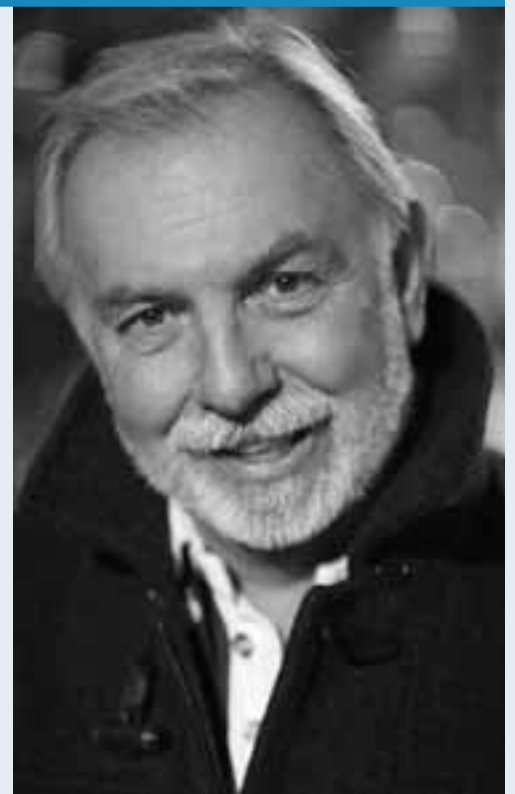
# brian large

Born in 1939, Brian Large studied at the Royal Academy of Music and the University of London where he obtained doctorates in music and philosophy. Postgraduate work took him to Prague. His biography of Martinů, the first to be written in the English language, was conceived after several years of research spent in Czechoslovakia and France where he worked closely with Charlotte Martinů.

He joined the British Broadcasting Corporation as a producer with responsibility for opera and music programmes for the new BBC 2 television channel. He directed Benjamin Britten's opera *Owen Wingrave* which was commissioned by the Corporation. BBC 2 also produced a documentary feature about the life of Martinů which helped to bring about a greater awareness of

the composer in Britain, a programme which many recall with affection. Brian was an advisor for this documentary, which was entitled „Music of Exile“. Written by Anthony Burgess and produced and directed by Anthony Wilkinson in 1967, it was screened recently on 27 November 2012 on Martinů Festtage in Basel.

Since leaving the BBC in 1980 he has directed numerous television productions for many opera houses including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, the Marriinsky Theatre and Covent Garden. He has directed many of the New Year's Day concerts from Vienna which are seen by audiences of millions across the world. His work has been widely acclaimed and he is regarded internationally as one of the pre-eminent producers of music programmes for television. ■



## IMC NEWS



WE WOULD LIKE to announce that **Mr. PATRICE CHEVY** has left his position on the IMC Board. He has been active in supporting the life and music of Bohuslav Martinů well before the IMC was officially established

in 2008. He was a keen and enthusiastic Board member, particularly in organizing the 2010 Board meeting in Paris.

Patrice Chevy was born in Limoges, France in 1951, and studied at the École Polytechnique in Paris.

Although he spent his working days as a director of an oil company, he has always had a strong interest in music, especially Czech music. His love for Martinů gave him the opportunity to meet Charlotte and become her close friend during the last years of her life. Although he now enjoys a very happy retirement and travels around the world, this passion for music remains one of his main interests in life.

Patrice's involvement in the activities of IMC was intense during these last years. He was often contacted by musicologists and musicians, and has tried to pass his great love of

Martinů's music to new generations and help musicologists with issues surrounding his biography and works. His contact with Giorgio Koukl following his recordings of the complete piano music greatly helped the production of the new album of songs. He is currently working on a book about Martinů's residences in Paris, which he describes below:

“Following the suggestions of many friends, I have undertaken to write a guide for Martinů lovers concerning his 17 years in Paris. The basis of this idea was to follow him through his

different (and many!) addresses during his stay. Then I decided to extend the scope to places important to both him and other major personalities. I also relate his works to these places, as well as the ones composed during his Czech holidays. Finally I describe what Parisian cultural life was like at the time of his stay. I have tried to give a new perspective to these fundamental years in Martinů's development.”

We look forward to seeing this interesting book and wish Patrice all the best in his retirement. ■

## OBITUARY



**ON 24 AUGUST 2013, MAX KELLERHALS, a Swiss priest and contemporary of Bohuslav Martinů, died at the age of 95.**

From 2002 he lived in a home for the aged in Frick, near Basel, where every Sunday he served mass and every day listened to music, including that of his dear friend Bohuslav Martinů.

Max Kellerhals was a vital source of information about Bohuslav Martinů. The two met in 1955 in Switzerland and remained in close contact during the composer's final years. Kellerhals was one of the founding members of the International Martinů Circle and an ardent champion of Martinů's music for many decades.

*We published an extensive article on Max Kellerhals in Martinů Revue 2012/2, p. 4, on-line: [www.martinu.cz/english/novinky.php](http://www.martinu.cz/english/novinky.php)*



**MARTINŮ REVUE** (formerly Bohuslav Martinů Newsletter) is published by the International Martinů Circle in collaboration with the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague with the financial support of the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation. **Published with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of Czech Republic, code No. MKCRX005QSHQ**

#### Editors

Zoja Seyčková & Lucie Harasim,  
Bohuslav Martinů Institute  
Justin Krawitz (English language editor)

#### Publisher's Office

**International Martinů Circle, o.s.**  
IČ: 22688846  
Bořanovická 14, 182 00 Praha 8-Kobylisy,  
Czech Republic  
e-mail: [incircle@martinu.cz](mailto:incircle@martinu.cz)  
[www.martinu.cz](http://www.martinu.cz)

#### Translation Hilda Hearne

#### Photographs

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

#### Graphic Design David E. Cíglér

#### Printing BOOM TISK, spol. s r.o.

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

#### Cover

Alexandre Bis.  
Photo of the performance at Opernhaus  
in Zürich, © Monika Rittershaus, 2013.



ISSN 1803-8514  
MK ČR E 18911

[www.martinu.cz](http://www.martinu.cz)

THE PREVIOUS ISSUE



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

Bohuslav Martinů Center  
Tylova 114, 572 01 Polička  
tel.: +420 461 723 857  
[www.cbmpolicka.cz](http://www.cbmpolicka.cz)



## incircle news

### IMC BOARD MEETING

**THE ANNUAL BOARD MEETING** of the IMC will take place on **14 December 2013** at 10 am in Prague at the seat of the Martinů Foundation. Please communicate any items you would like considered to a Board member or e-mail: [incircle@martinu.cz](mailto:incircle@martinu.cz)

That afternoon, at 2:30pm, all IMC members are invited to a concert and talk by singer Roman Janál and pianist Ivo Kahánek. We are grateful for IMC Board member Geoff Piper, who has sponsored this event.

Programme – B. Martinů: *Nový Špalíček* (whole piece),  
*Písničky na jednu stránku* (excerpts),  
*Three Czech Dances for piano*

All IMC members and Martinů fans are cordially welcome!

### CHANGES ON IMC BOARD

**WE REGRETTABLY ANNOUNCE** that Patrice Chevy will be retiring from the Board this year. A longtime supporter of Martinů's music and a friend of Charlotte, we wish him thanks for all his efforts. Please see page 4 for more information.

### MARTINŮ STRINGS PRAGUE ENSEMBLE

**JAROSLAV ŠONSKÝ**, a member of the IMC Board, has founded the 12-member ensemble "Martinů Strings Prague" in the Czech capital. The ensemble has already given concerts in Prague and Sweden. In 2014, the Year of Czech Music, the ensemble is scheduled to perform in Slovakia, Budapest and Switzerland, as well as at the American Spring festival in Prague, *Divertimento (Serenáda IV)* and *Concerto for flute, violin and orchestra* (arr. for flute, violin and piano by Jaroslav Šonský).

