

In Prague, on 27 April 2023

Petr Popelka's second term as the head of Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra

In the new concert season 2023/24, the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra will present top artists, an attractive dramaturgy including four premieres and invite the audience to a new concert series in the Bethlehem Chapel, which will replace the series in the Agnes Convent. Audiences can look forward to star soloists and conductors such as Christian Tetzlaff, Gidon Kremer, María Dueñas, Omer Meir Wellber, Ilan Volkov and Brad Mehldau. The 5-concert series will offer a total of 29 concerts. For the second season, the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra will be led by chief conductor Petr Popelka and principal guest conductor Robert Jindra.

"Our one and only main goal for the upcoming season is to reach the widest possible audience with our programme and music so that the Czechs can be justly proud of our single radio orchestra. I personally see Czech Radio, celebrating its 100-year anniversary, as a symbol of freedom in the modern history of our country, and its symphony orchestra with its activities as a true cultural treasure," says chief conductor Petr Popelka, who is looking forward to the new season and who will welcome several famous guests in the **R – Classics at the Rudolfinum**. For example, the violinist María Dueñas, a native of Granada, who won the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition, will perform E. W. Korngold's Violin Concerto on the opening night of **R1**. It will also feature the top jazz pianist Eldar Djangirov **R5**, whose performance will include the famous Rhapsody in Blue, and harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani, who will perform the Czech premiere of Standstill by Miroslav Srnka **R8**. Those of you who have experienced our thrilling evening of Wagnerian melodies can look forward to Act II of Tristan und Isolde **R11**. The *Má vlast* by Bedřich Smetana cycle, which will celebrate the Year of Czech Music **R12**, will undoubtedly arouse great interest. Principal guest conductor Robert Jindra will present the world premiere of a new composition for mezzo-soprano, baritone and orchestra, composed by Šimon Voseček for the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra to set the erotic poetry of the 17th-century French satirical poets **R2**. Further, Robert Jindra will honour the greatest Czech composers Dvořák, Fibich and Smetana **R7**.

The concert with Finnish conductor Eva Ollikainen, Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, and siblings Tanja and Christian Tetzlaff, whose performance of Johannes Brahms' Double Concerto for Violin and Cello **R4** promises a remarkable experience in the **R – Rudolfinum** series. Israeli conductor Omer Meir Wellber **R3** will make his Czech debut in an extremely attractive programme, which will be graced by the legendary Latvian violinist Gidon Kremer in the music of Philip Glass. Works by 20th-century composers Kalabis, Britten, Smolka and Prokofiev will be presented by conductor Ivan Volkov **R6**. You will hear Grieg's famous piano concerto performed by pianist Marianna Shirinyan and led by Olari Elts **R9**, who will also perform a symphonic documentary composed especially for the 100th anniversary of Czech Radio, titled "Radio" by Lukáš Hurník. The renowned conductor Petr Altrichter will present a music programme by three generations of Czech composers linked by the teacher-pupil relationship; thus, we will meet the trio Suk-Dvořák-Martinů **R11**.

The **P – Premium** series includes a total of three concerts this season. The first of them will take place in the Smetana Hall of the Municipal House, where the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra will present a selection from *The Nutcracker* **P1**, and its melodiously intoxicating music will spread Christmas cheer among the audience. The second concert will also be conducted by Petr Popelka, this time in the Bethlehem Chapel, featuring works by Vivaldi, Mozart, Salieri and Josef Matěj **P2**. With the third concert, the orchestra celebrates Czech Radio's anniversary outside a traditional concert hall. The open-air concert in Riegrovy Sady will offer the catchiest rock hits from the repertoire of Pink Floyd, Queen, U2, AC/DC, Deep Purple or Led Zeppelin **P3**.

"We introduce a new concept of the concert series formerly presented at the Agnes Monastery. In the new series, the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra presents itself as a chamber orchestra and the interest of the audience in this type of concerts is truly growing. To fully capitalise on the symphony orchestra's potential and offer more seats in the hall, we decided to move the venue to the Bethlehem Chapel. It is also a traditional concert environment and I believe that our audience will appreciate the upcoming early Romantic and 20th-century repertoire", Jakub Čížek, the orchestra's director, invites to the new concert space. Conductor Robert Jindra will take over the very first concert of Series **B – Bethlehem Chapel** and, together with three star singers, he will perform works by Britten and Shostakovich **B1**, classics of 20th-century music who, although separated by the Iron Curtain, knew each other's work well; they were united by mutual admiration and later friendship. In addition, the conductor and violinist Fedor Rudin **B2** will shine in the Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Concerto accompanied by the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra. We will also get to know better the winner of Concertina Praga 2022, violinist Diana Chaucheva – and the same evening, we will hear a composition by our Jana Vöröšová, inspired by the book *Chlapeček a Dálka* by Daisy Mrázková. It is another important signal that culture is breathing freely again **B3**. The final concert in the Bethlehem Chapel is dedicated to works by Korngold and Prokofiev – in his *Concertante Symphony*, cellist Andreas Brantelid **B4** will perform the solo.

In the **N – New Horizons** series, we are expecting a rich programme full of unusual experiences. The famous jazz pianist Brad Mehldau will improvise on Johann Sebastian Bach's preludes and fugues; he will also perform his own *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* **N1**. The DOX+ gallery will lead us to the landscape of contemporary jazz trumpet, live ambient electronics, and symphonic sound – all thanks to the collaboration of Michal Rataj, Oskar Török and Jaromír Honzák **N2**. Grammy-nominated soloist and a talented young man who has been performing since he was a child, Eldar Djangirov, will be performing with his trio **N3**, and the series will be rounded off by two ladies, Beata Hlavenková, one of the most distinctive contemporary musicians with an unmistakable trans-genre signature, and Kristina Barta, an increasingly successful jazz pianist, who will share the immeasurable experience of the arrival of new life in music with **N4**.

The **Chamber Concerts will be held in Studio 1** again next season. In the course of six evenings, you will be able to experience the atmosphere of the Czech Radio building and meet musicians from the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra in various chamber ensembles.

All concerts from the Rudolfinum are traditionally broadcast live by Czech Radio Vltava, and you are welcome to listen to the recordings the following Wednesday on the Czech Radio D major station. Other selected concerts of the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, held in DOX+, the Bethlehem Chapel, and Studio 1, will be offered by ČRo Vltava as a recording.

Pre-sale of both subscription and regular tickets will start on Tuesday, **2 May**. Starting from this date, interested individuals can purchase subscriptions to the concert series R - Classics at the Rudolfinum and the chamber series K at the Bethlehem Chapel, as well as individual tickets for concerts from the P, N, S and for the public dress rehearsals. Individual tickets for the R and B concert series will be available **from 15 May**.

The **Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and the City of Prague**, as the orchestra's main financial partners from the new season onwards, provide vital support for the artistic activities of the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra. Other partners include the State Cultural Fund of the Czech Republic, Bohuslav Martinů Foundation, OSA, Prague 2 city ward, DOX+ Gallery, Czech Technical University in Prague, and Aerofilms. **Czech Radio Vltava** remains the main media partner. Other media partners include Czech Radio D-dur, the specialist magazine **Harmonie**, the music portal **KlasikaPlus.cz**, the web audio portal and application **mujRozhlas** and the news portal **iRozhlas.cz**.

Eliška Kratěnová

Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra

telephone: 605 117 056, email: eliska.kratenova@rozhlas.cz

socr.rozhlas.cz