

The Kapralova Society Journal

A Journal of Women in Music

The Centenary of Vítězslava Kaprálová

Karla Hartl



Special points of interest:

- Special centenary issue

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This year marks the 100th birth anniversary of **Vítězslava Kaprálová** (1915–1940), an important representative of inter-war Czech music. She was regarded as one of the most promising composers of her generation by the foremost Czech musicologist Vladimír Helfert. He wrote about her in his seminal study on Czech modern music, *Česká moderní hudba*, published in 1936.¹ Today, there is no doubt that Kaprálová fulfilled that promise handsomely. Regardless of her untimely passing at the age of 25, she was an exceptionally gifted composer, whose oeuvre has withstood the test of time with admirable ease, proving its relevance for new generations of musicians and music listeners. Despite that her career was cut so short, Kaprálová's legacy is not a mere torso; her catalog includes a respectable number of forty-five compositions, among which there are remarkable works in all genres of music literature: piano, chamber, orchestral, and vocal music.

The cultured environment of Kaprálová's family and its circle of friends, among whom were some of the finest musicians and scholars of the new Czechoslovak republic,² played an important role in the creative development of young Vítězslava. She also benefited from the musical offerings of her native Brno, which in many respects measured up to those of the country's capital, Prague. Kaprálová's talent was recognized relatively early and nurtured by her musician parents. Her mother Vítězslava, (born Viktorie Uhlřřová, 1890–1973), was a certified voice teacher who studied with Marie Kollarová in Brno and Kristina Morfová at the National Theater in Prague. Kaprálová's father, Václav Kaprál (1889–1947), studied composition with Leoš Janáček and piano performance with Marie Kuhlová and Klotilda Schäferová in Brno. In

1911, he founded his own private music school in Brno, which grew in reputation and continued to attract generations of aspiring pianists throughout the twenties and thirties. (It is worth noting that one of the faculty, the Czech composer Theodor Schaefer, was Kaprálová's first mentor in instrumentation.) Kaprál was an outstanding teacher who never stopped educating himself throughout his life; he perfected his skills at composition under Vítězslav Novák (who was to become in due time also the teacher of choice for his daughter) and his piano technique with Adolf Mikeš in Prague and Alfred Cortot in Paris. Throughout the 1920s, Kaprál also devoted much of his time to piano performance: together with his friend Ludvík Kundera, they promoted four-hands repertoire and also performed in concert as a two-piano team. In addition to his performing career, Kaprál worked as a music editor and critic, as a lecturer at Brno's Masaryk University, and since 1936 as a tenured teacher at the Brno Conservatory, where he taught composition.

Music was therefore a natural part of Kaprálová's life since childhood. It was primarily her mother's influence, however, that led to Kaprálová's lifelong passion for art song. Kaprálová's contribution to the genre has indeed been significant: her songs in general and opuses 10, 12, and 14 in particular represent one of the late climaxes of the Czech art song.³ The song was the most intrinsic genre for Kaprálová—in it, she combined her passion for the singing voice with her love of poetry. Kaprálová had excellent judgment when it came to poetry: she not only had a penchant for high quality poems (one of her favorite poets was Jaroslav Seifert who at the end of his life won Nobel prize for literature) but she also wrote good poetry

Vítězslava Kaprálová

herself (her first song cycle from 1930 and the orchestral song *Smutný večer* [Sad Evening] from 1936 are believed to be set to her own texts).

Both parents were very supportive of Kaprálová's interest in music but had rather practical plans for her: she was to take over her father's private music school, which he even named in her honor. Kaprálová had her own plans, however; her mind was already set on composition and conducting, and it was this double major program that she chose for her studies at the Brno Conservatory. It is worth noting that she was the very first female student to graduate from the demanding program in the history of this respectable institution.

At the Brno Conservatory, Kaprálová studied composition with Czech composer Vilém Petrželka and conducting with Vilém Steinman and Zdeněk Chalabala, one of the finest Brno conductors and dramaturgs. Kaprálová wrote a good number of compositions during her "Brno period": one of the earliest was a piano suite that she later orchestrated under the title *Suite en miniature* and assigned it her first opus number. Other noteworthy compositions that followed include Two Pieces for Violin and Piano, op. 3, song cycles *Dvě písně*, op. 4 (Two Songs) and *Jiskry z popele*, op. 5 (Sparks from Ashes), and the remarkable song *Leden* (January) for higher voice and flute, two violins, violoncello and piano, set to words of Vítězslav Nezval, another great Czech poet. The finest among her compositions from the Brno period are, however, the two-movement *Sonata Appassionata*, op. 6 and the Piano Concerto in D Minor, op. 7, with which Kaprálová graduated from the Brno Conservatory both as composer and conductor. Her graduation concert received highly favorable reviews not only in the regional newspapers but also in major dailies. Among them was the German *Prager Tagblatt* whose reviewer expressed his disappointment over the conservatory's decision to present only the first movement of Kaprálová's piano concerto which attested to an extraordinary talent: "Es is zu bedauern, das die Veranstalter nur den ersten Satz des Werkes aufführen liessen, doch auch diese kleine Probe zeigt eine erstaunlich temperamentvolle musikalische Begabung."⁴

In the fall of 1935, Kaprálová was accepted into the Master School of the Prague Conservatory where she continued her double major studies, this time with the best teachers she could find in her own country: composition with Dvořák's pupil, Vítězslav Novák, and conducting with Václav Talich, a chief conductor of the Czech Philharmonic and Prague's National Theater. (It is worth noting that in the academic year of 1935/36, when Kaprálová began her studies at the Prague Conservatory, Talich's master class was opened to only 8 first-year students; even more competitive was Novák's class with just 5 students.)⁵ The Master School and the musical life of the country's capital provided a stimulating environment for

Kaprálová, in which her natural talent, coupled with her strong work ethic, continued to thrive. By joining the Society for contemporary music *Přítomnost* (The Presence) and as a regular participant of Silvestr Hippman's musical "Tuesdays" of *Umělecká beseda* (Artistic forum), she was exposed to contemporary music, both Czech and international. The two societies later also became important platforms for premiering Kaprálová's new works.

