

# The Kapralova Society Journal

A Journal of Women in Music



Special points of interest:

- The Story of Ethel Smyth
- Vita Kapralova: A Life Chronology

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## DAMNED IF YOU DO AND DAMNED IF YOU DON'T: SEXUAL AESTHETICS AND THE MUSIC OF DAME ETHEL SMYTH

By Eugene Gates

The last two decades of the nineteenth century marked a turning point in the extent and nature of women's activity as composers. For the first time ever, significant numbers of women entered the traditionally male field of art music composition. This dramatic change was chiefly due to the widening of educational opportunities for women in the great European conservatories, specifically, the reluctant acceptance of female students into classes in advanced theory and composition.<sup>1</sup> Before that time, only three groups of women had access to adequate theoretical instruction: nuns, daughters of noble or wealthy families, and those fortunate enough to be born into a family of musicians who nurtured equally the talents of their daughters and sons.<sup>2</sup>

The increasing visibility of women composers was greeted by turn-of-the-century critics with hostility and alarm. Fearing that this trend would lead to the feminization of music, they developed the double standard of sexual aesthetics<sup>3</sup>--a system of gendered criteria for the critical evaluation of women's music. This article examines the critical response to the music of English composer Dame Ethel Smyth (1858-1944), and, in a brief postscript, the legacy of sexual aesthetics as it exists today. As a preface to these endeavors, however, it will be necessary to discuss the nature of sexual aesthetics in greater detail.

Based on the Romantic ideology of complementary male and female intellectual and psychological traits, through which men were defined as objective, logical and active and women as subjective, emotional and passive,<sup>4</sup> sexual aesthetics enabled critics to discuss the form, style

and emotional range of a woman's musical compositions in terms of their appropriateness to her sex. On this view, "feminine" music, which women were expected to compose exclusively, was delicate, graceful, sensitive, melodic, and confined to the smaller forms such as songs and short piano pieces. "Masculine" music, on the other hand, was powerful, lushly orchestrated, and intellectually rigorous both in formal structure and in harmonic and contrapuntal innovation. Operas, symphonies and other large-scale works belonged to this realm.<sup>5</sup> As more and more women began to compose in the larger forms, they were attacked by critics for venturing beyond their supposedly innate sexual limitations.<sup>6</sup>

Camille Saint-Saëns provided a model for the rhetoric of sexual aesthetics when he declared in an 1885 essay that women, in their misguided attempts to imitate and compete with male composers, overcompensated for their femininity by producing music that was too boisterous. "Women," he wrote, "are strange when they dabble seriously in art. They seem preoccupied above all else with making you forget that they are women and displaying an excessive virility, without realizing that it is precisely that pre-occupation which betrays the female."<sup>7</sup>

Critics throughout the Western world quickly followed suit. American critic Philip Hale, for instance, wrote: "A woman who writes for orchestra thinks, 'I must be virile at all cost.' What Saint-Saëns said . . . is true of the sex."<sup>8</sup> Writing in similar vein, Rupert Hughes discussed music in terms of its "supremely womanly" and "man-tone" characteristics.<sup>9</sup> Like Saint-Saëns, Hughes claimed that women who

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wrote in man-tone were "seeking after virility."<sup>10</sup> When a woman composed in the smaller forms, it was said to be proof of her innate inability to think in the larger, more abstract forms; if, however, she wrote man-tone works, it was said that she had betrayed her sexual identity. Put simply, sexual aesthetics allowed critics to attribute both the merits and shortcomings of a woman's compositions to her gender.<sup>11</sup> It effected not only a double standard but a double bind.

As a woman composer who specialized in operas and large-scale symphonic/choral works, Ethel Smyth was a prime target for the critics' exercises in sexual aesthetics. One of the most colorful musical figures of the Victorian/Edwardian period, Smyth was born into a prosperous military family in Sidcup, near London, in 1858. Inspired by a governess who had studied music at the Leipzig Conservatory, she resolved at the age of twelve to do likewise and become a composer. Against the strenuous objections of her father, an arch conservative who held very traditional views about the role of women in society, Smyth set off for Leipzig in 1877 at the age of nineteen. At the Leipzig Conservatory, she studied composition with Carl Reinecke. Disillusioned with the low standard of teaching, she left after a year, and continued her studies privately with the Austrian composer Heinrich von Herzogenberg, founder and conductor of the Bach-Verein in Leipzig. Her published works include six operas, a concert mass, a double concerto, a choral symphony, songs with piano and orchestral accompaniment, organ pieces, and chamber music.<sup>12</sup>

It was as a composer of chamber music that Ethel Smyth made her professional debut. Among the earliest of her works to receive a public hearing was her dramatic *Sonata in A Minor*, Op. 7, for violin and piano, which was first performed at the Leipzig Gewandhaus on November 20, 1887. One critic found it "devoid of feminine charm and therefore unworthy of a woman."<sup>13</sup> This was Smyth's first encounter with sexual aesthetics; it would certainly not be her last.

Three years later, on April 26, 1890, Smyth's four-movement *Serenade* was given its premiere at the Crystal Palace in London under the direction of August Manns. Since it was both her orchestral debut and the first public performance of any of her works in her native country, this concert was an important landmark in her career.<sup>14</sup> Hoping to avoid unjust criticism, Smyth attempted to disguise her sex by having her name printed on the programme as E. M. Smyth. This strategy failed to work. While the Leipzig critic had said that her Violin Sonata lacked "feminine charm," George Bernard Shaw, then music critic of the *Star*, dismissed the *Serenade* for its "daintiness"--a supposedly desirable feminine trait. He wrote:

First there was a serenade by Miss Smyth, who

wrote the analytic program in such terms as to conceal her sex, until she came forward to acknowledge the applause at the end. No doubt Miss Smyth would scorn to claim any indulgence as a woman, and far from me be it to discourage her righteous pride . . . [However,] I am convinced that we should have resented the disappointment less had we known that our patience was being drawn on by a young lady instead of some male Smyth. It is very neat and dainty, this orchestral filigree work; but it is not in its right place on great occasions [such as this].<sup>15</sup>

Six months later, on October 18, 1890, Smyth's *Overture to Shakespeare's Anthony and Cleopatra* was given its first performance at the Crystal Palace, again under the baton of Manns. Shaw also reviewed this concert. Although he had nothing negative to say about the piece, he expressed surprise that such tempestuous music could have come from the pen of a woman composer. He wrote:

When E. M. Smyth's heroically brassy overture to Anthony and Cleopatra was finished, and the composer called to the platform, it was observed with stupefaction that all that tremendous noise had been made by a lady."<sup>16</sup>

A far more important work was Smyth's *Mass in D* for soloists, chorus and orchestra. It was first performed on January 18, 1893, by the Royal Choral Society under the direction of Sir Joseph Barnby at the Royal Albert Hall. The performance was excellent, and the audience wildly enthusiastic, but Smyth was discouraged by the reviews.<sup>17</sup> She later wrote bitterly that "except as regards the scoring, which got good marks on all sides, the Press went for the Mass almost unanimously."<sup>18</sup> Hardest of all for her to bear was the patronizing, sexist tone adopted by many of the critics.<sup>19</sup> A reviewer for the *Morning Post* declared himself to have been amused to see "a lady composer attempt[ing] to soar in the loftier regions of musical art."<sup>20</sup> A critic for the *Star* was equally backhanded: "Is a female composer possible? No, says your psychologist. . . . With women, however, it is just the impossible that is sure to happen."<sup>21</sup> Reviewing the performance for the *World*, Shaw wrote:

If you take an average mundane young lady, and ask her what service to religion she most enjoys rendering, she will proba-

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bly . . . instance the decoration of a church at Christmas. . . . Now I will not go so far as to say that Miss Smyth's musical decoration of the Mass is an exactly analogous case, . . . but . . . the decorative instinct is decidedly in front of the religious instinct all through.<sup>22</sup>

One critic who did recognize the Mass as a great achievement was J. A. Fuller Maitland. He wrote:

This work definitely placed the composer among the most eminent composers of her time, and easily at the head of her own sex. The most striking thing about it was the entire absence of the qualities that are usually associated with feminine productions; throughout it was virile, masterly in construction and workmanship, and particularly remarkable for the excellence and rich colouring of the orchestration.<sup>23</sup>

But, as the above passage shows, not even Fuller Maitland was immune to the all-pervasive influence of sexual aesthetics. In his view, Smyth had created a successful work; therefore, she had composed like a man.

On March 11, 1903, Smyth's opera *Der Wald* gained the distinction of becoming the first opera by a woman to be performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York.<sup>24</sup> As the following excerpts from the reviews show, many critics found it impossible to reconcile the energy and vitality of Smyth's music with those traits deemed typically feminine. In the *Musical Courier* of March 18, 1903, we read:

Not as the music of a woman should Miss Smyth's score be judged. She thinks in masculine terms, broad and virile. . . . Her climaxes are full-blooded, and the fortissimos are real. There is no sparing of the brass, and there is no mincing of the means that speak musical passion. In this respect (and it is not the only one) the gifted Englishwoman has successfully emancipated herself from her sex.<sup>25</sup>

Similarly, Richard Aldrich of the *New York Times* wrote: "Miss Smyth is very serious, and the opera sounds the note of sincerity and resolute endeavor. She uses the vocal and orchestral resources with masculine energy."<sup>26</sup>

While such evaluations were considered the highest praise a critic could offer a woman composer, they were also seen as proof of the widely held notion that women who succeeded in traditionally male fields such as

composition did so at great expense to their femininity.<sup>27</sup> An early expression of this theory is set forth in Immanuel Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*. He wrote:

Laborious learning or painful pondering, even if a woman should greatly succeed in it, destroy the merits that are proper to her sex, and because of their rarity they can make of her an object of cold admiration; but at the same time they will weaken the charms with which she exercises her great power over the other sex. [Such a] woman . . . might as well even have a beard; for perhaps that would express more obviously the mien of profundity for which she strives.<sup>28</sup>

Later writers even claimed that the mental effort required of a woman to excel in such fields as composition could cause her reproductive organs to wither. Paul Möbius, an extremely influential German pathologist, for example, wrote the following in 1898: "If it were possible for the feminine abilities to develop in a parallel fashion to those of a male, the organs of motherhood would shrivel."<sup>29</sup>

Smyth's next opera, *The Wreckers*, generally considered her finest work, was given its premiere in Leipzig on November 11, 1906. It was also produced in Prague one month later. Smyth was then determined to secure a performance of *The Wreckers* in England. When Covent Garden rejected the score, she decided to present a concert version of the first two acts at Queen's Hall in London. This performance, conducted by Arthur Nikisch, took place on May 28, 1908, and was a resounding success. Nonetheless, one patronizing critic felt obliged to describe the work as "a remarkable achievement—for a woman."<sup>30</sup> There is little wonder that Smyth later wrote resignedly: "The exact worth of my music will probably not be known till naught remains of [me] but sexless dots and lines on ruled paper."<sup>31</sup>

Smyth's most popular opera, *The Boatswain's Mate*—a work that includes quotations from traditional folk melodies—was first performed at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London, on January 28, 1916, by the Beecham Opera Company. In subsequent seasons, it was frequently presented at Sadler's Wells. Recalling the premiere in her memoirs, Smyth cites an incident that further illustrates the insidious nature of sexual aesthetics. She writes:

On that occasion I had drawn up a list of the folk melodies I had used, and owing to a printer's error 'Lord Rendal' was omitted, with the result that this tune was selected by four or five critics as an instance of the com-

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poser's unfortunate gift for turning out the cheaper sort of music-hall ditty. True, they made up for it by declaring my own tune 'When the sun is setting' (which by the same token had got into the Folk list), to be a perfect example of English melodic genius . . . My tune really is a good one (if I may say so), and in the belief that it was folk, these judges permitted themselves to enjoy it, whereas, taking 'Lord Rendal' for a woman's effusion, they closed their hearts against the charm of what is surely one of the most exquisite folk melodies in the world.<sup>32</sup>

The preceding excerpts from reviews of her works and from her memoirs demonstrate that Smyth's music was seldom evaluated as simply the work of a composer among composers, but as that of a "woman composer." This worked to keep her on the margins of the profession, and, coupled with the double standard of sexual aesthetics, also placed her in a double bind. On the one hand, when she composed powerful, rhythmically vital music, it was said that her work lacked feminine charm; on the other, when she produced delicate, melodious compositions, she was accused of not measuring up to the artistic standards of her male colleagues. And, if her music was deemed a success, she was said to have transcended the limitations of her sex by composing like a man. Clearly, as Judith Tick has said, "such evaluations whether motivated by good or bad will, ultimately harmed the woman composer in their insistence on a correlation between sex and emotive content of a piece."<sup>33</sup>