### MARTINŮ ON FACEBOOK

**MARTINŮ ON FACEBOOK!** Please follow Bohuslav Martinů and the IMC on Facebook. In cooperation with the Bohuslav Martinů Institute, the IMC holds online contests to win CD's with works of Martinů.

### 2013 SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS

**WE WOULD REQUEST** members to forward their 2013 subscription payments through their usual channels. A list of our international contacts:

- > Phillip C. Boswell (Great Britain), [pcboswell78@gmail.com](mailto:pcboswell78@gmail.com), 3 Warren Croft, Storrington, RH20 4BE Great Britain
- > Geoff Piper (Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria), [pipergeo@me.com](mailto:pipergeo@me.com), +352-474269, 24, rue des Cerisiers, Luxembourg, L – 1322 Luxembourg
- > Gert Floor (Netherlands), [gsmfloor@xs4all.nl](mailto:gsmfloor@xs4all.nl), +31725095262, Gortersweg 6, 1871 CC Schoorl, Netherlands
- > Robert Simon (USA), [rcs7684@yahoo.com](mailto:rcs7684@yahoo.com), mobile number 216-973-7716, 322 E Colfax Ave #103, South Bend, IN 46617, USA
- > Jaroslav Šonský (Sweden), [jaroslav@sonsky.se](mailto:jaroslav@sonsky.se), +4611318475, Knopgatan 6, 603 85 Norrköping, Sweden
- > Lucie and Clemens Harasim (Germany), [lucie@martinu.cz](mailto:lucie@martinu.cz), +49 152 581 668 32

Members who pay their subscriptions via the Dvořák Society should continue to do so. Those wishing to pay in Czech currency or by cash should contact us at [incircle@martinu.cz](mailto:incircle@martinu.cz) ■



Jakub Hruša,  
President of IMC

Magdalena Kožená,  
IMC Patron

### INTERNATIONAL MARTINŮ CIRCLE GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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

### MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

- ▶ YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION:  
**25 EUR / 30 USD / 18 GBP / 450 CZK**
- ▶ SUBSCRIPTION FOR CORPORATE MEMBERS: **100 EUR**  
includes 10 copies of each *Revue*  
PLUS 3 copies of the special limited edition CD
- ▶ SPECIAL RATE for music students under 25 years of age:  
**10 EUR / 250 CZK**
- ▶ SINGLE COPIES OF THE REVUE:  
**80 CZK / 3 EUR / 4 USD + postage**

For further details and for single copies of the *Martinů Revue* contact:

Jana Honzíková

tel.: +420 284 691 529,

+420 731 419 873

e-mail: [incircle@martinu.cz](mailto:incircle@martinu.cz)

The International Martinů Circle, o.s.  
Bořanovická 1779/14  
182 00 Praha 8-Kobylisy, CZ

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- > Indiana University Libraries, (Keith Cochran), Bloomington, USA
- > Kevin Faulkner, Norwich, Great Britain
- > Jan Kučera, Kladno, Czech Republic
- > Markéta Rajmontová, Turnov, Czech Republic
- > Barbara Renton, Domus Musicae Slavicae, USA
- > Marina Garuffi Santos, José dos Campos S.P, Brazil

# martinů / alexand

/ SEVERIN KOLB

Why not centre the production of Bohuslav Martinů's opera *Alexandre bis, opera buffa in 1 act, H. 255* around a single oversized canopy bed? Ultimately, everything comes down to it in the Zurich production: it is the workplace of the maid, *locus delicti*, a surreal dream world, courtroom and finally the place of emancipation. While the crowd is still chattering, the maid Philomène prances onto the stage wearing a mask and smoking lasciviously. A little later, Alexandre – in a hurry – asks her to bring his suitcases for a secret mission. She fulfils her task reluctantly, probably

suspenders seem to originate from another century. He represents bygone values, but cannot fully elude the new decadent times as he dances with Philomène and rides on her duster – an obviously phallic allusion – while bemoaning the supposed inconstancy of the real Alexandre.

Alexandre's wife Armande is not any less coquettish than Philomène. She appears at first with a sleeping mask, but later dressed in a frilled skirt with a sure taste for post-war fashion. The Zurich Armande emphasizes over and over again that she is a „respectable woman“, since she hardly seems as such at

Suddenly, the doorbell rings and Oscar flees helter-skelter.

Contrary to the ladies in „Così fan tutte“ and the printed libretto of „Alexandre bis“, the Zurich Armande does not seem in any way bewildered or brought to a state of inner conflict by the appearance of Alexandre's rustic American cousin. From the very first moment on, they are on a par with each other. Armande is as much playing a game with Alexandre as he is with her. Thus, she is engaging in the role playing and disappears with her guest under the duvet in spite of the protest of Philomène and Alexandre's portrait.



because haughtiness is attractive and as we learn later, she herself is interested in her mistress's husband and does not want him to leave.

On the back rest of the bed sits the portrait of Alexandre – the character that convinced Martinů to set André Wurmser's libretto to music – wearing an old-fashioned, golden frame around the upper part of his body. But something about the portrait is wrong: this otherwise splendidly dressed double does not wear trousers. This is compounded by the fact that his old-fashioned underwear and sock

face value. Because of her character, it is not easy to condemn Alexandre for putting her constancy to the test. For this, he plans to enact a fake departure and to return shaved and masked as his own cousin from America.

As soon as Alexandre has left the stage, Armande's admirer Oscar, a hyperactive sports nut wearing an aviator's cap, busts in the door and besieges her with his courtship. In fact, Armande stays a „respectable woman“, but she does not mind Oscar diving under her skirt for a moment. Playing a „respectable woman“ is obviously nothing but coquetry for her.

Abruptly, Armande finds herself in a feverish dream, in which she processes her feelings of excitement and guilt. Her bed is drenched in mysterious blue-green light. Various apparitions take turns, as in a round dance. Alexandre and his cousin fight with daggers in a grotesquely comical country-dance but are unable to hurt each other. Armande is tied to the post of the canopy bed, the scene of the crime, to await her trial. In her fear, she invokes the goddess of matrimony who is impersonated by the maid. Ironically, Philomène herself has her eye on Alexandre and is in no way a flag bearer for marital fidelity. Wrapped in a bed sheet,

# re bis in zurich



PHOTOS: MONIKA RITTERSHAUS



she proclaims the verdict in mechanistic coloraturas: „You are damned!“ Oscar whips her, while more and more huge, dancing, pale faces appear out of the dark and surround her. But suddenly, Oscar defects to her and is able to disperse the spooky appearances. Who would have expected such an abyss in the soul of such a light-hearted Armande who so much seemed to love to play with fire?

But then, day breaks and Armande is herself again. Affected by the experiences of the previous day and by her dreams, she decides to leave her husband for Oscar, whose bicycle

lessons appeal more to her now. From the very beginning of the play, Armande has been emancipated and independent from Alexandre. So what is the difference between now and before? Not much, she just decides to leave him now, but it could have been earlier as well. This Armande is not in need of emancipation.

And what about the punch line of the opera? Alexandre loses his wife by his frivolous test. But was it really frivolous? The saying: „There are never two without three“ accounts for Alexandre as well. At the end of the opera, the former maid Philomène drops herself into the

canopy bed with exactly the same gestures as Armande the day before. No doubt, Philomène's rise from maid to mistress is the real process of emancipation in this production. ■

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**Zürich, Opernhaus, 21 September 2013**

Further performances are to be announced.