During her studies at the Prague Conservatory, Kaprálová composed some of her best known music, such as the song cycle *Navždy*, op. 12 (For Ever) and the art song *Sbohem a šáteček*, op. 14 (Waving Farewell) that she later orchestrated in consultation with Bohuslav Martinů in Paris. Other creations of Kaprálová's "Prague period" include her remarkable String Quartet, op. 8 and her most popular work for piano solo, *Dubnová preludia*, op. 13 (April Preludes), dedicated to Rudolf Firkušný who brought attention to its qualities by his masterly performance several years later in Paris. But one composition in particular brought her the most public attention—*Military Sinfonietta*, op. 11, Kaprálová's graduation work, which was premiered by the Czech Philharmonic under the baton of the composer on November 26, 1937 at Lucerna hall in Prague. It was with the sinfonietta that Kaprálová achieved not only wider recognition at home but also abroad when it was performed at the opening night of the 16th season of the ISCM Festival in London on June 17, 1938. The British premiere of the sinfonietta, in which Kaprálová conducted the excellent BBC Orchestra, was transmitted across the ocean to the United States where it was broadcast by CBS (and it was the name of this corporation—Columbia Broadcasting System—that led to an "urban legend" that the concert was broadcast to Columbia in Latin America). According to the reviewer of *Time* magazine, Kaprálová not only fared well at the international competition at the festival but she also became the star of the opening concert, and so "to composer Kapralova, who conducted her own lusty, sprawling composition, went the afternoon's biggest hand."⁶ Among all the reviews mentioning her performance, Kaprálová would have cherished that of her colleague, Havergal Brian, who in his festival report for *Musical Opinion* wrote: "The first work played and broadcast at the recent festival, a *Military Sinfonietta* by Miss Vitezslava Kapralova of Czechoslovakia, proved an amazing piece of orchestral writing; it was also of logical and well balanced design."⁷ But it is unlikely that she ever read it.

Kaprálová travelled to the ISCM festival in London from Paris where she had lived since October of the previous year. She arrived in Paris on a one-year French Government scholarship to advance her music education at the *École Normale de musique*, initially hoping to continue her double major studies: conducting with Charles Munch and composition with Nadia Boulanger. However, her knowledge of French was not good

enough to study with Boulanger; and so she decided to enrol just in the conducting class, because with Munch she could also communicate in German. She also accepted an offer of private consultations with Bohuslav Martinů, who was by then established in France and well respected both in Paris and his native Czechoslovakia. Kaprálová met Martinů in Prague; they became acquainted on April 8, 1937, during Martinů's brief visit to the capital, where he arrived to negotiate with Václav Talich the details of the premiere of his new opera *Julietta* at the National Theater.

In Paris, Martinů became first Kaprálová's mentor, later also her friend, and, at the end, her soulmate. From the very beginning, he was generous with his contacts and time; and, besides hours of free consultations, he also opened quite a few doors for Kaprálová. Soon after she arrived in Paris, Martinů introduced her to a circle of composers who were members of Triton, a Parisian society for contemporary music, whose concerts (there were seven to twelve of them per year, concentrated in the period of January–May) Kaprálová diligently attended. He entrusted her with the task of conducting his Concerto for Harpsichord and Small Orchestra, H 246 on June 2, 1938 in Paris, just two weeks before her well-received ISCM Festival appearance. He also facilitated the publication of her *Variations sur le carillon de l'église St-Étienne du Mont*, op. 16, which he much admired, by La Sirène éditions musicales (whose catalog was bought after the war by Eschig that still list Kaprálová's original edition in their piano catalog).

In the fall of 1938, Martinů spent much time and effort to secure another stipend for Kaprálová so that she could return to France. The rapidly worsening political situation and separation from Kaprálová were the roots of his anxiety projected into his *Double Concerto*, H 271 for two string orchestras, piano and timpani. Martinů finished this score on the very day of the Munich Agreement. During the same time, Kaprálová continued to work, back home, on her Partita for strings and piano, op. 20, in which Martinů, as he put it himself, “interfered more than he would have liked but both (*he and Kaprálová*) looked at it as a learning exercise (*for Kaprálová*).”⁸ However, he did not interfere in her *Suita rustica*, op. 19, commissioned by Universal Edition London, which Kaprálová composed in just three weeks during late October and early November 1938. Neither did he interfere in her Concertino for Violin, Clarinet, and Orchestra, op. 21 (1939), the last movement and orchestration of which Kaprálová later set aside and did not finish. (At the beginning of this millennium, Brno composers Miloš Štědroň and Leoš Faltus were entrusted with the task of finishing the concertino's orchestration so that it could be recorded for a television documentary about Kaprálová. The concertino had its world premiere on January 10, 2002 in Hradec Králové and its Prague premiere on November 26, 2014—on this occasion, it was performed by Czech Philharmonic

at Prague's Rudolfinum.)

