International Music Festival
ETERNAL HOPE:
Gustav Mahler and Terezín composers

**Final Report – 2019**

“For the third time, an international music festival dedicated essentially to the music of the Terezín composers took place in Prague and Terezín. Again at a high artistic level and with increased interest of the music community and expert critics. Hereby we present information about the history of the festival and foremost about this year's festival edition.

We look forward to meeting you at next year's festival concerts in 2020! ”

Jiří Polák, Member of the Board of Trustees of the Endowment Fund ETERNAL HOPE

Excerpts from selected reviews

“[The Martinů Voices Chamber Choir…] has for the final concert prepared a program in which the works of the imprisoned composers Hans Krása and Gideon Klein have been coupled with the songs of Gustav Mahler, Madrigal Bohuslav Martinů and five biblical songs by contemporary American Eric Whitacre.
The beautiful voices of the choir, which has only 16 members, were a true treat for the audience. The intonation perfection, singing of all groups and sensitive performance adapted to individual compositions make the choir one of the best in our country. It was a voice feast and the highlight of the festival as one should be.”

Právo daily, August 27, 2019

“Many of the forgotten [Terezín] composers are still awaiting recognition by the general public. At least for the Terezín authors the winds of recognition are blowing in the form of the Eternal Hope Festival - in addition to such a successful interpretation. ”

Magazine Harmonie, August 20, 2019

“The return of the Eternal Hope festival to Prague was spectacular despite all its intimacy. It was mainly songs and small chamber compositions that helped to keep the life in the Terezín ghetto of the 1940s more bearable and which today convey a message telling us not only of great suffering but also of the persistent human desire for art and belonging. And after more than seventy years, the same works speak to us with the same importance, urgency and sincerity. ”

Magazine Harmonie, August 24, 2019

**About ETERNAL HOPE**

The endowment fund ETERNAL HOPE was founded in 2017. The main reason for establishing the Endowment Fund is to foster the legacy of the Terezín composers and Gustav Mahler and other composers mainly through live interpretation of their musical works, as well as in other forms such as conferences, research, publications, seminars, theater performances or art activities. The Foundation also endeavors to actively promote artistically prized music, promote European classical music and European cultural values. The Foundation also aims to support young artists, aspiring musicians and youth interested in culture. Another objective of the Endowment Fund is to facilitate access to cultural values ​​for disadvantaged people in society. Last but not least, the Endowment Fund aims to offer first class music performances to the public, especially by organizing the festival ETERNAL HOPE: Gustav Mahler and the Terezín composers.

The music Festival **ETERNAL HOPE: Gustav Mahler and the Terezín composers** strives to present works of the so-called Terezín composers to the public by means of concerts and music performances. The festival is founded on the idea that it is important to raise awareness of the music and musical works that originated in Ghetto Theresienstadt, as well as of the music that was written during the Holocaust. The backbone of the festival are the neglected works of Terezín artists. It is largely the work of Viktor Ullmann, Gideon Klein, Hans Krása or Pavel Haas which remains underestimated. The vision of the festival is to build a prestigious music feast with an emphasis on exceptional artistic quality of both the performers and the works performed and to thus preserve the cultural heritage that might otherwise be forgotten.

The ETERNAL HOPE foundation also financially supports the **Terezín Composers´ Institute** established in Terezín, where a number of related events are held. Among other, the Institute began publishing a critical edition of the Terezín composers works in cooperation with the well-established German publishing house Bärenreiter.

The music Festival ETERNAL HOPE: Gustav Mahler and the Terezín composers celebrates the interwar Czech-German cultural milieu and contributes to the development and reconciliation of relations within the Central European region today. The activity of the Terezín artists was closely connected with the musical production of the period between the two world wars and the functioning of Prague music institutions and societies of that era. Many Terezín authors consitute today an integral part of the Austrian, German and Czech music canon.

**Festival Dramaturgy**

The dramaturgy of the festival focuses on two historically different areas. The first area comprises the work of Gustav Mahler and the reception of his monumental work by other authors. The second area focuses on Terezín composers, i. e. composers who were imprisoned in Terezín during World War II. The festival includes the works of their important teachers or contemporaries as well. In addition, Mahler was a model for his musical successors from Central European modernism which is also significantly represented in the works of Viktor Ullmann, Hans Krása, Pavel Haas and Erwin Schulhoff.

From the genre point of view, the festival is divided into two parts. While the first focuses on the symphonic works of Gustav Mahler, or those of his contemporaries and epigones, the other concentrates on his chamber music, including his extensive song repertoire. As far as the Terezín authors are concerned, it was foremost chamber music that was created in Terezín itself. Sometimes, old lyrics were set to new music or composers created new songs. For these reasons, the song repertoire is also incorporated in the festival program and works which are presented at the festival are mainly designated for smaller chamber ensembles or chamber orchestras. The festival program is every year complemented by works by other Czech or world composers that have a relationship to the Holocaust music. The festival programming also mirrors current anniversaries or important historic events.

The compositions at the festival are performed by leading Czech and foreign artists.

**Festival History**

With the establishment of the Endowment Fund in 2017, several cultural events were organized the same year. The inaugural year of the ETERNAL HOPE music festival, which can be seen as a prologue to the annual festival, took place in 2017.

Inaugural year of the festival – 2017

In 2017, two concerts of the works of Terezín composers were held in Terezín. The **Prague Chamber Orchestra** performed at Terezín´s House of Culture under the direction of the conductor **Jan Kučera** and the **Graff Quartet** presented an interpretation of the works of the Terezín composers at Terezín´s Magdeburg Barracks. In parallel with the festival, a conference was held in Terezín and the Terezín Composers´ Institute was ceremoniously founded at the Terezín Townhall.

