

PER BOYE HANSEN

Artistic Director of the National Theatre Opera and the State Opera

Musica non grata to launch the Women in Music cycle

Female composers with a connection to the Czech artistic milieu, who created against the backdrop of a new social and political order arising in Europe in the first half of the 20th century, are the focus of the Women in Music cycle, which is part of the Musica non grata project. The programme will include works by Julie Reisserová, Vítězslava Kaprálová, Sláva Vorlová, Elizabeth Maconchy, Dora Pejačević and Lena Stein-Schneider. Some of the compositions will return to a concert stage after decades and receive their modern-day premieres.

“One of the objectives of the Musica non grata project is rediscovering the music and presenting the lives of female composers with a connection to the Czech cultural milieu, who notwithstanding the obstacles resulting from gender inequality promoted Czech music and the Czech composition school worldwide. With large parts of their oeuvres virtually unknown, even the names of some of them are not familiar to the public. In the light of this fact, we have decided to dedicate to the pioneering female artists a special series of concerts, which under the title *Women in Music* will be given in 2023,” said **Per Boye Hansen**, Artistic Director of the National Theatre Opera and the State Opera. “Our joint Musica non grata project aims to present to the general public the work of artists who were persecuted by the Nazi regime and whose music was banned. Women made up a considerable proportion of them. I am delighted that Musica non grata has dedicated a special series to female composers,” added **J. E. Andreas Künne**, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Czech Republic.

Musica non grata has afforded scope to female composers previously: its opening concert in 2020 featured a piece by Vítězslava Kaprálová, while an evening a year later comprised selected chamber pieces by Czech female composers, dating from between 1870 and 1970. Under the title *Women in Music*, it will offer three events: ***Women in Music / Opening Concert***, to take place on 16 April at the State Opera; the chamber concert ***Women in Music / Esquisses***, scheduled for 23 May at the Goethe-Institut in Prague; and a programme for nursery and primary schools, consisting of performances of **Lena Stein-Schneider**'s fairy tale ***Goldilocks***, planned for the autumn of 2023.

The *Women in Music / Opening Concert* on 16 April at the State Opera will feature works by **Julie Reisserová**, **Vítězslava Kaprálová**, **Dora Pejačević** and **Elizabeth Maconchy**. It includes three orchestral pieces by Julie Reisserová, which will receive their modern-day premieres. “The disappearance of Julie Reisserová’s name from the map of Czechoslovak music was most likely in consequence of her untimely death and the ban on public performances of her works in Czechoslovakia after 1948, yet it was also due to the scores not having been available,” said the musicologist **Jean-Paul Montagnier**, who has made a critical edition of the composer’s works for Ries & Erler, and who is now completing a Julie Reisserová monograph. “Along with Vítězslava Kaprálová, Julie Reisserová was one of the two Czech female composers who gained international recognition in the 1930s,” **Kai Hinrich Müller**, the *Women in Music* cycle’s programme manager, pointed out. “Her *Pastorale maritimo*, for instance, was in the second half of the 1930s performed in Vienna, Bratislava and Paris, where it was conducted by Charles Munch. And when it comes to the cycle *March*, to be sung by the soprano **Kateřina Kněžiková**, accompanied by the **State Opera Orchestra**, under the baton of **Viktorija Zhadko**, a prize-winner at the Arturo Toscanini international competition, the literarily gifted Reisserová set some of the songs to her own texts,” Kai Hinrich Müller added. *The Women in Music / Opening Concert* includes the *Concertino for Piano and Chamber Orchestra* by **Elizabeth Maconchy**, a Dame Commander of the British Empire, which received its world premiere in 1930 in Prague, with Erwin Schulhoff as the soloist and conducted by Karel Boleslav Jirák, who taught the composer during her six-month studies in the city as a scholarship recipient. The soloist of the Opening Concert will be the renowned Brazilian pianist **Clélia Iruzun**. “The audience can look forward to fascinating music: modern, diverse, some of it avant-garde – mesmerising in all respects!” Kai Hinrich Müller concluded. More information about the evening is available at musicanongrata.cz and narodni-divadlo.cz, where you can also purchase tickets for the *Women in Music / Opening Concert*.

WOMEN IN MUSIC PROGRAMME

Women in Music / Opening Concert

Sunday 16 April 2023, 7pm, State Opera, Prague

Works by **Julie Reisserová**, **Vítězslava Kaprálová**, **Dora Pejačević** and **Elizabeth Maconchy**
Performers: **Victoria Zhadko** (conductor), **Kateřina Kněžíková** (soprano), **Clélia Iruzun** (piano),
State Opera Orchestra

More about the concert: <http://bit.ly/42IXoLm>

Women in Music / Esquisses

23 May 2023, 7pm, Goethe-Institut, Prague

Works by Julie Reisserová, Vítězslava Kaprálová, Sláva Vorlová, Agnes Tyrrell and Nadia Boulanger

Details: <http://bit.ly/3K0uM8a>

Women in Music / Goldilocks

Autumn 2023, programme for schools

Dramatisation of a fairy tale with songs by Lena Stein-Schneider, incarcerated at the Theresienstadt camp-ghetto from 1942 to 1945

VISUALS

Opening Concert

Graphic visual: <https://1drv.ms/f/s!ApBE3x3pPyNihoEA1Su-X2dC5xFbOw?e=oRYKrZ>

Artist photos: <https://1drv.ms/f/s!ApBE3x3pPyNihf8RcBVNbrjdv8RyOw?e=hGqFAj>

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...and yet it still resounds!

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