The Triton concerts and the thought-provoking discussions with Martinů were some of the elements of Kaprálová's new environment that further stimulated and accelerated her creative development: during the two years she lived in Paris, Kaprálová produced almost as much music as during the five years in Brno and two years in Prague. The pinnacles of her first “Parisian period” (October 1937–May 1938) include *Variations sur le carillon*, op. 16 and her (unfinished) reed trio. Another work that Kaprálová composed in Paris during this period, the large orchestral cantata *Ilena*, op. 15, is important in the context of her own oeuvre. Its musical ideas occupied Kaprálová's mind as early as 1932. When she finally began working with them, however, she found the music rooted in the post-romantic idiom from which she had already moved; consequently, she felt ambivalent about the composition and finished it only because Martinů valued it. Unfortunately, she did not complete its orchestration. (It was finished only in 2007 by Martin Kostaš, as part of his graduate studies requirements at the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, so that *Ilena* could receive its world premiere on May 31, 2007 in Brno.) During her second Parisian period (January 1939–May 1940), Kaprálová was even more productive. Soon after her return to Paris in January 1939, she composed two works honoring the memory of Czech writer Karel Čapek, whose passing during Christmas 1938 was mourned by the nation: the Elegy for violin and piano, and the melodrama *Karlu Čapkovi* (To Karel Čapek). On March 15, 1939, German armies marched into the streets of Prague. In addition to the occupation of her homeland, Kaprálová had to deal with a personal crisis in her relationship with Martinů; in anguish, she turned to the only solace afforded to her—music. The result was the Concertino for Violin, Clarinet, and Orchestra, op. 21. It reflects much of the composer's mental state at the worst period of her life; she even scribbled on the score “Job 30:26”—a telling reference to the Book of Job (*Yet when I hoped for good, evil came; when I looked for light, then came darkness*). The Concertino, with its bold ideas and modern musical language, was to be Kaprálová's last major work; only two high points were to follow: the song cycle *Sung into the Distance*, op. 22, and the *Deux ritournelles pour violoncelle et piano*, op. 25, her last composition.

The German occupation of Czechoslovakia changed Kaprálová's life literally overnight. As a return home was not an option, Kaprálová was now facing the arduous task of earning her own living; she no longer received financial aid from home, (as financial transactions were subjected to new, strict rules), nor her stipend. During the final year of her life, Kaprálová spent much of her precious time on small com-

Vítězslava Kaprálová

missions in an effort to support herself (one of them was the lively *Prélude de Noël*, an orchestral miniature that Kaprálová composed for a Christmas program of the Paris PTT Radio). Throughout the spring of 1939, Kaprálová was trying to obtain a scholarship at the Juilliard School so that she could relocate to the United States (in the company of Martinů). Nothing came of the plan, however; and at the end of summer 1939, Kaprálová entirely depended on assistance of several of her friends and a few benefactors (the most generous among them was Jewish-Czech entrepreneur Pavel Deutsch to whom she was introduced by Martinů; she also received two financial contributions from Czech ex-President Edvard Beneš to whom she once dedicated her *Military Sinfonietta*). Lacking regular income, Kaprálová joined the household of her artist friends who found themselves in a similar position and decided to pool their resources to get through hard times (one of these friends was her future husband Jiří Mucha). She also joined the efforts of the Czech community in Paris that organized activities for and around the newly formed Czechoslovak Army. Soon she became heavily involved: from founding a choir and writing reviews for *La Cause Tchécoslovaque* to composing music for the radio (Paris PTT Radio), stage (together with Martinů she composed stage music for a theater group) and even screen. (The latter concerned most possibly a commission facilitated by Kaprálová's friend, film actor Hugo Haas, who at the time worked on two films in France: *Mer en flames* by director Léo Joannon, in which Haas played a leading role; the film was released in 1945 under the title *Documents Secrets*; and the film *Ils se sont rencontrés dans l'eau*, whose script Haas co-authored).⁹ In the last months of her life, Kaprálová also resumed her studies at the École Normale (whether she was taking class with Boulanger remains inconclusive), adding to her already busy schedule. In April 1940, less than two months before her death, she married Jiří Mucha. In early May, Kaprálová exhibited the first symptoms of her terminal illness. Since Paris was threatened by German invasion, she was evacuated by Mucha to Montpellier, near his military base in Agde, on May 20. By then Kaprálová was already seriously ill; and, following several weeks of suffering, she succumbed to her illness on June 16, 1940.

Despite the amount of research amassed over the decades, there are still many questions in the Kaprálová historiography that remain unanswered. While there is not a single text on the composer that would fail to mention her relationship with married Martinů (some authors do not even shy away from analyzing and evaluating it!), in fact we know very little about it. One thing is certain, however; that it meant a great deal to both of them, and when, in the end, Kaprálová gave it up, she did it out of consideration for her parents, with whom she had lifelong loving relationship. Kaprálová's relationship with