*German translation:* Kurt Honolka

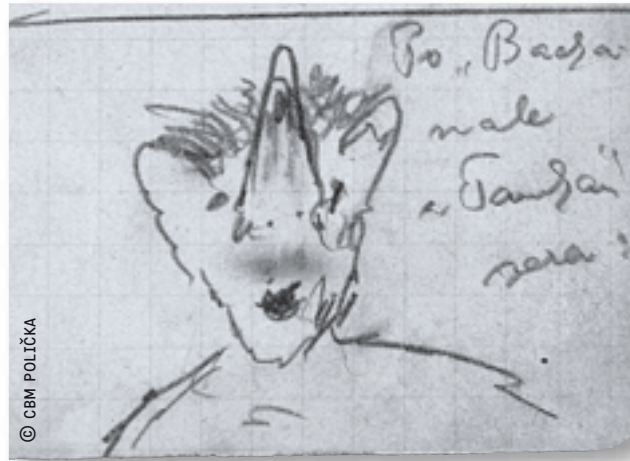
*Musical director:* Thomas Barthel

*Production:* Jan EBinger

# martinů on Wagner

This year the music world is celebrating the double anniversary of Richard Wagner (1813–1883), a composer whose theoretical work and music has impacted all subsequent opera creators, with Bohuslav Martinů being no exception.

Martinů first got to know Wagner's operas during his studies at the Prague Conservatory, where he enrolled in the autumn of 1906. He and Stanislav Novák would frequently visit the National Theatre, which, like with the German Theatre, included a number of Wagner works in its post-1900 repertoire. Dating from this period are several caricatures from *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* and *Siegfried* that Martinů drew in his sketchbook. With reference to Karel Novák, Miloš Šafránek wrote that Martinů liked *Tannhäuser* and *The Flying*



*Dutchman* but loathed *The Ring of the Nibelung*. In 1914, the young composer spent a few days in Vienna, where he saw *Rienzi* at the Hofoper. Reflections of Wagner's – as well as Richard Strauss's – musical phraseology can be detected in early Martinů pieces such as *The Death of Tintagiles*, H. 15, and

◀ "After 'Bachanale' from *Tannhäuser*".  
Drawing by B. Martinů,  
Prague, 1910

*The Angel of Death*, H. 17. Also bearing witness to his profound interest in Wagner's works is a letter to Stanislav Novák (probably from 1917) in which Martinů wrote: "[...] I've borrowed from *Beseda* the scores of *Tristan and Parsifal*, and am now wading through them, having found that my instrumentation is not bad."

Later on, however, Martinů would distance himself from Wagner. He indicated his creative orientation with regard to music theatre in a text on *Istar*, H. 130, published in *Tribuna* on 10 September 1924, a day before the ballet's premiere at the National Theatre in Prague:

## bohuslav martinů: the creator of tristan

Future historians will easily find the borderline among their respective analyses: the war. Not that the war plays the main role in many questions, nor can it be said that it particularly accelerated the solution to numerous theories, stimuli and changes, the appearance of which could have been anticipated. Yet after the war we did not find many a thing in the state we left it before. And the change was radical. When considering the current state of affairs, we see and feel, perhaps too evidently even, that many of the questions we asked ourselves and which we considered vital have simply become inconsequential and that our current point of view differs almost diametrically. The entire epoch of Romanticism has ceased to act on us directly, and that which has remained we view with great scepticism and distrust. The new values we are establishing in no way undermine the strong points of Romanticism, they merely place their significance within boundaries acceptable from our vantage point. Neverthe-

less, the question of our upbringing and our youth plays a great, I would say, sentimental, commemorative role, and we naturally keep returning and clinging to our old loves, without, I hope, doing disservice to that which we now have in our hearts.

The name Richard Wagner alone brings it all flooding back – the thousands of impressions and memories – and it instinctively urges us towards a comparison. Wagner: that was all just yesterday, not actually that long ago. But if we mention only a few names, the great divergence of viewpoints and systems become clear to us, as does the distance that, perhaps in too great a haste, has been covered. Wagner – Liszt – Schumann, Bülow, and Cosima herself. The beautiful figure of Liszt, his friendship and his sacrifice as an artist. Schopenhauer. Drama without musical accompaniment: Nietzsche – Wagner. Munich – Zurich – Venice – Bayreuth. Not that long ago, yet so very distant! Ludwig of Bavaria, a king and a poet, it is the world of



Bohuslav Martinů  
in Prague, 1920





▲ *Flying Dutchman. Drawing by B. Martinů, Prague, 1910*

“A lot has been written of late about new problems and attempts at stage art. It’s a topical issue, based on the stagnation of the operatic form, actually musical drama, which as a result of combining independent

and, many a time, disparate powers has got into a stalemate.” This outspoken rejection of Wagner’s “Gesamtkunstwerk” anticipates Martinů’s stage works written in the first half of the 1930s, in which he turned away from

was published in February 1935 in the periodical *Tempo – Listy hudební matice*, as well as in his *Autobiography* (1941).

— **Marek Pechač**

*To be continued in the next issue*

yesterday. Today’s is Hitler. Weimar — Geneva, but the questions that are being addressed are far from being the same. Yesterday there were questions of real culture; today we give preference to the question of international debts. And what a distance: from Schopenhauer – Nietzsche to Freud and Einstein! Today, Stravinsky, Picasso, Braque, Schönberg, Berg, not to mention jazz, Jeanette MacDonald, Chevalier, Josephine Baker, avant-gardes, thousands of various artistic movements and isms. I don’t mean this as a reproach, I simply state it. All this probably belongs together and, even if not, we can’t really object to it – it’s life.

Nevertheless, when contemplating the Wagner era, it strikes us that we have lost something very beautiful. Yet it should be noted that these slight pangs are perhaps of a nostalgic nature, since it was none other than Wagner who nurtured us and made us see. But then it was necessary to move on, the powerful influence and extreme passions of Romanticism notwithstanding. And move on we did, and it can be said that we are very distant, almost at the

opposite end. Few, hardly any explosions of passion, no overstressing of emotion, a creative process seemingly rather civil, ordinary, without fanfares and drums, personal life contained, not exposed to all the winds, objective work and resistance to virtually all the ideas that were so dear to the Romantics. This demarcation, the limitation of the new personality, may seem to possess no charm when juxtaposed with the wizardry – sometimes very gaudy – of Romanticism; yet I would argue that this is far from the case. It cannot be denied that, despite its solid values, Romanticism was replete with empty, hollow slogans containing nothing. It’s no great pity that we have jettisoned the slogans for good, since they did nothing but obscure the path.

The name and work of Wagner are firmly embedded in us. The reason is that we used to love him and hate him at the same time. This struggle, in which we had to get over Wagner without ceasing to love him, cannot be erased from our memory, nor can all the twists and turns of this struggle, when at the

least expected moment this powerful sorcerer emerged again and again and reduced all our efforts to naught. This proud artist had a powerful impact, and traces of his influence can be found everywhere. And even in our time, when the change in the tide of opinion and values does not allow for judging him as would be necessary, i.e. in the Romantic sense, there is a work that has defied both the times and the changed sensibility: *Tristan und Isolde*. It is a work accomplished with such power and definitiveness that even today, when many approach the figure of Wagner with scepticism, we simply cannot overlook it. It is a drama genuinely experienced. The contemporary artist remains rather indifferent to this fact (since the time of Marcel Proust), yet it seems to him that the finale of *Tristan* is more than a drama which has been endured, that it is something that touches the very limits of creative ability, as well as of creative mystery.

