

57TH INTERNATIONAL  
MUSICOLOGY COLLOQUIUM BRNO

# NEW PATHS IN OPERA

9–10/10/2023

LIVE Stream

## Round Table, 10 October, 15.00–20.00

Presenters: **Kelly St. Pierre** and **Tomáš Kraus**

The colloquium has been organised by the **Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University** and the **National Theatre Opera and the State Opera** in Prague as part of the **Musica non grata** project, with financial support from the **Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Prague**.

### Participants

**Michael Beckerman** (online)

Carroll And Milton Petrie Professor at the New York University

**Rachel Bergman** (online)

Leland B. Sateren Endowed Professor and Chair of Music at Augsburg University in Minneapolis

**Gwyneth Bravo** (online)

Assistant Professor of Music and Global Network Assistant Professor at New York University Abu Dhabi

**Aleš Březina** (online)

Composer and Musicologist; Director of the Bohuslav Martinů Institute in Prague

**Barbara Dallheimer** (online)

Consultant for special tasks for the opera research project FOKUS'33; Social media expert

**Albrecht Dümling** (online)

Musicologist and Music Critic, Chairman of the "musica reanimata" society

**Bruno Ferrandis** (online)

Conductor

**John Gabriel** (online)

Senior Lecturer in Music at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music

**Herbert Gantschacher** (in person)

Stage Director, Artistic Director of the theatre- and research-project "War = daDa"

**Michael Haas** (online)

Musicologist and Recording Producer of the Exilarte CD Series; Initiator and Executive Producer of Decca's recording series "Entartete Musik"

**Christopher Hailey** (online)

Director of the Franz Schreker Foundation

**Frank Harders-Wuthenow** (online)

Head of Promotion & Repertoire of the Boosey and Hawkes

**Per Boye Hansen** (in person)

Artistic Director of the National Theatre Opera and State Opera; Initiator of the Musica non grata project

**Matthew Jocelyn** (online)

Stage Director; General Director of Koffler Centre of the Arts in Toronto

**Petr Kotík** (online)

Composer and Conductor; Founder and Artistic Director of the festival "Ostrava Days"

**Andreas Krause** (online)

Artistic Editor in Chief of the Schott Music

**Kai Hinrich Müller** (online)

Musicologist; Assistant Professor at Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln,  
Musica non grata Dramaturge and Research Manager

**Vlasta Reittererová** (online)

Musicologist, Dramaturge and Translator

**Jiří Rožeň** (online)

Conductor

**Helena Spurná** (in person)

Faculty of Fine Arts and Music at University of Ostrava; Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences; Dramaturge of the 57th International Musicology Colloquium Brno

**Lubomír Spurný** (in person)

Professor of Musicology and Vice Dean for Research and Project Activities at the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University in Brno; Director of the Terežín Composers' Institute

**Jiří Štílec** (online)

Naxos representative for the Central Europe; Founder of the Gustav Mahler Society and the ArcoDiva label

**Miriam Weiss** (in person)

Musicologist and Jazz Pianist

**Jeremy Zima** (online)

Assistant Professor of Music at Wisconsin Lutheran College

## Program

### Avant-garde vs. Entartete Musik

- 1) What are objectives to define Entartete Musik? What role does 1933 play in this question?
- 2) Talking about avant-garde interwar opera, do we talk about Entartete Musik, or not?

### Seeking expression

- 3) *"I do not speak of Reality, for I have no means of knowing, what lies outside."* (Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes) Anti-music, anti-art; interwar opera as a reflection of reality or an escape from reality?
- 4) *"The world is changing now. Plans are being worked out, strictly and precisely, in the laboratory of Comintern."* (Karel Teige) Art and the Left. Reflection on social issues in opera of the 1920s and 1930s.
- 5) A victim of an erotic longing. Sexuality in pre-war operas.

### Everything is jazz

- 6) *"Everything is jazz. From body stockings to the newsboy, up to an emigrant prince who, in patent leather shoes, urge his ,favorite' horse forward."* (Emil František Burian)  
The treatment of jazz in the interwar opera. Zeitoper.
- 7) Influence of jazz on Czechoslovak interwar music. Zeitoper in the Czech opera literature.