Mucha also raises more questions than answers. Would she have married him under different circumstances than in her difficult situation in 1940? Even the cause of Kaprálová's death is a mystery, despite the official diagnosis of military tuberculosis. It does not fit all that well with the symptoms and the nature of her sudden and acute illness, and is also undermined by the documents found in several private and public archives.¹⁰ The questions that are more important, however, are those concerning the composer's oeuvre. One remains a complete enigma: Kaprálová's opus 24. The composer's correspondence might (or might not) offer some clues: in January 1939, Kaprálová wrote to her friend Rudolf Kopec that her mind had been pre-occupied for some time with musical ideas for a new work she would like to entitle *České oratorium* (Czech oratorio); in May 1939, she wrote to her parents about her intention to compose Sonatina for violin and piano; in another letter to her parents, from March 1940, she announced that she was about to compose "a smaller thing for orchestra" she would like to entitle *Krajiny* (Landscapes). Did she reserve the opus 24 for one of these compositions? Had she ever begun composing any of them? We might also never discover another of Kaprálová's works, the second of her Deux ritournelles, although we know that she at least finished the sketch. Another piece of lost music is Kaprálová's Two Dances for Piano, op. 23, of which only an unfinished sketch of one dance survived. Perhaps these autographs will resurface one day, as did the orchestral score of *Prélude de Noël*. But whether they will be found or not, we have been fortunate to have the rest of Kaprálová's oeuvre: the vital body of works which never fails to surprise and move us.

Notes:

1. Vladimír Helfert, *Česká moderní hudba. Studie o české hudební tvořivosti* (Praha: Editio Supraphon, 1970), 303. A reprint of the first edition published in 1936 by Index, Olomouc.
2. Czechoslovakia became an independent democratic republic on October 28, 1918.
3. Jindřiška Bártová, "Kaprállová in the Context of Czech Music." In *The Kaprálová Companion*, ed. Karla Hartl and Erik Entwistle (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), 13–25.
4. "Konzerte," a review signed by initials W.H., *Prager Tagblatt*, June 20, 1935, 6.
5. *Výroční zpráva Pražské konservatoře za školní rok 1935/36* [Annual report of the Prague Conservatory for the academic year 1935/1936] (Praha: Pražská konservatoř, 1936).
6. "International Egg Rolling." *Time Magazine*, June 27, 1938. Available online <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,759885,00.html>
7. Havergal Brian, "The Nature of Modern Music. Contemporary Music Festival," *Musical Opinion* (July 1938): 858.
8. Přemysl Pražák, ed., *Vítězslava Kaprálová, studie a vzpomínky* (Praha: HMUB, 1949), 127.
9. Karla Hartl, "Vítězslava Kaprálová: An Annotated Life Chronology." In *The Kaprálová Companion*, ed. Karla Hartl and Erik Entwistle (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), 151n85.
10. Ibid, 153n95.

Vítězslava Kaprálová

PÍSNÍČKA

Little Song (1936)

VÍTEŽSLAVA KAPRÁLOVÁ (1915–1940)

Cantabile
Piano
p

mf

f

mp
p

poco rit.
f a tempo

20 *sempre f*

24 *subito p* *crescendo*

28 *p* *mf*

32

36 *f* *mp*

40 *p* *pp poco rit.*

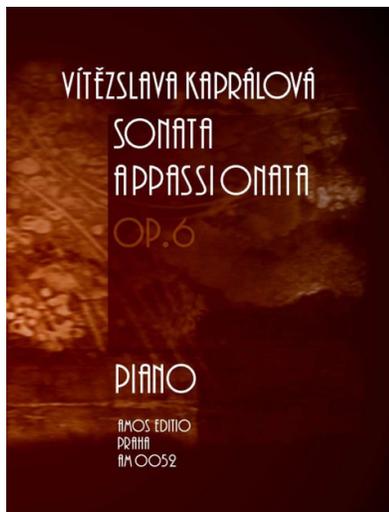
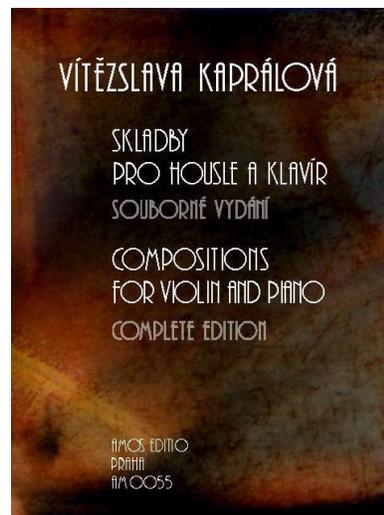
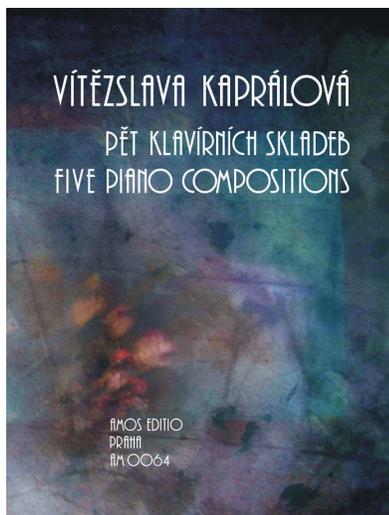
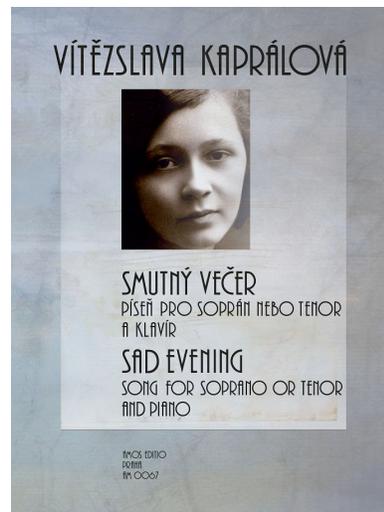
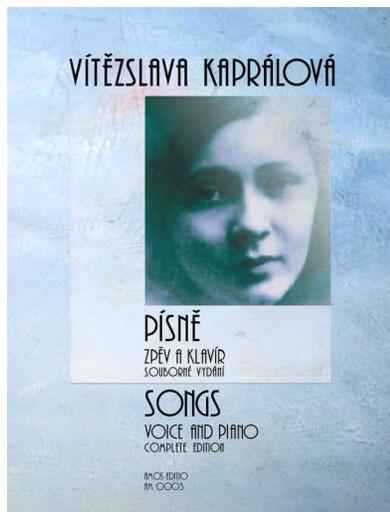
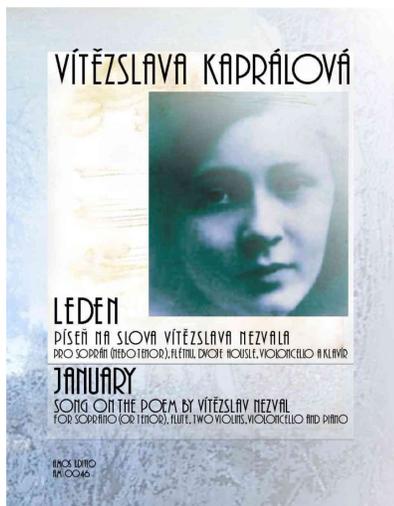
KS001