— *Lidové noviny*, 12 February 1933

## blanche — world class musician, world class mother

**Noteworthy Lessons for Living in Harmony with Self, Others & the Universe**  
by **Dominique Moyses Steinberg**

Published by Amazon.co.uk

This small volume (126 pages) is an affectionate celebration of the life of Blanche Honegger Moyses by her daughter Dominique.

Readers will know that Blanche was a Founding Member of the International Martinů Circle. She trained as a violinist and joined the eminent flautist Marcel Moyses and his son Louis Moyses to form the Moyses Trio which attained legendary status. Blanche later married Louis. Martinů became friendly with the family in Paris



during the 1930s and composed the *Sonata, H. 254* for the Trio and also a concerto for Marcel and Blanche.

After the war the Moyses settled in Vermont and joined with Adolf Busch (her former teacher), Herman Busch and Rudolf Serkin to co-found the Marlboro Music Festival where works by Martinů were regularly programmed. Following her enforced retirement as a violinist in 1966, Blanche turned to conducting. She formed a choir from local amateur singers which became known the Blanche Moyses Chorale. It was



Moyses Trio

famed for its performances of the choral works of Bach which Blanche loved above all else.

The book explores Blanche's philosophy of life. In respect of the Chorale, she adhered to the virtues of collaboration and stressed the importance of members practising individually between rehearsals. She was constantly striving to attain new heights of excellence in her performances.

The book contains a charming selection of snapshots stretching from childhood to old age. One of the last shows Blanche displaying the Martinů Medal which Aleš Březina presented to her at the Music Centre in Brattleboro in 2006. ■

## bohoslav martinů & stanislav novák as remembered by ela švabinská

/ LUDMILA KESSELGRUBEROVÁ

Purely by chance, during 2013 the Municipal Museum in Česká Třebová received two previously unpublished texts relating to Bohuslav Martinů. The first is a manuscript of reminiscences written by Max Švabinský's first wife Ela, who came to know the young composer during his visits to Kozlov and the couple's apartment in Prague. Dating from between 1962 and 1964, Ela Švabinská's reminiscences refer to Martinů, as well as to his close friend, the violinist Stanislav Novák. The text does not contain any groundbreaking or especially revealing information about the two artists, but is still of great interest in that it describes the impressions they made on the accomplished and intellectual woman.



Božena Dapceiová

The second text is a letter Martinů sent in September 1922 to Ela's cousin, the poet Božena Dapceiová. In purple prose, the composer recalls a visit to the cottage in Kozlov,



▲ Světlana Vojtěchová, Ela Švabinská and Božena Dapceiová in Kozlov PHOTO: FRANTIŠEK BROKEŠ

as well as his encounter with Mrs. Dapceiová. The letter was discovered in 2013 in the personal effects of Božena Dapceiová at the State District Archive in Louny (Dapceiová Božena, Inv. No. 87) by its director, Dr. Bohumír Roedl.

The two short texts are now being prepared for publication by the Municipal Museum in Česká Třebová. Furnished with footnotes and accompanying photographs, they are scheduled for publication in the first half of 2014. ■

CATEGORY/

## VOCAL MUSIC

SUBCATEGORY/

### SONGS WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT / PART I /

### WORKS FOR SOLO VOICE AND ORCHESTRA / MELODRAMAS

ON THIS PAGE of the Revue we continue with our publishing of the complete list of Bohuslav Martinů's works.

In this issue we finish the subcategory Songs with Piano Accompaniment and will start the Subcategory Works for Solo Voice and Orchestra (listed in alphabetical order). The basic data on the works listed here have been taken from the online catalogue of Martinů's oeuvre at <http://database.martinu.cz>

#### Commentary/

"Archive" – gives the information as to where the autograph is deposited.

Only accessible information is stated.

If data on the publisher are missing, the work has yet to be published.

#### SONGS WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

##### CZECH RIDDLES (ČESKÉ HÁDANKY)

H. 277bis

*Place of composition:* Paris  
*Date of composition:* 1939  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* Saša Pucová  
*Archive:* Paris, private property  
*Copyright:* free (Bohuslav Martinů Foundation)

##### FOUR SONGS ON CZECH FOLK POETRY (ČTYŘI PÍSNĚ NA TEXTY ČESKÉ LIDOVÉ POEZIE)

H. 282bis

*Durata:* 8:30  
*Place of composition:* Aix-en-Provence  
*Date of composition:* 1940  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* Edmonde Charles-Roux  
*Performers of premiere:* Magdalena Kožená (V), Karel Košárek (Pf)  
*Premiere:* Prague, 8. 12. 1997  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Publisher:* Editio Praga, Prague 1999, H 7809  
*Copyright:* Bärenreiter, Prague

##### I KNOW A GROVE (VÍM HÁJÍČEK)

H. 273

*Durata:* 1:30  
*Place of composition:* Paris  
*Date of composition:* 1939  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* to birthday of Vítězslava Kaprálová's mother, 1939  
*Archive:* Moravian Museum in Brno  
*Copyright:* Bärenreiter, Prague

##### NEW CHAP-BOOK (NOVÝ ŠPALÍČEK)

H. 288

*Durata:* 9:30  
*Place of composition:* Jamaica – NYC  
*Date of composition:* 1942  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* Jan Masaryk  
*Performers of premiere:* Jarmila Novotná (V), Jan Masaryk (Pf)  
*Premiere:* New York, 11. 1. 1943  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Publisher:* Melantrich, Prague 1948  
*Copyright:* Bärenreiter, Prague

##### RHYMES AND SONGS ON LYRICS OF CZECH FOLK POETRY (ŘÍKADLA A PÍSNĚ NA TEXTY ČESKÉ LIDOVÉ POEZIE)

H. 283bis

*Place of composition:* Aix-en-Provence  
*Date of composition:* 1940  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* Edmonde Charles-Roux  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Copyright:* free (Bohuslav Martinů Foundation)

##### SONGS ON ONE PAGE (PÍSNÍČKY NA JEDNU STRÁNKU)

H. 294

*Durata:* 6:30  
*Place of composition:* New York  
*Date of composition:* 1943  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* Olga Hurbanová  
*Archive:* Garches, private property  
*Publisher:* Melantrich, Prague 1948  
*Copyright:* Bärenreiter, Prague

##### SONGS ON TWO PAGES (PÍSNÍČKY NA DVĚ STRÁNKY)

H. 302

*Durata:* 7:15  
*Place of composition:* New York  
*Date of composition:* 1944  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Performers of premiere:* Aša Slavická (mS), Oldřich Kredba (Pf)  
*Premiere:* Prague, 15. 10. 1946  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Publisher:* Melantrich, Prague 1948  
*Copyright:* Bärenreiter, Prague

##### WISHES TO MAMMA (PŘÁNÍ MAMINCE)

H. 279bis

*Durata:* 1:30  
*Place of composition:* Paris  
*Date of composition:* 1939  
*Performing forces:* V Pf  
*Dedication:* Rudolf Kundera's mother  
*Performers of premiere:* Rudolf Firkušný, Otakar Kraus  
*Premiere:* Paris, 24. 12. 1929  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Copyright:* free (Bohuslav Martinů Foundation)

##### WORKS FOR SOLO VOICE AND ORCHESTRA

##### MAGIC NIGHTS (KOUZELNÉ NOCI)

H. 119

*Durata:* 16:00  
*Place of composition:* Polička  
*Date of composition:* 1918  
*Performing forces:* S 4322-2200-Ptti-Trgl-Camp-Cel-Aprá-Archi  
*Dedication:* Theo Drill-Oridge  
*Performers of premiere:* Pavla Vachková-Osuská, Czech Philharmonic  
*Premiere:* Prague, 2. 4. 1924  
*Archive:* Czech Museum of Music in Prague, Moravian Museum in Brno  
*Publisher:* Panton, Prague 1981  
*Copyright:* Panton International, Mainz