Although one might reasonably assume that the practice of analyzing women's music in terms of masculine and feminine traits disappeared long ago, this is not so. Consider what American composer Priscilla McLean has to say about two recent experiences:

One noted Midwestern orchestral conductor told me he believed that there definitely was a 'woman's music,' which was delicate, soft, unctuous in harmonies, organic in form, and so on. I answered by telling him that he had exactly described the music of Debussy, and how did he account for that? Another conversation took place after a two-piano piece of mine called *Interplanes* was played on the radio. Without knowing that I had written the work, a male composer friend of mine who had been researching contemporary music for years remarked that here was a definitely mascu-

line work--strong, forceful, driving, dissonant, and so on--and was astounded to hear that the work was mine.<sup>34</sup>

Ironically, sexual aesthetics has also found its way into the burgeoning new discipline of feminist arts criticism. During the past three decades, the question of whether there is a recognizably female voice in the music of women has become a heated topic of debate in feminist circles.<sup>35</sup> Some academic feminist critics believe that there exists in women's music a specifically female style that differs from that of male composers both in formal structure and in expressive quality, and in some way reflects woman's nature or "essence." Such critics often describe music written by men as "hierarchical," and that written by women as "democratic."<sup>36</sup> One theory stemming from this school of criticism posits that women composers, because of their female nature, should write in circular forms with the climax appearing in the middle. Such forms are believed to parallel the female orgasm.<sup>37</sup> But, because this theory attempts to limit the forms in which women should create, it is just as oppressive to female composers as is the original version of sexual aesthetics. Moreover, as musicologist Susan McClary points out, any attempt to define a universal female essence in the music of women is doomed to failure, for

[e]ven though our obsession for classifying all music stylistically might make us want to jump impulsively at the chance to codify the distinctive characteristics of a "women's music," there can be no such single thing, just as there is no universal male experience or essence [embodied in the music of male composers].<sup>38</sup>

Canadian composer Violet Archer (1912-2000) held a similar view. In a 1994 interview she said: "I'm thinking of Clara Schumann, who was a very good composer. I've heard some of her music and I can't say I'd call it feminine. It was really [just] Romantic music."<sup>39</sup> As for the music of today's composers, Archer added, "I can't say that there is a difference really, from what I have heard."<sup>40</sup> Addressing this issue with reference to her own music, Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983) said in 1982: "My music is neither masculine nor feminine. It is just plain music."<sup>41</sup> Further to this point, composer Joan Tower, who has served as a juror for the National Endowment for the Arts, observes: "For the grants panels of the National Endowment for the Arts, we tried to tell if scores were written by men or women, and we couldn't."<sup>42</sup>

Now that both men and women are composing in a wide variety of styles and genres, perhaps the notion of gendered traits in women's music will at last be given a decent burial. The time is long overdue.

## Notes

This article was first published in the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 31 (Spring 1997): 63-71. It is reprinted here with the permission of the publisher.

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of female education in nineteenth-century conservatories, see Eugene Gates, "The Woman Composer Question: Four Case Studies from the Romantic Era," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, 1992, pp. 32-35.

<sup>2</sup> Carol Neuls-Bates, ed., *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), pp. xi-xii.

<sup>3</sup> The term "sexual aesthetics" seems to have been coined by Judith Tick. See her "Women as Professional Musicians in the United States, 1870-1900," *Yearbook for Inter-American Musical Research* 9 (1973): 110-15.

<sup>4</sup> The notion of sexual complementarity is most famously expounded in Book V of Rousseau's *Emile*. For a recent insightful critique of Rousseau's thesis, see Jane Roland Martin, "Rousseau's Sophie," in her *Reclaiming a Conversation: The Ideal of the Educated Woman* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 38-69.

<sup>5</sup> Neuls-Bates, *Women in Music*, p. 223.

<sup>6</sup> For a critique of the psychological literature which allegedly supports the claim that women are innately incapable of equalling men as composers, see Eugene Gates, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Composers? Psychological Theories, Past and Present," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 28 (Summer 1994): 27-34.

<sup>7</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, *Harmonie et mélodie*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Calmann Levy, 1885), p. 228.

<sup>8</sup> Philip Hale, "Mrs. Beach's Symphony Produced Last Night in Music Hall," *Boston Sunday Journal*, 1 November 1896, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Rupert Hughes, *Contemporary American Composers* (Boston: L. C. Page, 1900), p. 433.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 438.

<sup>11</sup> Neuls-Bates, *Women in Music*, p. 223.

<sup>12</sup> For further biographical information on Smyth, see the following: Louise Collis, *Impetuous Heart: The Story of Ethel Smyth* (London: William Kimber, 1984); Christopher St. John, *Ethel Smyth: A Biography* (London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1959); Ethel Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, 2 vols. (London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1919); Ethel Smyth, *The Memoirs of Ethel Smyth*, abridged and introduced by Ronald Crichton (New York: Viking, 1987).

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Smyth, *Impressions that Remained*, vol. 2, p.162.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 227.

<sup>15</sup> [George] Bernard Shaw, *The Bodley Head Shaw: Shaw's Music*, ed. Dan H. Laurence (London: Max Rheinhart, 1981), vol. 2, p. 54.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 558.

<sup>17</sup> Ethel Smyth, *A Final Burning of Boats* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1928), p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ethel Smyth, *As Time Went On* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1936), p. 172.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Collis, *Impetuous Heart*, p. 63.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>22</sup> Shaw, *Shaw's Music*, vol. 2, p. 791.

<sup>23</sup> J. A. Fuller Maitland, "Smyth, Ethel," *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. J. A. Fuller Maitland (New York: Macmillan, 1910), vol. 4, p. 490.

<sup>24</sup> *Der Wald* remains the only opera by a woman composer ever

produced at the Metropolitan Opera.

<sup>25</sup> "A New Opera in New York," *Musical Courier* 46 (18 March 1903): 12.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Aldrich, "Operatic Novelty at the Season's End," *New York Times*, 15 March 1903, p. 25, cols. 4-5.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Louis C. Elson's comments on this point in his *The History of American Music* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1971, a reprint of the 1925 ed.), p. 305.

<sup>28</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, trans. John T. Goldthwait (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), pp. 78-79.

<sup>29</sup> Paul J. Möbius, *Ueber den Physiologischen Schwachsinn den Weibes*, 9th enlarged ed. (Halle: Carl Marholm, 1908), p. 14, quoted in Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 172.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in St. John, *Ethel Smyth*, p. 114. Emphasis in St. John.