p

Detailed description: This page contains a piano score for measures 20 through 40. The music is written in a key with two flats and a 2/4 time signature. It features a variety of dynamics including *sempre f*, *subito p*, *crescendo*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *pp*, and *poco rit.*. The score includes numerous fingerings and articulation marks such as accents and slurs. The piece concludes with a *pp* dynamic and a *poco rit.* instruction.

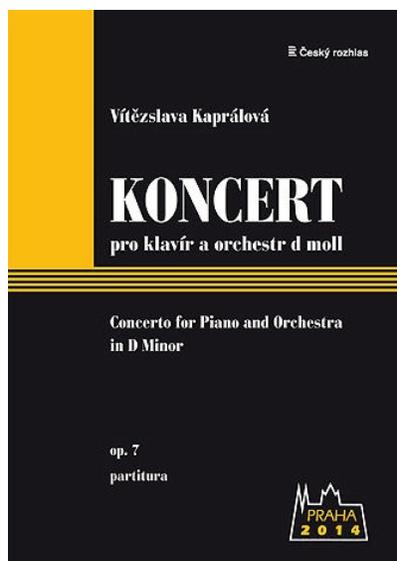
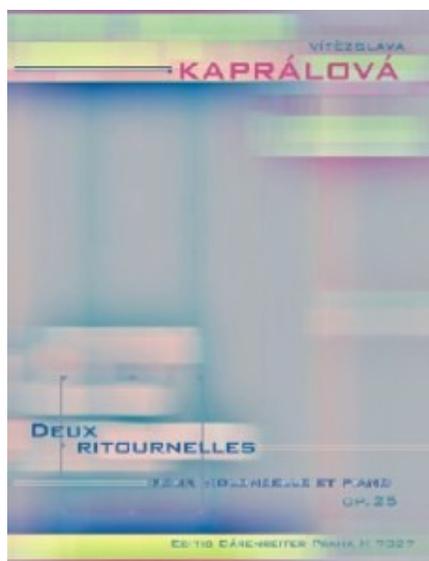
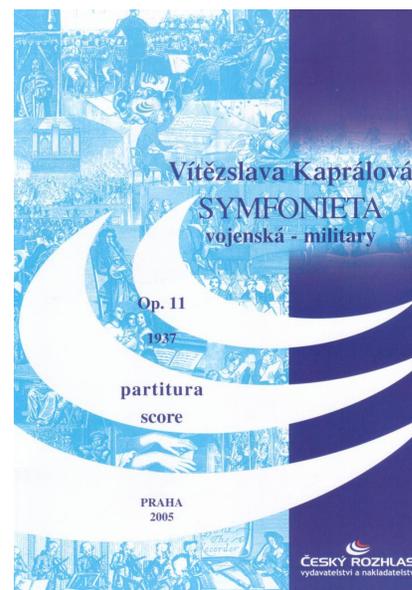
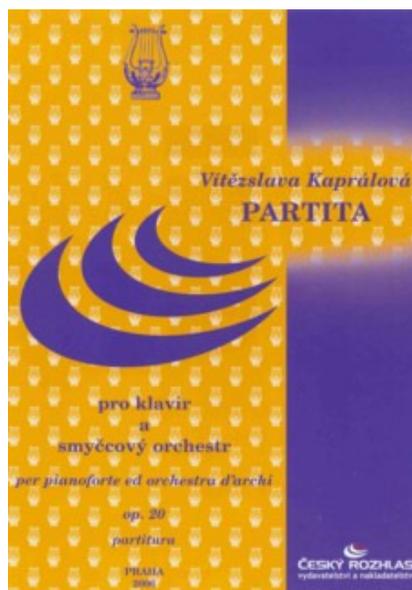
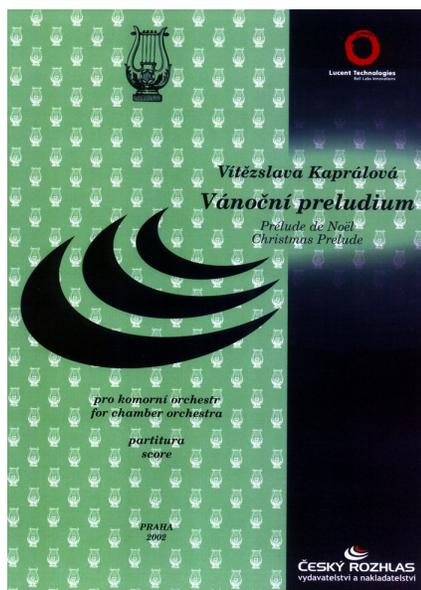
Vítězslava Kaprálová: Scores we helped publish