##### NIPPONARI (NIPPONARI)

H. 68

*Durata:* 24:00  
*Place of composition:* Polička  
*Date of composition:* 1912  
*Performing forces:* S 3Fl Cor ing Trgl Tam-tam Cel Arpa Pf Archi (9Vl 6Vle 4Vc 2Cb)  
*Dedication:* Theo Drill-Oridge  
*Premiere:* Brno  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Copyright:* Schott Music, Mainz

#### MELODRAMAS

##### THREE MELODRAMAS

##### I. DANCERS FROM JAVA (TANEČNICE Z JÁVY)

H. 84

*Durata:* 7:00  
*Place of composition:* Prague  
*Date of composition:* 1913  
*Performing forces:* SVla Arpa Pf  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Publisher:* Czech Music Fund, Prague 1980, CHF 6489  
*Copyright:* free (Bohuslav Martinů Foundation)

##### II. DRAGONFLY (VÁŽKA)

H. 83

*Durata:* 6:00  
*Place of composition:* Prague  
*Date of composition:* 1913  
*Performing forces:* SVI Arpa Pf  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Publisher:* Czech Music Fund, Prague 1980, CHF 6489  
*Copyright:* free (Bohuslav Martinů Foundation)

##### III. EVENING (VEČER)

H. 82

*Durata:* 7:00  
*Place of composition:* Prague  
*Date of composition:* 1913  
*Performing forces:* S Arpa  
*Archive:* The Bohuslav Martinů Center in Polička  
*Publisher:* Czech Music Fund, Prague 1980, CHF 6489  
*Copyright:* free (Bohuslav Martinů Foundation)

# the **ritornello** as a symbol of



/ PAVEL ŠÝKORA

/ part I

**BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ** is among the leading 20th-century artists whose works are pervaded by echoes of the Antique, especially its mythology, and perhaps even its ritual world. Similarly to Stravinsky, Picasso, Joyce, Dürrenmatt and others, Martinů did not stylise original works, nor did he strive to revive ancient reality. Antique stimuli instead served as models, to which the artist added his personal commentary – a fundamental creative method throughout the history of music, the visual arts, literature and philosophy. In the case of the aforementioned figures, one sees the commentary of 20th-century persons who had become aware that their current attitude to the world

was somehow prefigured in times long past, in other cultures. Such prefiguration can also be found in ancient mythology. Accordingly, it is not a question of uncritical adulation of Antiquity, as was the case with the European humanists or J. J. Winckelmann. Antiquity is understood instead as a universal part of the whole of human culture. The advantage of myth is its timelessness. Contemplations of those living in ancient times about life, love and death can be accepted as a manifestation of something that does not have a linear development and is rather permanently present.

When seeking echoes of Antique myth in Martinů, we can either limit ourselves to works with Ancient Greek and Roman themes or – in the spirit of a broader concept of myth –

we can also trace mythological symbols in pieces that are not based on Antique sources. Such an understanding of myth has been outlined by Rudolf Pečman, who has dealt with the relation between Martinů's musical theatre and the ancient world.<sup>1)</sup> It would seem that Pečman's approach reflects Robert Graves's famous *Greek Myths* (1982).<sup>2)</sup> Graves identifies nodal points in the mythology of the Mediterranean, e.g. a connection between the fate of two children, Oedipus and Moses. From this viewpoint, Pečman also refers to Martinů's symphonic poem *Death of Tintagiles, H. 15* (1910), in which, in addition to Symbolism and Impressionism, he detects traits of ancient legend,<sup>3)</sup> as well as the ballet *Istar, H. 130* (1918–21), where Istar's journey to hell to

# labyrinthine dance in bohuslav martinů's **ariane**



▲ Theatre performance of the opera *Ariane* in Ostrava (CZ) in 2010 PHOTO: MARTIN POPELÁŘ

◀ Theatre performance of the opera *The Soldier and the Dancer*, Praha 2000 PHOTO: ROBERT TICHÝ

set her lover free conspicuously resembles Orpheus's expedition to the Underworld. This element is underlined by the motif of wandering – Istar finds her lover after long meandering,<sup>4</sup> which may be compared to the wandering in the labyrinth in *Ariane*, Martinů's prime work based on ancient motifs. (A sort of surrealistic image of wandering, especially through human consciousness, also appears back in the opera *Juliette*.)

When it comes to real inspiration of the Antique, we cannot omit the opera *The Soldier and the Dancer*, H. 162 (1927), a modern-day reworking of Plautus's *Pseudolus*. It is, however, located outside the mythological sphere.

The first Martinů work actually pervaded by ancient myth is the half-hour one-act ballet *Le jugement de Paris*, H. 245 (1935), based on the theme of the beautiful Helen. Or rather, it would have been had the piece actually been performed (the composition was written to commission for the new Les Ballets Russes). Martinů, however, was not satisfied with the work (Mihule, 2002, p. 230) and the score is missing. More valuable is therefore the stage music for Honzl's radio production of André Gide's *Oedipe*, which originated the following year. When assessing the influence of the

*Oedipus* story in this case, it is essential to consider the loose paraphrase penned by Gide. For Martinů it meant getting nearer to Surrealism, which, surprisingly, had appeared in the somewhat earlier *Juliette*, yet would only markedly manifest itself in *Ariane*.<sup>5</sup> When evaluating the music to *Oedipe*, it is perhaps most illuminating to refer to Stravinsky's stage melodrama-cantata *Perséphone*, written at virtually the same time (1933–34). Stravinsky too created music to Gide's libretto, so both he and Martinů transformed the ancient myth through French culture. The two composers chose a technique that was not typical for either of them: melodrama. Martinů, despite writing the early work *Three Melodramas*,<sup>6</sup> scarcely employed the speaking narrator. In the case of Stravinsky, what's more, "Gide's non-dramatic tale"<sup>7</sup> evokes an elegiac and melancholic mood, markedly different from that of his other pieces. Martinů's relationship to his Paris idol (Martinů came to know Stravinsky's work in Paris) is primarily evoked through his Neoclassical instrumentation. He calls for an atypical ensemble peculiar to this piece, with a significant role being entrusted to percussion instruments, and the organ having a notable part in both Stravinsky's and Martinů's scores.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps an even closer link between the two composers can be seen in the ballet *The Strangler*, H. 317, 1948. In this work, written for 3 dancers (Oedipus, Sphinx and Chorus), 1 narrator and small ensemble, Martinů drew on the Oedipus myth, just as Stravinsky had 20 years earlier in the opera-oratorio

*Oedipus rex* (1925–27). The Oedipus variations by both composers contain a distinct ritual element, with Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* being the main basis. Let us give at least one example from the musical structure itself: the significance of the percussion instruments. In Stravinsky's *Oedipus rex* an important role is assigned to the bass ostinato (a rhythmical pedal), whose origination can to a considerable extent be seen to derive from the structure of J. S. Bach's music. Yet unlike in the case of Bach, it is primarily executed by timpani, which – alongside other musical and scenic components – evoke the ritual roots of the myth: the drum as a symbol of fertility. Martinů augments this ritual element by including parts for unique Aztec percussion instruments, acquired for him by Henry Cowell.<sup>9</sup> After all, the ballet's subtitle, *A Rite of Passage*, clearly indicates the rite too. Compared to Stravinsky's work, however, a significant, already structural, role is played by the Surrealistic element. En route from Delphi to Thebes, at a point decisive for the later development of tragedy, Oedipus is haunted by a nightmare about patricide and incest. The Sphinx, at whose face he stares, has the features of his mother Jocasta.<sup>10</sup> The alter ego motif as an element of deep psychology is also important for understanding this version of the myth of Ariane, which constitutes Martinů's major contribution to the group of works reflecting Antique mythology in the 20th century.