<sup>31</sup> Smyth, *A Final Burning of Boats*, p. 54.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>33</sup> Tick, "Women as Professional Musicians in the United States, 1870-1900," p. 115.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Paul Fromm, "Creative Women in Music: A Historical Perspective," in *A Life for New Music: Selected Papers of Paul Fromm*, ed. David Gable and Christoph Wolff (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 48.

<sup>35</sup> For a variety of opinions (both pro and con), see "Is There a Feminist Aesthetic in Music?," *Heresies*, no. 10 (1980), pp. 20-24.

<sup>36</sup> Heidi Waleson, "Women Composers Find Things Easier--Sort Of," *New York Times*, 28 January 1990, p. H27.

<sup>37</sup> See Jeannie G. Pool's critique of this and other related theories, in "Is There a Feminist Aesthetic in Music?," p. 21.

<sup>38</sup> Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 131. For a critique of essentialism in feminist arts criticism, see Gisela Ecker, Introduction to her *Feminist Aesthetics*, trans. Harriet Anderson (London: The Women's Press, 1985), pp. 15-22. See also Eugene Gates, "The Female Voice: Sexual Aesthetics Revisited," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 22 (Winter 1988): 59-68.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Owen Jones, "Discussing the Score on Female Composers," *Windsor Star*, 11 March 1994, p. C2.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Laura Mitgang, "Germaine Tailleferre: Before, During, and After *Les Six*," in *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective*, vol. 2, ed. Judith Lang Zaimont, Catherine Overhauser and Jane Gottlieb (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), p.178.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Waleson, "Women Composers Find Things Easier," p. H27.

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## Vitezslava Kapralova: A Life Chronology (Part III)

By Karla Hartl



Fig.1. Kapralova rehearses her *Military Sinfonietta* with the Czech Philharmonic in November 1937 in Prague. Photo courtesy of the Kapralova Estate. Previously published in Jiri Macek, *Vitezslava Kapralova* (Praha: Svaz cs. skladatelu, 1958).

### 1937 [cont.]

October 30 - Vitezslava meets with Bohuslav Martinu in Le Dôme in Paris.

November 4 - First conducting class with Charles Munch.

November 8 - Vitezslava is introduced to Florent Schmitt, Darius Milhaud and Arthur Honegger at Triton.

November 9 - *For Ever* is premiered by Jarmila Vavrdova and Frantisek Vrana [pf] at a concert of Umelecka Beseda in Prague.

November 22 - Vitezslava departs for Prague to conduct her *Military Sinfonietta* at a concert organized by the National Women's Council.

November 26 - Vitezslava conducts the Czech Philharmonic in her *Military Sinfonietta* at the concert organized by the National Women's Council, under the patronage of Edvard Benes, President of the Republic, in Lucerna Hall in Prague.

November 28 - The *Military Sinfonietta* receives favourable reviews in *Lidove noviny* (from Bohuslav Vomacka) and *Venkov* (from Otakar Sourek).

November 28 - Vitezslava returns to Paris.

November 30 - Another review of the *Military Sinfonietta* is printed in *Ceske slovo*.

December 1 - Vitezslava begins composing her four-part ballad-cantata *Ilena*, op.15.

December 10 - Vitezslava drafts the first part of *Ilena*.

December 12 - *Rodny kraj / Homeland* [Seconds]

December 14 - *Koleda / Carol* "V trni vrabce cvirikaju" for voice and piano

December 17 - A review of the premiere of the *Military Sinfonietta*, praising Kapralova's conducting performance, is printed in *Tempo*.

December 18 - Vitezslava begins composing *Trio for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon*.

December - *Vanocni prani / Christmas Wishes*, six miniatures for piano

December 24 - *Carol* is printed in *Lidove Noviny*.

December - final version of *Potpolis*

December 26 - Firkusny informs Vitezslava that her *Military Sinfonietta* was selected for the ISCM Festival in London.

December 29 - Alois Haba confirms that Vitezslava has been selected as one of the four finalists (Kapralova, Krejci, Bartos and Ullmann) who are to represent Czechoslovak contemporary music at the upcoming ISCM Festival in London. The Festival Jury members included Ernest Ansermet, Johan Bentzon, Adrian Boult, Alois Haba, and Darius Milhaud.

### 1938

January - Martinu begins composing *Tre Ricercari* and discussing the work with Vitezslava. He will incorporate some of her suggestions and later refer to the work as "our little ricercari."<sup>1</sup>

January 4 - Vitezslava drafts the second part of *Ilena*.

January 7 - Vitezslava begins to work on the third part of *Ilena*.

January - Vitezslava finishes a draft of the third part of *Ilena*.

February - *Variations sur le Carillon de l'Eglise St-Etienne du Mont*, op. 16, for piano

February 17 - *Koleda milostna / Love Carol* [Seconds, op. 18]

February - Vitezslava starts orchestrating her song *Waving Farewell*.

February - *Hymna dobrovolnych sester Cs. cerveneho krize / Hymn of Volunteer Nurses of the Czechoslovak Red Cross*

March - Vitezslava begins composing *Partita*, op. 20, for piano and string orchestra.

March 16 - Martinu and his wife Charlotte attend the premiere of *Julietta* in Prague.

March 27 - *Variations sur le Carillon* is premiered by Prof. Ludvik Kundera in Brno. Martinu writes to Vaclav Talich asking him to support Kapralova's application for the renewal of her French scholarship.

March 29 - The *Variations sur le Carillon* is praised by Gracian Cernusak in his review for *Lidove noviny*.

April 12 - Another favourable review of the *Variations sur le Carillon* is printed in *Narodni listy*.

April - *Apple from the Lap*, op. 10 is published by HMUB in Prague.

April - *April Preludes*, op. 13 are published by HMUB in Prague with the financial support of the Schindler Foundation.

April - Vitezslava applies for the renewal of her scholarship so that she can continue her studies at the Ecole Normale.

April 26 - Vitezslava departs for a trip to Southern France, Monaco



Fig.2: Vitezslava Kapralova with her parents, friends, and neighbours in front of her summer house in Tri Studne in summer 1937(?): Kapralova sits at the front in the centre, her mother Viktoria Kapralova sits slightly to the right behind her, and her father Vaclav Kapral is standing in the back row (third from the left). Photo courtesy of the Duchoslav Family.

and Italy, organized for a group of Czech students by Vitezslava's new friend Rudolf Kopec.