The Kaprálová centenary is an opportunity to highlight some of the accomplishments of our Society since its inception in 1998. There have been many—from initiating and assisting publication and release of Kaprálová’s music to encouraging its performance and broadcast, analysis and research. Over the course of the past sixteen years, we have initiated and assisted a great number of projects. Here are the scores we have initiated and fully supported:



Vítězslava Kaprálová: Scores we helped publish

Here are other publications that we have initiated and/or assisted:



Our most notable achievements in brief:

1998–to date: *The Kaprálová Edition* (Scores: pp. 6–9; CD Recordings: pp. 10–11)

1998–to date: *The Kapralova Society Website*: our award winning site promotes Kaprálová and other women in music.

2000–to date: Articles in *Tempo*, *Journal of IAWM*, *Viva Voce*, *Czech Music Quarterly*, *Opus musicum*, and *Harmonie*.

2001–to date: Seminal radio documentaries and programs we have assisted: *The Life and Music of Vítězslava Kaprálová* (CBC 2); *Componist van de week: Vítězslava Kaprálová* (Dutch Radio 4 Vara); *Zenske v svetu glasbe: Vítězslava Kaprálová* (Radio Slovenija 3 Ars).

2003–to date: *The Kapralova Society Journal*: our journal of women in music is published twice a year.

2007: *World premiere of Ilena, op. 15*—initiated and financially supported by the Society in partnership with Janáček Academy of Performing Arts.

2010: *The Kaprálová Companion*: assisted research for the first monograph on Kaprálová in English, published in 2011 by Lexington Books in the United States (p. 12).

2011–to date: *The Kapralova Society Award* for the best interpretation of a Kaprálová song is given to participants of the biannual Czech and Slovak art song competition in Montreal, Canada (with semifinals held at the University of Wisconsin).

Vítězslava Kaprálová Discography: CDs we helped publish

Studio Matouš. MK 0049-2 011 (1998). TT: 75:14. Military Sinfonietta, String Quartet, April Preludes, Love Carol, Ritornel, Partita, Waving Farewell (orchestral version). Brno Philharmonic and František Jílek, Janáček Quartet, Bohumil Smejkal, Lenka Škorníčková, Jitka Drobílková, Ivan Měrka, Jiří Skovajsa, and Jaroslav Smýkal.

Recorded in the Czech Radio (Studio Brno) in 1974, 1975, 1982, 1991, and at the Domovina Studio in October 1998.

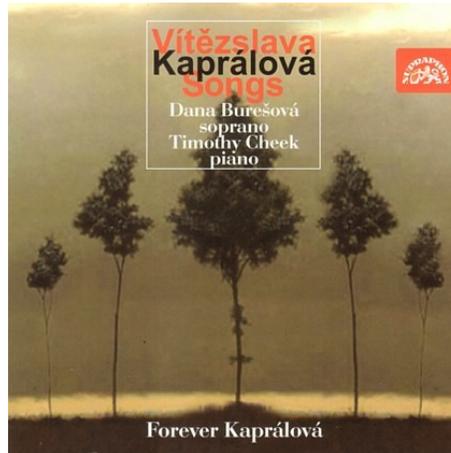
This excellent and generously filled issue does a great deal to establish her credentials as a genuinely fascinating voice in inter-war Czech music... *BBC Music Magazine*, June 1999.

[A] moving testimony to a substantial creative personality who had already hit her stride before her career was so cruelly cut short. *Tempo*, October 2000.

Discoveries aplenty here ... Well worth the quest you will need to make if you want to find this treasurable CD... *Musicweb.uk*, October 2003.

In her short 25 years, Czech composer Vitezslava Kapralova amassed an astonishingly original output that would be the envy of any composer three times her age... *All Music Guide*, July 2005.

Yes, of course, it would be fascinating to know what Kapralova would have become had she survived to full maturity - but more to the point, there can be no question that the music she actually left is more than worth getting to know. *Records International*, August 1999.



Supraphon SU 3752-2 231 (2003). TT: 70:13. Accompanied with a 73-page booklet containing texts and lyrics in English, German, French, and Czech. Two Songs, Sparks from Ashes, January, Apple from the Lap, Forever, Waving Farewell, Carol, Christmas Carol, Seconds, Sung into the Distance, Letter. Dana Burešová, soprano, and Timothy Cheek, piano.

Recorded at the Domovina Studio in Prague on July 13-15 and 17-20, 2003.

Une artiste d'exception... *Diapason*, May 2004
Mesmeric, dreamy and expressive. *Musicweb.uk*

Kapralova est pour le lied tchèque ce que Duparc est pour la mélodie française. Une redécouverte capitale. *AbeilleMusique.com*

Some of the most purely beautiful music I have heard in a long while. *Musicweb.uk*

One of the best CDs in the genre of 20th century art song repertoire recordings. *IAWM Journal*, Fall 2004

There are some real treasures here and for anyone interested in 20th-century Czech music, a fresh perspective on the post-Janacek era. *BBC Music Magazine*, March 2004

Kapralova's group of songs *Forever* would be a remarkable achievement for any composer, let alone one in her early twenties. *Fanfare Magazine*

Both Burešová and Cheek display expertise in portraying the many intricate and complicated facets of this hauntingly beautiful vocal music, and their CD is a must-have for anyone interested in the music of Kaprálová. *Kapralova Society Journal*, Fall 2011



Koch Records. KIC-CD-7742 (2008). TT: 64:42. April Preludes, Legend, Burlesque, Five Compositions for Piano, Sonata Appassionata, Variations sur le Carillon de l'Eglise St-Etienne du Mont, Little Song. Virginia Eskin, piano, Stephanie Chase, violin.