Martinů defined *Ariane*, H. 370 (1958) as a "light comedy".<sup>11</sup> He wrote the opera in less

than a month during a break from work on *The Greek Passion*, H. 372. Indeed, on first listening, both the music and text come across – in true Neoclassical spirit – as simple and uncomplicated. Within a staunchly anti-Wagnerian approach, *Ariane* is devoid of any pathos and emotional effusions. With its diatonic language, chamber textures and objectivity, it resembles the poetics of Mozart's theatre; early Baroque (Monteverdian) effects are applied in an inconspicuous manner too. The system of self-contained numbers and unifying ritornellos helps the listeners orient themselves easily in the work's structure. The concluding aria is a manifestation of crowd-pleasing virtuoso music-making, which Martinů used previously in *Mirandolina*, H. 346 (1954). Why is it, then, that Pečman and some others consider *Ariane* to be Martinů's most philosophical opera?<sup>12)</sup> Miloš Šafránek even raises the question of whether the final aria with its soft conclusion conceals a private secret.<sup>13)</sup> Let us try to elucidate this contradiction by comparing Martinů's 1950s work with the original myth.

The myth of Ariane (Theseus, the Minotaur) is one of the archetypes of European culture and thinking, as well as a popular subject in opera, literature and the visual arts. Nietzsche's classification of artistic principles, in which he draws a distinction between Apollonian and Dionysian principles, bids the question of how to classify Martinů's treatment of the story. Its lightness and playfulness ("light comedy"), lack of any psychologising and, above all, its sense of classical order, clarity and restraint put Martinů's opera close to Apollonian art. The Ariane cult on Naxos, however, relates to the Dionysian cult. Ariane, the daughter of King Minos, helps Theseus to kill the Minotaur. Afterwards, she goes with him to Naxos, where Theseus abandons her asleep on the shore. Why he does so will for ever remain a mystery.<sup>14)</sup> Ariane wakes up alone on the deserted island and bursts into a bitter lament, bewailing her having sacrificed her step-brother, parents and homeland. Consequently, a tragic ending as we see in settings such as Benda's melodrama *Ariane auf Naxos* (1769) seems apt. But Martinů eschews this dramatic ending, so



The title page of the autograph score

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popular with audiences, and his Ariane, instead of cursing her perfidious lover, becomes a reconciled and forgiving being. This solution does not surprise in relation to the original myth, since the young woman is subsequently discovered by the god Dionysus and his merry retinue of satyrs and maenads, and the deity then marries her. Martinů's opera does not contain this effective denouement, as we know it from, for instance, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, where Apollo prevails over Dionysus. The mysterious, unimpassioned end of the aria may appear as an entry into a new world, one abounding in mysteries.

Significant are the particular semantics of the concluding ritornello. It is the opera's main ritornello, which in the introduction is conceived as a sinfonia obligato. The three repetitions of its theme, albeit in different keys (D, A, F major), are strikingly reminiscent of the three repetitions of the toccata in the introduction to Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*.<sup>15)</sup> Its non-dramatic, festive and rather optimistic nature (a diatonic major key) can be understood as merely a signal for getting the performance under way. It does not set the tone as regards the nature of the work ("light comedy"). Yet similarly to the famous *favole in musica*, it gradually takes on a dramatic

nature. It appears at the moment when Ariane introduces herself to Theseus. In this spirit, its emersion resembles the theme of Juliette in the eponymous opera. A dramatic dimension is accorded to it by the fact that Ariane's question about the stranger's name remains unanswered. The mystery of the use of this music in closing, as the coda to a grand aria, lies also in the instrumentation. Whereas in the opera's introduction the *sinfonia* is performed in *tutti* by the orchestra (strings + winds), the conclusion features this material in the most delicate instrumentation (harp + celesta), standing in striking contrast to the grandiose aria.

The meaning of this major instrumental feature of the work can be explained by the very nature of the work. Together with the relatively simple melody, the rhythmic structure of the ritornello may suggest some rowing movements. Yet rowing itself attains crucial significance, since it symbolises wandering, with Theseus's departure falling within its framework too. In addition, the music of the ritornello possesses a markedly dance-like character.

And dance is an integral part of the Dionysian cult. This dance is said to have been created for Ariane by Daedalus, the builder of the Cretan labyrinth, who designed for her at Knossos a dancing ground inlaid with a maze's relief. This area reproduced Egypt's Labyrinthos. Theseus subsequently took the dance to the island of Delos, where he and his companions danced the Crane dance around Apollo's altar. This dance's characteristic traits are revolutions similar to wandering through a maze.<sup>16)</sup> The labyrinthine nature of the dance has also been referred to by Gustav Hocke, who describes a circular dancing ground on which dancers whirl in a counter-movement around the imaginary centre.<sup>17)</sup>

If we transfer the elements of the labyrinthine dance to the mentioned ritornello, the motif of wandering acquires the character of a motif of labyrinthine wandering. The opera's Surrealistic principles become manifest, suggested not only by Georges Neveux's play but also the music itself. Similarly to the theme of *Juliette*, the ritornellos in *Ariane* often turn up unexpectedly, when their appearance is not designated merely by the rules of the musical form. This resonates with the distortion of the Antique subject matter, taking us into the realm

of magic realism. With whom is Ariane actually in love? The Minotaur acts as Theseus's alter ego. The "labyrinthine ritornello" is thus elevated to the level of magic symbol. Heroes wander through not only the ancient mythological world but, above all, their own mysterious inner being. What is the solution to this harrowing situation?

Hocke states that the initial phase of the dance, which he defines as "labyrinthine chaining" and which is a symbol of ingenuously tragic wandering, is followed by a harmonising phase as an expression of recovery of order.<sup>18)</sup> When listening to Martinů's music, we may say that the solution is offered by the music itself – the harmonious major diatonic scale of the ritornello is a manifestation of joyous dance. After all, Friedrich Dürrenmatt's Minotaur dances out of joy too, rejoicing in his no longer

being alone and having found his Ariane.<sup>19)</sup> Hocke, however, points out that such reaching of order is merely illusory and that the solution only arrives in the third phase of the dance, which mocks the retrieved centre by means of grotesque elements. If we accept this thesis, there is no choice but to consider the use of the ritornello at the end of the opera as its parody – a conclusion also suggested by the (ironical) instrumentation, for the harp and celesta. Accordingly, Martinů actually tackles tension by applying the method of parody, distortion of the original – essentially simple – material, which is a vital expressive means of the post-war avant-garde (Stravinsky, Bartók, etc.).<sup>20)</sup> ■

*To be continued in the next issue*

*The study was published (in Czech) in Musicologica Brunensia, Brno, 2010*

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- 1) Pečman 1982.
- 2) Graves 1982.
- 3) Pečman 1982, p. 292.
- 4) Cf. Šafránek, ed. 1979, p. 23.
- 5) According to Pečman, Martinů was also inspired by Gide's clinging to the tradition of classical art (Pečman 1982, p. 240).
- 6) At the time, he had a positive approach to the form of melodrama (Cf. Mihule 2002, p. 55).
- 7) Stravinsky 1967, p. 240.
- 8) Clarinet, trumpet, 2 violas, piano, organ and percussion.
- 9) Mexican percussion instruments, wooden + metal: cochiti, deer-hooves, cocoon rattle, wood-blocks.