Martinu starts composing a deeply personal *String Quartet No. 5*.

May 6 - Vitezslava visits Monaco.

May 7 - Vitezslava visits Italy.

May 18 - Vitezslava visits Monte Carlo.

May 20 - Vitezslava returns to Paris.

May - Martinu finishes his *String Quartet No. 5* and dedicates its original sketch to Vitezslava.

May 27 - Vitezslava signs a contract with Michel Dillard of La Sirène Editions Musicales with respect to publishing her *Variations sur le Carillon*.

June 2 - Vitezslava conducts Martinu's *Harpsichord Concerto* at Salle Pleyel in Paris, at a concert organized by L'Association Internationale des Ecrivains pour la Défense de la Culture.

June 8 - Martinu writes another letter to Vaclav Talich concerning Vitezslava's scholarship.

June 15 - Vitezslava, accompanied by Bohuslav Martinu, departs for London to conduct her *Military Sinfonietta* at the ISCM Festival.

June 16 - Vitezslava participates in a BBC Television program about the ISCM Festival.

June 17 - Vitezslava meets Jan Masaryk in London.

June 17 - The International Society for Contemporary Music opens its XVI. Festival in London. Among composers whose works are presented at the festival are Béla Bartók, Benjamin Britten, Aaron Copland, Karl A. Hartmann, Paul Hindemith, Ernst Krenek, Olivier

Messiaen, and Anton Webern.<sup>2</sup> Vitezslava's *Military Sinfonietta* is programmed to open the festival.

June 17 - Vitezslava conducts the BBC Orchestra (later known as the BBC Symphony Orchestra) in her *Military Sinfonietta* at the opening of the ISCM Festival in London. She is the youngest (while Bartók is the oldest) composer participating at the festival.

June 18 - Kapralova's performance and music are favourably reviewed in *The Daily Telegraph* and *La revue musicale*.

June 21 - Martinu introduces Vitezslava to Swiss conductor Paul Sacher.

June 23 - Kapralova and Martinu return to Paris.

June 27 - Martinu leaves Paris for Prague.<sup>3</sup>

June 28 - Martinu's review<sup>4</sup> praising Kapralova's performance is printed in *Lidove noviny*.

June 28 - Vitezslava departs for Prague.

July - Havergal Brian praises Kapralova's *Military Sinfonietta* in his article about the ISCM Festival written for *Musical Opinion*.<sup>5</sup>

July 3 - Vitezslava, Martinu and his best friend Stanislav Novak attend the 10th *vsesokolsky slet* (July 3-6) in Prague.

July 5 - Vitezslava arrives at Tri Studne.

July 12 - Martinu arrives at Tri Studne.

July - Vitezslava works on the orchestration of her song *Waving Farewell*, aided by Martinu.

July 28 (?) - Vitezslava visits Martinu's hometown Policka. Before his departure to Prague (July 30?) Martinu urges Vitezslava to pur-

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Fig. 3: Kapralova with Charles Munch and her classmates in January 1938 (Kapralova sits in the first row next to Munch, fourth from the left). Photo courtesy of the Kapralova Estate. Previously published in Macek, 1958.

sue her French scholarship so that she can join him in Paris.

August 1 - Martinu leaves Prague for Paris. He would never see his homeland again.<sup>6</sup>

August - Deeply missing Vitezslava and with the political situation in Czechoslovakia deteriorating, Martinu begins composing his most powerful orchestral work - *Double Concerto for Two String Orchestras, Piano and Timpani*.<sup>7</sup>

August 22 - Vitezslava writes to Otakar Sourek asking him to follow up on her scholarship application with Dr. Stransky, secretary to Stanislav Bukovsky, the Minister of Education and Culture.<sup>8</sup>

September 7 - Vitezslava finishes her ballad *Ilena*.

September 29 - The Munich Accord.<sup>9</sup> Martinu finishes the *Double Concerto*.<sup>10</sup> Vitezslava experiences difficulties in obtaining her scholarship and has to delay her departure to Paris.

October - Vitezslava finishes her sketch of *Partita*, op. 20.

October 2 - At Tri Studne, Vitezslava begins orchestration of *Ilena*.

October 11 - Alfred Kalmus of Universal Edition (London) writes to Vitezslava inquiring about the status of his commission for a "suite on Czech folk songs."

October 15 - Vitezslava begins composing *Suita rustica*, op. 19.

October 25 - Vitezslava plays her *April Preludes* to Milos Sokola, a friend and former classmate from the Brno Conservatory. In 1952, Milos Sokola would compose orchestral variations on a theme of the third prelude and dedicate the work to the memory of Kapralova.

October 25 - Bohuslav Martinu writes to Vaclav Talich and Otakar Sourek, pleading with them to assist Kapralova's efforts to renew her French scholarship.<sup>11</sup>

October 28 - Bohuslav Martinu writes to Karel Capek asking him to help Vitezslava to secure her scholarship so that she can continue her studies in Paris.<sup>12</sup>

November 2 - Vitezslava finishes a sketch of *Suita rustica*.

November 8 - Martinu follows up on the matter of Kapralova's



## Kapralova: A Life Chronology

scholarship with Otakar Sourek.

November 10 - Vitezslava finishes orchestration of *Suita rustica*.

November 13 - Martinu pleads again with Sourek with respect to Kapralova's scholarship.<sup>13</sup>

November 24 - Otakar Sourek receives a letter from L.R. Stran-sky, secretary to Stanislav Bukovsky, interim Minister of Educa-tion and Culture, confirming that Kapralova would receive the scholarship. Grateful Vitezslava dedicates *Suita Rustica* to Ota- kar Sourek.<sup>14</sup>

November - *Military Sinfonietta*, op. 11 is published by Melantrich in Prague.

December 19 - The Bedrich Smetana Foundation names Kapra- lova a recipient of *Smetana Award*, for her *Military Sinfonietta*.<sup>15</sup>

December 25 - Karel Capek, the best known and most beloved Czech writer dies in Prague.

### 1939

January 10 - Vitezslava finally leaves Prague to join Martinu in Paris and to continue her studies at L'Ecole Normale de Mu- sique. She would never again return to her homeland...

January - Vitezslava continues working on the orchestration of her ballad *Ilena*, op. 15. She will not finish it.