Recorded in July 2007 at the Performing Arts Center, Purchase, New York.

If you are looking for highly sophisticated piano music rich in texture, clarity and depth, look no further. *About.com*

The piano and violin-and-piano music here is richly melodic, highly chromatic, and bursting with invention. *American Record Guide*, 2008

Kapralova's music displays a remarkable mastery of form and harmony, and radiates youthful spontaneity, lyrical tenderness, and passionate intensity. *Strings Magazine*, Nov. 2008

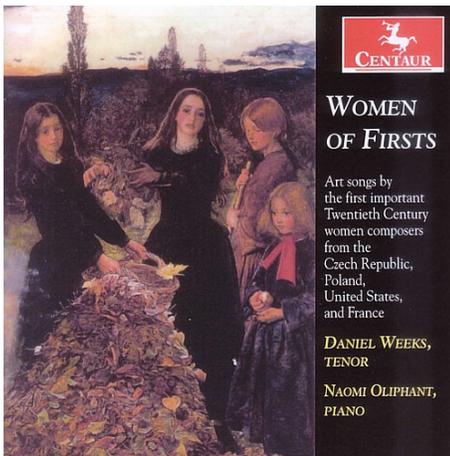
Kaprálová was one of the major female composers in history, despite her short time on earth; this Koch disc does her music considerable justice and serves as a strong introduction to Kaprálová's music. *Allmusic.com*

Add this to your select discography of a composer whose early death deprived Czechoslovakia of a burgeoning talent. *Musicweb.uk*

I have no doubt that this release will not only please Kapralova's enthusiasts but also add many others to her following. *IAWM Journal*, Fall 2008

This recording is an important milestone in Kaprálová's discography and testifies to the memory of a brilliant mid-twentieth century composer. *Amazon.com*

The recording is strong and the performances sensitive and completely committed. *Musicweb.uk*

Vítězslava Kaprálová Discography: CDs we helped publish

Gentaur Records CRC 2966 (2009). TT: 50:01. Forever (plus songs by Beach, Bacewicz, and Boulanger). Daniel Weeks, tenor and Naomi Oliphant, piano.

Recorded in April 2007 in the Margaret Comstock Concert Hall at the University of Louisville School of Music, Louisville, Kentucky.

The most important reason to add this to your recording shelf is the opportunity it affords the listener to encounter the music of four gifted women composers. With its superb performances, this disk is an excellent step in the right direction. *Journal of Singing*, Nov./Dec. 2009



Stylton (2010). TT: 64:36. Sonata Appassionata, Three Piano Pieces (with Grotesque Passacaglia), April Preludes, Variations sur le Carillon de l'Eglise St-Etienne du Mont (coupled with Martinů's Preludes for Piano). Renata Bialasová, piano.

Recorded in November 2009 at the Czech Radio Ostrava.



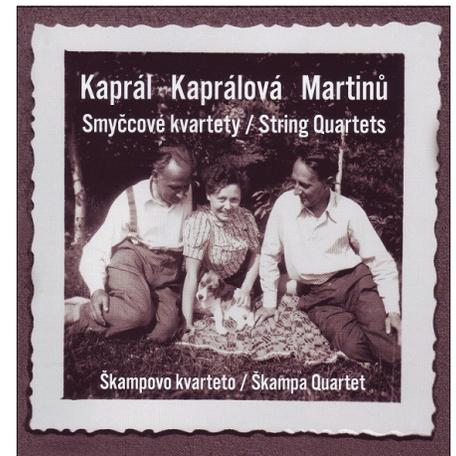
Radioservis CRO577-2 (2011). TT: 53:32. Piano Concerto in D Minor, Three Piano Pieces, Variations sur le Carillon de l'Eglise St-Etienne du Mont, Sonata Appassionata. Alice Rajnohová, Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic, Tomáš Hanus.

Recorded live at the House of Art in Zlín in November 2010 and at the Congress Center Zlín in June 2011.

The 2011 compact disc recording featuring four of Vítězslava Kaprálová's piano works is an important addition to the growing oeuvre of CDs showcasing Kaprálová's compositions. Not only does this recording contain representative works from the span of her career, but it also marks the first recording of her Piano Concerto in D Minor. The entire CD is expertly played by pianist Alice Rajnohová and matched in passion and precision by the Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Tomáš Hanus. *Kapralova Society Journal*, Fall 2012.

This CD release of the Czech Radio is worth buying for Kapralova's Concerto in D-Minor, op. 7 (1934-1935) alone. Kapralova graduated with the concerto from the Brno Conservatory in 1935, and while the work is rooted primarily in the late romantic idiom, its energetic and passionate score is full of fresh and inspiring ideas. The work receives a sensitive performance from both the soloist and the orchestra in front of live audience. *Amazon.com*

[Piano Concerto is] Amazing! Sounding romantic at the opening but quickly developing to more 20th Century astringency. A touch of Hindemith, particularly in the second movement. Most enjoyable, the performance bringing out the best. "Entusiastico" indeed! *YouTube*, 2013.