- 10) Cf. Mihule 2002, p. 407.
- 11) Cf. Šafránek 1979, p. 108.
- 12) Pečman 1982, p. 294.
- 13) Šafránek 1979, p. 110.
- 14) Cf. Graves 1982, p. 354.
- 15) Cf. Vysloužil 1967, p. 198.
- 16) Cf. Graves 1982, p. 357.
- 17) Hocke 2001, p. 445.
- 18) Ibid.
- 19) *Minotaurus (Balada)*, in: Dürrenmatt 1998, pp. 301–315.
- 20) Cf. Stahmer 1970.

# martinů & roussel

/ GREGORY TERIAN

**NINETY YEARS AGO** Martinů left Prague and settled in Paris. An early port of call in November 1923 was the residence of the composer **Albert Roussel** (1869–1937) in the avenue de Wagram.

It is worth noting that at the time of their first meeting, Martinů had already composed more than one hundred works whereas Roussel had little more than a score of opus numbers to his credit. A partial explanation lies in the fact that, although he was 21 years older than Martinů, Roussel had served for seven years in the French Navy before commencing his musical studies. His career was further interrupted by service in the French Army during the Great War when he composed very little. Apart from these factors, Martinů was manifestly the more prolific of the two composers.

The most successful of Roussel's works were composed after the war which raises a question as to how Martinů became so enamoured with Roussel's music as to uproot and seek out the composer in Paris. One early work, *The Spider's*

*Feast*, premiered in 1913, had made a major impact and is said to have been the work which Martinů most admired. The opportunity of hearing it came in January 1914 when it was performed by the Czech Philharmonic at the Smetana Hall. At this time Martinů was living in Prague following his failed music studies at the Conservatoire. Despite his impoverished circumstances, he was able to get access to many concerts and rehearsals and he is hardly likely to have missed this unique event. Also included in the programme was the *Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Dukas, another work which is said to have made a deep impression on the young Martinů. The programme was completed by Debussy's newly composed score for *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien*. The concert was directed by the young French conductor Edgard Varese, who studied composition with Roussel and who knew Debussy personally. He is now best remembered as a composer who settled in New York in 1919 and figured prominently in the avant-garde movement of the inter-war years. Several of Varese's strikingly original



## REVIEW

# between war and peace

/ LUBOŠ STEHLÍK

The opening concert of the **PKF-Prague Philharmonia** cycle (2 October 2013), abounding in colours, flavours, moods and gentle emotions, fully met my expectations. As for the general framework, the concert seemed to oscillate between war and peace. Jakub Hruša chose three major works from three stylistic epochs. The evening started with Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (Songs of a Wayfarer). The Norwegian baritone Audun Iversen, a graduate of the Opera Academy in Copenhagen who in 2009 received the Danish Reumert Talent Award, has a hearty, technically well-led voice, one more of the universal type than clearly identifiable, as is the case of, for instance,

Thomas Hampson or Simon Keenlyside. Such a timbre, however, suits this music very well indeed, particularly when bolstered by an appropriately unimpassioned delivery. A little bit more poignancy wouldn't have gone amiss here and there (*Ich hab' ein glühend Messer*), yet there is no doubt that the high tessitura will steady with maturity.

Iversen was an even more admirable partner to the PKF-Prague Philharmonia in Bohuslav Martinů's *Field Mass, H. 279*, which pleasantly surprised me. One of the 20th century's most powerful choral works, it has a lucid texture and the wind-instrument parts backed up by percussion, piano and harmonium are naked as a newborn. The performance was virtually flawless. The piece's core element is the chorus.

The men of the **Prague Philharmonic Choir** sang at their customarily high standard, and besides being vocally certain and homogeneous, their performance radiated the necessary degree of spirituality. The sublime *Domove vzdálený* (Distant Home), the insistent *Stůjte jak skály v mořském příboji* (Stand Like Rocks in a Sea Swell) and the prayer *Smiluj se nade mnou, Bože* (Kyrie eleison), the piece's apex, were magical, breathtaking moments. The soloist knows the work inside out, he took pains to pronounce the Czech clearly, and he and the choir were on the same spiritual wavelength. The compactness was enhanced by placing the choir behind the orchestra and, above all, the conductor's well-considered work with the tempos, dynamics and expression, with the result being the desired absence of affect-edness. It was one of the most fascinating performances of the *Field Mass* (alongside those of Neumann and Mackerras) I have ever heard.

Pavel Vranický is considered a notch beneath the big three Viennese composers. His works



works such as *Amerique* endure in the orchestral repertoire today. Most employ an array of percussion.

A further opportunity of hearing Roussel's music came in 1920 when the Symphony No. 1 *Le Poeme de la Foret* was performed by the Czech Philharmonic under Václav Talich at the time when Martinů was serving as a back-desk player in the orchestra's second violins. Dating from 1903, it was regarded by the critics as one of his less successful works but Martinů was said to have been captivated by the score. Roussel's major orchestral works including the ballet score for *Bacchus et Ariane* and the symphonies nos 3 and 4 appeared in the years following Martinů's arrival in Paris.

As for Martinů, the first orchestral fruits of his Paris sojourn included *Half-Time* (1924), the *Piano Concerto No. 1* (1925) and *La Bagarre* (1926) reflecting his exposure to new influences. The former created a furore because of its perceived indebtedness to Stravinsky. The other two works achieved immediate success.

Although the meetings between the two composers were intermittent, one can appreciate the high esteem in which Roussel held his young colleague from the oft-quoted remark "*Martinů – that will be my glory*", made during the former's 60th birthday celebrations. Following the death of his mentor eight years later, Martinů in his turn revealed the extent

## Témoignage tchécoslovaque



Il y a quinze ans, que Roussel a été joué pour la première fois à Prague et, depuis ce premier contact, il y a été admiré et aimé, et on a accueilli chaque nouvelle œuvre de lui avec une faveur grandiose. Personnellement, je l'ai suivi jusqu'à Paris pour bénéficier de son enseignement. J'y suis arrivé avec mes partitions, avec mes plans, mes projets, avec une multitude, un chaos d'idées et c'est lui qui m'a indiqué, toujours avec justesse et avec une précision qui lui était propre, le chemin qu'il faut suivre, tout ce qu'il fallait garder et ce qu'il fallait rejeter. Il a réussi à mettre de l'ordre dans mes pensées, mais je n'ai jamais su comment il y est arrivé. Avec sa modestie, sa bonté et sa noblesse et aussi avec son ironie fine et amicale, il m'a guidé de telle façon, que cela s'est toujours passé presque sans que je m'en aperçoive. Il m'a laissé le temps de réfléchir et d'évoluer par moi-même. Cependant, après avoir été mon maître, il est devenu mon ami, ami sincère et plein de bonté. Quand je regarde maintenant tout ce qu'il m'a appris, j'en reste tout étonné. Ce qu'il y avait en moi d'inconscient, de caché, d'inconnu, il l'a pressenti et me l'a révélé, me l'a confirmé, et cela toujours d'une façon amicale et presque tendre.

Tout ce que je suis venu chercher à Paris, je l'ai trouvé chez lui et de plus son amitié a toujours été le plus précieux des réconforts. Ce que je suis venu chercher chez lui, c'était l'ordre, la clarté, la mesure, le goût et l'expression directe exacte et sensible, les qualités de l'art français que j'ai toujours admiré et que j'ai voulu connaître plus intimement. Toutes ces qualités, il les avait et il m'avait fait part généreusement de son savoir, très simplement et très naturellement, en grand artiste qu'il était. J'ai été son élève, et grâce à cela, je me sens un peu Français et j'en suis très fier et aussi j'espère bien un jour transmettre son message chez nous, à Prague, où il est si admiré.