January 21 - Alfred Kalmus informs Vitezslava about his deci- sion not to publish *Suita rustica*.<sup>16</sup>

January 28 - Vitezslava begins composing *In Memoriam* (of Karel Capek) for violin and piano (renamed *Elegy* by violinist Jan Sedivka who premiered the piece).

January 31 - Martinu gives Vitezslava his treasured piano sketch of *Julietta*.

February - Vitezslava revisits *Partita* - she will make major revi- sions to its original orchestral score over the next few months, under the guidance of Bohuslav Martinu.

February 2 - Vitezslava finishes *Elegy* for violin and piano.

February 10 - Melodram *Karlu Capkovi* / melodrama *To Karel Capek*

February 15 - *To Karel Capek* is premiered in Paris at a com- memorative evening organized by the Czechoslovak Student Association and the Czechoslovak Colony in Paris at the Office du Tourisme de Tchecoslovaquie.

February 28 - *Elegy* is premiered at the Cercle International de Jeneusse in Paris.

March - First mention in a letter to her parents that she and Mar- tinu are contemplating leaving together for the United States.

March 3 - Vitezslava receives a grant from the Svatobor Society.

March 15 - Czechoslovakia is invaded by German armies. Vitezslava Kapralova becomes a refugee.

March 18 - 1st movement of *Concertino for Violin, Clarinet and Orchestra*, op. 21

March 18 - Martinu writes to his friend Milos Safranek, former employee of the Czech Embassy in Paris now living in New York, asking him to assist both him and Kapralova in obtaining US visas.<sup>17</sup>

April 1 - Darling of Czech cinema, actor Hugo Haas arrives in Paris.

April 9 - Vitezslava departs to Rouen to visit her cousin Vera Uhlirova.

April 10 - Vitezslava finishes 1st movement of the *Concertino*.

April 16 - The Radio Brno Orchestra, conducted by Bretislav Ba- kala, premieres Kapralova's *Suita Rustica*.

April 17 - Vitezslava returns to Paris.

April 18 - Vitezslava starts composing 2nd movement of the *Concertino*.

April 18 - Martinu writes another letter to Milos Safranek urging him to assist Kapralova with her departure for the United States.<sup>18</sup>

April 25 - Vitezslava finishes the 2nd movement of the *Concertino*.

April 26 - Vitezslava begins composing 3rd movement of the *Con- certino*.

April 27 - Vitezslava meets Jiri Mucha, a writer and son of the fa- mous art-nouveau painter Alphonse Mucha.

April 28 - Martinu writes his third letter to Safranek urging him to as- sist Kapralova's immigration to the United States.<sup>19</sup>

May 3 - Vitezslava writes to Milos Safranek asking him to assist her in obtaining a scholarship in the United States.<sup>20</sup>

May 5 - Martinu discusses his *Cello Sonata* No. 1 with Vitezslava.<sup>21</sup>

May - Vitezslava and Bohuslav Martinu start discussing a project of stage music for a series of folk theatre plays.

May 12 - *Pisen tve nepritomnosti* / *A Song of Your Absence* [from: *Zpivano do dalky* / *Sung into the Distance*, op. 22]

May 15 - *V zemi ceske* / *In the Bohemian Land*, for voice and piano

May 20 - *Polohlasem* / *Under One's Breath* [from: *Sung into the Dis- tance*]

May 21 - Vitezslava finishes her song cycle *Sung into the Distance* and dedicates it to Dr. Viktor Kripner.

May - Vitezslava begins composing *Sonatina for Violin and Piano*. She will not finish it.

May 31 - *Muj mily clovece* / *My Dear One* [from: *Seconds*, op. 18]

June 7 - Vitezslava is assisted by the American University Union in Paris with her application for a scholarship at the Juilliard School of Music. She announces to her parents that she and Martinu are mak- ing plans to live together.<sup>22</sup>

June 12 - Martinu suggests to Vaclav Talich to program his new composition *Tre ricercari* and Kapralova's *Partita*.<sup>23</sup>

June 14 - Kapralova writes another letter to Safranek regarding her immigration to the United States.

June 23 - Vitezslava writes to Vaclav Talich and asks him to pro- gram her *Partita*, op. 20, for piano and string orchestra.<sup>24</sup>

June 30 - *Sung into the Distance* is premiered by R. Herlingerova in Paris.

July - Martinu composes deeply personal *Czech Madrigals*.

July 20 - Vitezslava leaves Paris to spend her summer holidays at Augerville la Rivière.

August - Vitezslava begins orchestrating her *Concertino*, op. 21. She will not finish it.

August 15 - Martinu visits Vitezslava at Augerville la Rivière.

August 24 - Mucha arrives at Augerville la Rivière.

September 1 - The WWII begins.

September 2 - Vitezslava returns to Paris.

September 3 - Vitezslava departs to Vieux Moulin to stay at Marti- nus.

September 4 - Jiri Mucha joins Vitezslava at Vieux Moulin.

September 18 - Vitezslava and Mucha return to Paris.

September 21 - Vitezslava receives financial assistance from now exiled Czechoslovak president Edvard Benes.

October 23 - Vitezslava receives further financial assistance from Edvard Benes.

October 28 - Vitezslava meets Czech writer Egon Hostovsky, now a refugee in Paris.

December 8 - Vitezslava, Jiri Mucha, and Frantisek Hodza organize a private birthday party for Martinu and his friends at Quai de Passy. At this occasion, Martinu's *Polni mse* / *Messe Militaire* is given its first performance.<sup>25</sup>

December 18 - *Prélude de Noël*, for chamber orchestra

December - *Vanocni koleda* / *Christmas Carol*, dedicated to her

## Kapralova: A Life Chronology

parents

December 22 - Vitezslava records her *Prélude de Noël*, for the radio program "Noël à Prague" at the Jean Masson Studio in Paris.<sup>26</sup>

December 24 - The radio program "Noël à Prague", with Kapralova conducting her *Prélude de Noël*, is broadcast to occupied Czechoslovakia.<sup>27</sup>

[to be continued]

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Bohuslav Martinu to Vitezslava dated November(?) 4, 1938: "A vis, ze ty nase ricerkarky mely ohromny uspech v Benatkach, [...] no, jak by ne, kdyz mi Pisnicka pomahala, to by bylo smutne, vid, kdyby takovi dva talenti nedali dohromady nic poradneho." / *And do you know that our ricerare were a great success in Venice, [...] and rightly so, as it was my Little Song (Martinu's nickname for Kapralova) who was helping me, and it would be indeed sad if two such talents would not be able to put together something substantial.* I am indebted to Bohuslav Martinu Memorial in Policka for providing me with copies of Martinu's letters to Kapralova.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to thank Fons Willemsen of ISCM for providing me with the information.