Radioservis CRO618-2 (2012). TT: 67:43. String Quartet (coupled with Martinů's Fifth and Kapral's First). Škampa Quartet.

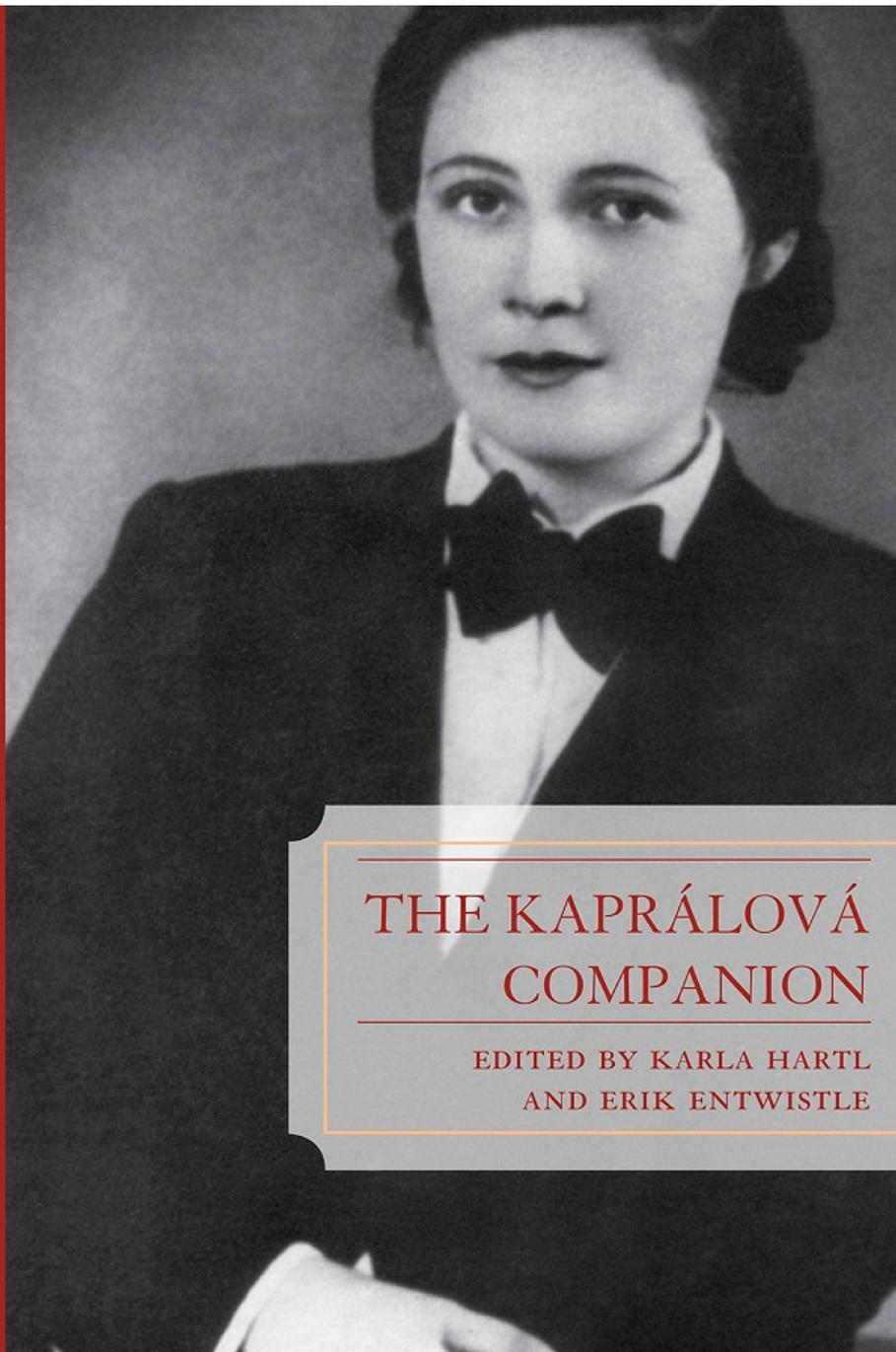
Recorded at the Czech Radio on January 10-11, February 24, and March 3, 2012.

The three composers also came very close together in these works intellectually - to the point that the way their quartets are performed and combined on this recording gives an impression of a "through-composed" triptych. [...] The youthful string quartet of Kapralova enchants the listener from the first measures by its freshness and vitality. The Skampa Quartet also lives up to its reputation as one of the most renowned Czech quartets; theirs is a highly sophisticated and sensitive performance that attests to their extraordinary musical imagination. *Czech Music Quarterly*, 1/2013

This disc will particularly interest those intrigued by the links between the three composers. The disc opens with a quartet by Vaclav Kapral, a pupil of Janacek whose influence is apparent in this engaging work. Martinu's 5th Quartet is already well represented in the catalogues but this new recording brings us a fresh interpretation from the admirable Skampa Quartet. Kapralova's own quartet pre-dates her meeting with Martinu. It has been recorded before but this performance presents a more authentic edition of the score, restoring previous cuts. It shows that at the time of its composition in 1936, Kapralova's idiom had evolved beyond the influence of her father and was developing a distinctive and appealing voice of its own. *Martinu Revue* 1/2013.

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ENTWISTLE

THE KAPRÁLOVÁ COMPANION



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