E. MARTINU.

of his deep admiration and affection for Roussel in a contribution to a special memorial issue of the *Revue Musicale* published in November 1937, translation taken from "Albert Roussel" by Basil Deane (Barrie & Rockliff 1961):

*"I came all the way from Paris to profit from his tuition. I arrived with my scores, my projects, with a multitudinous welter of ideas, and it was he who pointed out to me, always with sound*

*reasoning and with a precision peculiar to himself, the path to follow, what to retain and what to reject. He succeeded in putting my thoughts in order, although I have never understood how he managed to do it. With his modesty, his kindness and his nobility of mind, and also with his subtle and friendly irony, he always led me in such a way that I was hardly aware of being led. He allowed me to reflect and develop by myself... When I consider how much I learned from him, I am quite astounded. That which was hidden within me, unconscious and unknown, he divined, revealed and strengthened in a way that was always friendly, even affectionate.*

*All that I came to look for in Paris I found in him, and in addition his friendship has always been a valuable stimulant. What I sought in him were order, clarity, restraint, discernment and direct, exact and sensitive expression – those qualities inherent in French art which I have ever admired and with which I desired a more intimate acquaintance. He did, in fact, possess all these qualities, and he freely imparted his knowledge to me, simply and easily, like the great artist he was." ■*



PKF – Prague Philharmonia, Audun Iversen and Jakub Hrůša, 2 October 2013, Rudolfinum, Prague

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certainly do not attain their heights, yet he is by no means a minor creator. His *Grand Characteristic Symphony for the Peace with the French Republic* wouldn't have disgraced Haydn or a young Beethoven. What's more, the conductor brought out the piece's qualities to the full. Of course, the composition has its limitations, a case in point being, for instance, the second movement – *The Fate and the Death of King Louis XVI* – which sounds more like a gallant expression of sorrow than a funeral march. The late-Mozartian third movement, *English March – March of the Allies*, however, is a splendid rendition of the tumult of battle. The nimble, light-footed final movement, *The Prospects of Peace – Rejoicing at the Achievement of Peace*, is simply irresistible. As was the whole evening for that matter. ■

The review is reprinted from the music magazine *Harmonie* No. 11, 2013 with their kind permission.

## other concerts

ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2013 the Brno Contemporary Orchestra opened its third season with a concert version of Bohuslav Martinů's ballet *Le Raid merveilleux*, H. 159. The evening's program, which took place at the famous Functionalist Tugendhat Villa in Brno, also featured Paul Hindemith's *Herodiade* and Jan Novák's *Three Inventions for String Quartet*.

The Brno Contemporary Orchestra performed *Le Raid merveilleux* at the same venue on 29 November. For information about other concerts, visit

► [www.bcorchestra.cz/koncerty](http://www.bcorchestra.cz/koncerty)

IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2013, the Martinů Quartet, made up of Lubomír Havlák, Zbyněk Paďourek, Libor Kaňka and Jitka Vlašánková, made a tour of Slovakia, Great Britain and Switzerland (Martinů Festtage Basel), during which they played Martinů's *String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2*.

The ensemble will be performing on 1 December 2013 in Düsseldorf and on 9 December as part of the Martinů Days festival in Prague. From 6 to 28 January 2014 they will be touring Spain. The Martinů Quartet is a long-time member of the International Martinů Circle.

► [www.martinuquartet.eu](http://www.martinuquartet.eu)

### NEW CD

#### SOUND CLOUDS

Martinů:  
*Divertimento  
for Two Recorders*,  
H. 365



i Flautisti –  
The London Recorder Quartet  
IF-01-2013, Recorded 2012



THE PROGRESSIVE New London Orchestra celebrated its 25th anniversary with a concert that included music by Bohuslav Martinů. The NLO was formed in 1988 with the aim to perform music rarely heard in concert. It also promotes a Young Performers Concert Series, with each of the recitals providing young musicians with an opportunity to showcase their talent. The NLO's flagship education programme is the Literacy Through Music project taking place in primary schools. Its 25th Birthday Concert on 9 October 2013 in London, conducted by Ronald Corp, included works by Bernstein, Ibert, Duncan, Tippett, as well as Martinů's *Concerto for Double String Orchestra, Piano and Timpani*, H. 271.

More information ► [www.nlo.co.uk](http://www.nlo.co.uk)

## pianos on the street

THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2013, early evening. The main railway station in Prague resounds with the strains of selected Bohuslav Martinů pieces played by Michal Mašek on a grand piano placed in the concourse as part of the Street Pianos project. In this way, dozens of listeners can savour such compositions as *Note into a Scrapbook*, H. 241, *Etude in A*, H. 308 and *Black-Bottom*, H. 165, precisely delivered by the acclaimed artist who, the piano's rather battered condition notwithstanding, gives a wonderful performance, full of energy and lightness. The event was initiated by the Bohuslav Martinů Institute, which has long pursued the goal of presenting the composer's work to a wider public. To date, the Street Pianos project has placed no less than fifteen instruments in Prague, with the aim of cultivating public space and providing passers-by with often unexpected musical surprises.

Photographs and video recordings from Michal Mašek's concert can be seen on the Facebook page [www.facebook.com/CzechComposer](http://www.facebook.com/CzechComposer)



# peephole into the bohuslav martinů center in polička /8

**ONLY A FRACTION** of the copious surviving photographs of Bohuslav Martinů is in colour. The Polička Museum collections have recently acquired one of these precious items, which captures the composer and his wife Charlotte in Edgartown. They stayed there from July to September 1941 in the company of a group of friends. In her memoirs, Charlotte wrote: *“A month later, we went to stay in Edgartown, on an island in Massachusetts, where we rented a small house from our friends. A lot of musicians – Bernard Wagenaar, Leopold Mannes, Emanuel Ondříček, a relative of a Czech violinist of the same name – and others stayed there. The cottage was simply yet cosily furnished. The sea air was bracing and refreshing, and petit père passionately plunged into work on a concerto for violin and chamber ensemble, commissioned by Paul Sacher [Concerto da camera, H. 285]. When we had time, we would go to the marsh or forest to pick cranberries and bilberries or occasionally take a boat ride. We swam in the sea too. But we had to watch out for a spider called the black widow. We spent a pleasant three months in Edgartown with a handful of artists who gave concerts.”* The photograph splendidly captures this relaxed summer atmosphere.

— Lucie Jirglová



## NEWS

### promotion of bohuslav martinů in austria



**THE CONFERENCE** of the International Association of Musical Libraries (IAML) took place from 27 July until 2 August 2013 in Vienna, Austria. Marek Pechač and Zoja Seyčková from the Bohuslav Martinů Institute attended the conference, presenting a poster session in which they promoted the Institute's new online database of sources (see photo).

Marek Pechač also presented a paper entitled “Source Research for the Bohuslav Martinů Complete Edition”. ■



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## Bohuslav Martinů bei UNIVERSAL EDITION

*Concerto* (1935) for harpsichord and small orchestra

*Concerto da camera* (1941) for violin and string orchestra with piano and percussion

*Concerto grosso* (1937) for chamber orchestra

*Les Fresques de Piero della Francesca* (1955) for orchestra

*The Epic of Gilgamesh* (1955) oratorio for soli, mixed choir and orchestra

*The Greek Passion* music drama in 4 acts

1<sup>st</sup> version (London version) 1957

2<sup>nd</sup> version (Zurich version) 1957–1959

*Concerto No. 5 Bb major* (1957–1958) fantasia concertante for piano and orchestra

*2 Pièces* (1955) for harpsichord

*The Rock* (1957) for orchestra

*String Quartet No. 2* (1925)

[www.universaledition.com/martinu](http://www.universaledition.com/martinu)