### Paper 1 | Aleš Březina (online, EN)

#### Bohuslav Martinů and his contacts with the Paris theatre avant-garde of the 1920s

After his arrival in Paris in 1923, Martinů discovered a completely different musical scene than he had expected. Instead of the legacy of Debussy and Ravel, he encountered the latest work of Igor Stravinsky and, above all, discovered a whole new world of the Paris theatre avant-garde, represented by Jacques Copeau, Léon Chancerel, Marguerite Bériza, Henry Ghéon, and others. This paper will attempt to show the influence of the works of these innovators on Bohuslav Martinů's musical theatre.

### Opera and new media

- 8) *"With the advent of German silent film in the 1920s and its subsequent international recognition up to 1933, cinematic montage-informed by Eisenstein's notion of a dialectic of colliding fragments became the new aesthetic model for artistic production and reception."* (Bryan Gilliam) The influence of film and radio techniques on interwar opera. Opera on film and radio – new possibilities?

### New, contemporary language

- 9) *"In a century of flights to the stratosphere, the breaking of atmo, the theory of relativity, and electric light, the seven-toned system has moved to dodecaphony. Just as natural science has gradually brought to an end research into physical space and converted all movement into electricity, so Schoenberg abandoned the world of twelve bright major and dark minor keys and transformed the twelve Ur-tones into self-contained, truly liberated, but also soulless points, rather atoms."* (Viktor Ullmann) Composers dealing with atonality and dodecaphony.
- 10) Quarter-tones and athenatic music – a symptom of the stalemate in avant-garde art?

## Questions

– Intermission 10 min –

## **Paper 2 | Vlasta Reittererová (online, DE)**

### **Victor Ullmann's operas in the context of Czech opera between the World Wars.**

Opera in the first half of the 20th century sought themes that would respond to the change in spiritual values, social and political changes. It sought a new, contemporary language and new scenic devices. Viktor Ullmann also followed his path to opera in this context.

#### **How to stage?**

- 11) How to work with a full score? Edit or let the work sound as true to the original as possible? How to approach an issue of multiple versions and unfinished or incomplete works?
- 12) The role of lyrics. How to work with librettos today? To translate or not to translate?
- 13) Alois Hába: "A modern opera director requires a textured, effective, and nevertheless proportionate gesture from singers." How to stage operas of the 1920s and 1930s? As historical copies or "liberated" works? How far to stick to the original instructions?
- 14) Transformations of symphonic forms into the shape of music theatre.
- 15) In "captivity" of symbols. Problems of staging operas by Viktor Ullmann or Alois Hába.

## **Paper 3 | Gwyneth Bravo**

### **Hearing Histories – "Recovered Voices"**

How can we hear the music of composers who were caught up in the destructive currents of the twentieth century yet who left behind them a legacy of musical works, which, owing to their complex reception histories, have remained mostly unheard in concert repertoires today? This presentation explores the significance of Los Angeles Opera's inaugural 2007 Recovered Voices production, which was developed by Music Director James Conlon as part of his ongoing commitment to staging operas of composers impacted by the rise of National Socialism in Europe. As Conlon's Visual Research Assistant in the development of Recovered Voices, I explore the role that the screen projections we curated for the project played in enhancing the staging and communicating the historical resonances of the music.

#### **Questions**

##### **Past and future of "Entartete Musik"**

- 16) How did the exile and/or the death of "Entartete Musik" composers change the music of the 20th century?
- 17) Murdered twice? Why should this music have remained forgotten or been forgotten after the WWII?
- 18) What would European/world music of the second half of the 20th century have been like if we could re-write the history and there had been no Nazi regime and Holocaust?
- 19) Does this music need some historical context? In what ways (if any) do "Nazi back stories" affect the way performers play the music and how audiences listen?
- 20) What are the approaches in promoting these works? Is there any difference from the promotion of the "standard" repertoire? What role can play social media and streaming platforms as Spotify, Idagio, Apple Music?
- 21) Wouldn't a reduction in royalties lead to a greater expansion of this music? E.g. particularly in terms of the recording industry and streaming?
- 22) How do opera houses relate to this music? What are the objective conditions for artistic creation (quality of sheet music, willingness of artists to study this music)?
- 23) What does this music need for the future? Should it end up something like Beethoven studies?

#### **Questions**

**20.00 END**