<sup>3</sup> Jaroslav Mihule, *Martinu: Osud skladatele* (Prague: Karolinum, 2002), 277.

<sup>4</sup> He wrote: *The very first item on the program of the festival was Military Sinfonietta by Vitezslava Kapralova - an opening with a great promise for both the festival and the composer. Her performance was awaited with interest as well as some curiosity - a girl with a baton is quite an unusual phenomenon - and when our "little girl conductor" (as the English newspapers put it) appeared before the orchestra, she was welcomed by a supportive audience. She stood before the orchestra with great courage and both her work and performance earned her respect and applause from the excellent BBC Orchestra, the audience, and the critics. [...] Vitezslava Kapralova's international debut is a success, promising and encouraging. [...] Lidove noviny, June 28, 1938, p. 7.*

<sup>5</sup> Havergal Brian's article included the following assessment: *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. Musical Opinion, July 1938, p. 858.*

<sup>6</sup> Martinu's last stay in Czechoslovakia is described in great detail in Jan Kapusta, "Bohuslav Martinu v roce 1938," *Hudebni veda* 2 (1982): 162-175.

<sup>7</sup> Its inspiration is usually attributed to the anxiety Martinu felt in reaction to the events leading to the infamous Munich Accord. Yet there seems to be a deeper, more personal impulse. Martinu started working on the concerto in early August 1938, shortly after his return from Czechoslovakia, when he was already getting depressed by Kapralova's absence and the prospect that he would not be able to see her for several months. During fall 1938 he was to write to her his most intense love letters (30 letters in total) and even contemplate a divorce with Charlotte. At the end of his life, Martinu admitted to his first biographer Milos Safranek (in his letter dated February 25, 1958) that *the Double Concerto [has], of course, a very private character, but only I know about that and all other conjectures are only screen.* Safranek makes this com-

ment: "That means that also his public comments on the *Double Concerto* do not uncover the deeper impulse that moved him to write it, which does not mean that they do not contain part of the truth, as, for instance, in the sentence 'I think that [...] the foreboding of approaching tragedy anticipated the character of the whole work, like a warning against unleashed destructive elements, as if it were in my power to hold them back.'" [Milos Safranek, *Bohuslav Martinu: His Life and Works* (London: Allan Wingate, 1962), 184].

<sup>8</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Alan Houtchens for providing me with copies of correspondence between Otakar Sourek and Vitezslava Kapralova.

<sup>9</sup> The Munich Accord, by which France and Britain ceded the Czech Sudetenlands to Germany, opened the door for an invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Germans the following year.

<sup>10</sup> The autograph is dated 29.9.1938; however, Martinu's correspondence with Paul Sacher suggests he revisited the score during the period of April 19 to June 5, 1939 [Jaroslav Mihule, *Bohuslav Martinu: Profil zivota a dila* (Prague: Editio Supraphon), 211].

<sup>11</sup> The story of Kapralova applying for the renewal of her scholarship has been described in some detail by Alan Houtchens [*Irish Music Studies* 4 (1996), reprinted in the *Kapralova Society Journal* 1 (2005)]. While Houtchens' article focuses on Martinu's letters to Otakar Sourek, Martinu's letters to Talich on the same matter have been published by Milan Kuna, "Korespondence Bohuslava Martinu Vaclavu Talichovi 1924-1939," *Hudebni veda* 2 (1970): 236-247. Martinu's correspondence with Sourek has been recently reproduced in Katerina Mayrova, "O cem si psali Otakar Sourek a Bohuslav Martinu," *Harmonie* 3 (2003): 19-21 and *Harmonie* 4 (2003): 17-21. The letter dated October 25, 1938 is quoted from at some length in the latter source.

<sup>12</sup> The letter is reprinted in Milada Chlibcova, ed., *Karel Capek. Prijata korespondence* (Prague: Nakladatelstvi Lidove noviny, 2000), 212. I would like to thank Mgr. Martina Muchova for bringing this correspondence to my attention.

<sup>13</sup> The recently published description of Sourek's and Martinu's correspondence (Mayrova, 2003) reveals that Martinu wrote 6 letters on the subject of Kapralova's stipend. The letters are dated October 25, 1938, November 8 and 11, 1938, December 5 and 22, 1938, and January 20, 1939. It seems that although Kapralova was approved for the stipend, there were additional delays in providing her with the necessary documents which prompted Martinu (in his correspondence dated December 22, 1938) to seek further assistance from Sourek.

<sup>14</sup> Letter to Otakar Sourek, dated Prague, November 24, 1938.

<sup>15</sup> Kapralova shared the prize with Pavel Haas who received it for his opera *Sarlatan*.

The Bedrich Smetana Foundation (Jubilejni nadace B. Smetany) was a large foundation established in Brno in 1924 to mark Smetana's centennial anniversary. Its mandate was to provide awards and financial support to composers of Czech nationality. The foundation administered about 1 million CK in funds from which it provided grants and stipends to artists and - every three years - also a grand prize for the best composition (or life achievement in the field of composition). The Foundation was abolished during WWII and German occupation of Czechoslovakia by a decree of 18.1.1943. Revived shortly in 1945, it ceased to exist after the Communist takeover in 1948. Sources: Gracian Cernusak, Bohumir Stedron, and Zdenko Novacek, eds., *Ceskoslovensky hudebni slovník osob a instituci*, (Prague: SHV, 1963), 555. I am indebted to Dr. Jindra Bartova and Alexandra Lukasova for providing

## Notes

me with additional information about the history of The Bedrich Smetana Foundation.

<sup>16</sup> Since Jiri Macek (Macek, 1958, 164) and other musicologists have considered *Suita Rustica* Kapralova's best work, Kalmus' rejection is rather puzzling. Although painful, this episode represented only a temporary setback for Kapralova who went on composing two other major orchestral works - the *Partita* and *Concertino for Violin, Clarinet, and Orchestra*.

<sup>17</sup> Dated March 18, 1939 in Paris: "Chtel bych aby bylo mozno vzit i malou Kapralovou, ktera se asi take tezko bude moci vratit do Cech, a ktera by nam tam mohla pomahati, jako dirigentka i s komposici, je velmi energicka a ma stesti, nekdo ji nahore z tech muzikantskych kruhu pomaha, byla by to do jiste miry takova zvlastni atrakce." / *I would like to be able to take with me the little Kapralova who now also cannot return home and who would be able to help us, both as a composer and a conductor. To some extent, it could be quite an attraction; she is very energetic and has been lucky, someone influential in the music community has been helping her.* I am indebted to Bohuslav Martinu Memorial in Policka and Mgr. Martina Muchova in particular, for researching Martinu's correspondence and kindly providing me with this quotation.

<sup>18</sup> Dated April 18, 1939 in Paris: "...ze bych byl povolán oficiálně od vlády...Snad by to bylo možno i pro tu naši malou dirigentku kterou bych rozhodně chtěl zachránit aby se nemusela vracet do Lži. Take jsem si myslel hlavně pro ni zdali by to neslo zaradit s Voskovcem, kteri podle zpráv co tu mám, tam mají úspěch, zdali by si nemohli engazovat jako dirigentku, byla by to určitě atrakce a bude z ní moc dobrá komponistka, tak bych nerad aby se musela vracet zpět. S Voskovcem bych sam případně chtěl něco dát dohromady, zkratka možnosti by byly jenom se tam dostat..." / ... so that I would be officially invited by the Government. Perhaps this would be possible also for our little conductor whom I would certainly want to save so that she wouldn't have to return and live a lie. I was thinking if perhaps something could be arranged for her with Voskovec - I hear they are successful over there, so they could offer her a conducting engagement, it might be quite an attraction. She will be a very good composer so I would not like to see her being forced to go back. I would also want to do something together with Voskovec, so there are a few possibilities, now only to get there... I am indebted to Bohuslav Martinu Memorial in Policka and Mgr. Martina Muchova in particular, for researching Martinu's correspondence and kindly providing me with this quotation.

<sup>19</sup> Dated April 28, 1939 in Paris: "...pro malou K./apralovou/, ktera by nam mohla udelati znacnou sensaci." / .. for the little K [apralova] who could create quite a sensation. I am indebted to Bohuslav Martinu Memorial in Policka and Mgr. Martina Muchova in particular, for researching Martinu's correspondence and providing me with this quotation.

<sup>20</sup> Safranek notes that he received two letters from Kapralova asking him to assist with her immigration to the U.S., but he dates them differently: in his text published in Prazak's collection of essays and texts on Kapralova he mentions that he received both letters at the beginning of April 1939 (Prazak, 1949, 113), whereas in Milos Safranek, *Divadlo Bohuslava Martinu* (Prague: Editio Supraphon, 1979), 85, he dates one of them May 3 and the other June 14, 1939.

<sup>21</sup> Kapralova's diary, May 5, 1939.

<sup>22</sup> In her letter dated June 7, 1939, Kapralova informs her parents about her plans to leave for the United States with Bohuslav Martinu: "Martinu by jel s sebou a tato otazka by se take jiste pri teto

prilezitosti resila. / *Martinu would accompany me and the question (of his marriage) would surely get addressed at that time.* [Letter courtesy of the Kapralova Estate.] A week later she reacts to her parents' concerned reply: "Nepřejete-li si, zatím by se nemuselo nic s Martinu resit (...) rozloučení s ním by ve mně ale zanechalo velkou a tezkou ranu (...) Ty sam, tatinku, vis, co to znamená zít s nekým jen na základě rodinných a společných shod, i když je to předobry člověk jako máma nebo Kopec. (...) Kopec - dobrý manžel, děti, kuchyn. Martinu - láska a hluboké porozumění (...) Diference věkova mi dosud nikdy neprekazela, ovšem jisté je, že někdy časem bych si na tuhle věc sem tam pozasteskla. Ale to už by byly děti a tím by bylo všechno vyřešeno." / *If you do not wish it, nothing has to be resolved right away. (...) but to part with him would be too painful and would leave too deep a scar (...) You know too well, daddy, how it feels to live with someone only because of family responsibilities and social conventions, even if the other person is as good as my mom or Kopec. (...) Kopec - a good husband, children, a household. Martinu - love and true understanding (...) Age difference never bothered me. Of course, as time would progress I might complain about it here and there but by that time there would be children and that would solve it all.* (This letter is quoted in Mucha, 1988, p. 264).

<sup>23</sup> Dated June 12, 1939 in Paris: "Udelal bys mi velikou radost kdybys take provedl něco od moji zacky Vitky Kapralove, ktera je ted zde a dokončila dobrou věc pro smyčce s pianem "Partitu". Napíše Ti sama rovněž a já se vřele za to primlouvám, je to velký talent a jisté se Ti to bude líbit, tak jí trochu pomoz, ano?" / *You would make me very happy should you decide to present also something from my student Vitka Kapralova who is now here and has just finished a good work for strings and piano - "Partita". She herself will also write to you about it, and I can wholeheartedly support her request; she is a great talent, and I am sure that you will like the work, so help her a bit, would you?* The letter is reprinted in: Milan Kuna, "Korespondence Bohuslava Martinu Václavu Talichovi 1924-1939," *Hudební věda* 2 (1970): 245.

<sup>24</sup> The letter is included in the Václav Talich Papers housed in Muzeum Ceskeho krasu in Beroun, Czech Republic. I would like to thank the Museum for providing me with a copy of the letter.

<sup>25</sup> I am indebted to Ales Brezina of the Bohuslav Martinu Institute in Prague for providing me with a copy of the invitation.

<sup>26</sup> Letter to Kapralova dated December 21, 1939, signed by Geneviève Druon, MPTT, Le Service des Montages, Service de la Radiodiffusion, 107, rue de Grenelle, Paris. Courtesy of the Kapralova Estate. The recording session for the public radio Paris PTT is described in Jiri Mucha's autobiography (Mucha, 1988, 331, 333).

<sup>27</sup> Mentioned in Kapralova's correspondence to parents dated December 25, 1939 and in Martinu's letter to Václav Kapral, dated in New York, January 15, 1946. Courtesy of the Kapralova Estate. *Unless stated otherwise, all English translations are by the author.*

### About the author:

Karla Hartl is founder and chair of the Kapralova Society, an international music society based in Toronto, dedicated to promoting Kapralova and other women in music. A graduate of Charles University (Prague) and University of Toronto, she has worked as Program Consultant for Status of Women Canada and more recently as Arts Consultant for the Department of Canadian Heritage. Her articles on Kapralova have appeared in *Tempo, Journal of the International Alliance for Women in Music, VivaVoce, Czech Music*, and this journal.

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