The third concert took place in Prague, the Prague Chamber Orchestra was performing under the baton of **Vojtěch Spurný**. As part of the concert, Ullmann's piano concert was performed by **Ivo Kahánek**. The inaugural year ended with Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 1 performed by the **Czech** **Radio Symphony Orchestra** under the leadership of conductor **Ion Marin** in the unique premises of the Czech Senate Garden.

The first year of the festival – 2018

Six chamber concerts featured a representative cross-section of the works of Viktor Ullmann, Hans Krása, Pavel Haas and Gideon Klein. Special attention was paid to Viktor Ullmann; the hundred and twenty years´ anniversary of Ullmann's birth was commemorated at the opening festival concert. It was a commented concert, prior to the concert there was a lecture given. The lecture was devoted not only to Viktor Ullmann, but also to the work of R. M. Rilke., on whose song called *The love and death of Cornet Christopher* Ullmann´s piece is based. Ullmann composed the music only a few days before his transport to Auschwitz. The works were presented in the form of string quartets, trios and piano recitals with male or female accompaniment. Among the performing artists were the pianists **Martin** **Kasík, Karel Košárek, Ivo Kahánek** together with clarinetist **Irvin Venyš**, **Renan Koen,** and the **Wihan Quartet**.

Two symphonic concerts were also on the program of the first year of the festival. The concerts referred directly to the Mahler tradition and occasionally overlapped into a wider musical context. The first orchestral program of the **Czech Radio Symphony Orchestra** reflected the compositions of the jubilee Leonard Bernstein. The final concert was performed by **Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester Wien** with conductor **Lorenzo Viotti** and soloist cellist **Gautier Capuçon**. The concert took place on the occasion of the opening of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The past years have attracted considerable media coverage in the print media, on the radio and at the television. The festival concerts were honored by reviews, for example in *Harmonie* magazine, *Lidové noviny* daily newspaper or *OperaPlus* portal. In addition to printed and on-line news, there were live entries at the public *Czech* *Television*. From the festival concerts, there were repeatedly live entries to both the main news program and in the specialized section “Events in Culture”. Several radio interviews dedicated to the festival were also aired.

The second International Music Festival **ETERNAL HOPE: Gustav Mahler and the Terezín composers**

On August 18 – 25, 2019, the ETERNAL HOPE FOUNDATION organized the second edition of the ETERNAL HOPE international music festival: Gustav Mahler and Terezín composers. As in the first year, the main emphasis of the festival was on the work of Terezín composers with the aim to bring together, through the performances of leading domestic and foreign artists, the work of composers linked with the framework of Central European musical culture. The festival included works by jubilee authors such as Pavel Haas (1899–1944), Hans Krása (1899–1944) and Gideon Klein (1919–1945).

The opening ceremony took place on August 18, 2019 at the Martinů Hall at HAMU (Academy of Performing Arts) in Prague. The *Trio for Violin, Viola and Cello* by Gideon Klein was performed by **Virtuosi Brunenses**, accompanied by a ballet performance by soloists of the **Ballet of the J. K. Tyl Theater in Pilsen** in choreography by **Zdeněk Prokeš** and *Passacaglia and fugue for string trio* by Hans Krása.

On August 19, the **Petrof Piano Trio** featured compositions by Zikmund Schul, Erwin Schulhoff, Leoš Janáček and Antonín Dvořák. The first part of the concert focused on the works of the first half of the 20th century. In the second half, the ensemble introduced the traditional repertoire composition *Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 90 „Dumky“* by Antonín Dvořák.

The next day, on August 20, the festival moved to Terezín for two days. In cooperation with the Terezín Composers´ Institute, a four-day event *International Youth Encounters in Terezín* was held there, offering many interesting lectures and workshops, film screenings, student conferences and tours of Terezín as well as a discussion with the survivor of the Terezín Ghetto, Mrs. Doris Grozdanovičová. The American string trio **Black Oak Ensemble** featured works by Gideon Klein, Hans Krása, Dick Kattenburg and others. Afterwards, the **Brno Children's Choir** performed a song from Karel Reiner's *Flowered Horse* cycle, which was once sung by children at the Terezín Ghetto.

The second Terezín evening was dedicated to the 100th birth anniversary of Gideon Klein. His two most mature pieces were performed, the *Piano Sonata* in Ivo Kahánek´s interpretation, who further complemented his performance by Leoš Janáček´s and Viktor Ullmann´s compositions, and the *Trio for Violin, Viola and Cello* again performed by **Virtuosi Brunenses** with ballet accompaniment by soloists of the **Ballet of the J. K. Tyl Theater in Pilsen** in **Zdeněk Prokeš**´choreography.

On Thursday, August 22, the festival moved back to Prague, this time to the Municipal House concert hall. A soprano singer **Irena Troupová** whose focus is the work of the interwar period authors, and pianist **Jan Dušek** performed at the Grégr Hall. The program was composed of works by Viktor Ullman, Pavel Haas, Erwin Schulhoff, Hans Winterberg and Rudolf Karl. Jan Dušek has previously recorded Winterberg´s complete piano work for the Czech Radio.

On Friday August 23, the **Bennewitz Quartet** performed at the Rudolfinum concert hall. The compositions by Erwin Schulhoff, Gideon Klein, Viktor Ullmann and Antonín Dvořák, which were a representative cross-section of the chamber work of the Central European cultural milieu of the first half of the 20th century were among those performed.

The closing concert of the festival, which took place on Sunday, August 25, in the Church of St. Simon and Judy, offered compositions by Gideon Klein, Bohuslav Martinů, Gustav Mahler and Eric Whitacre. The performing artists were the **Martinů Voices vocal choir** led by choirmaster **Lukáš** **Vasilek**. The concert was opened by *Five Hebrew Love Songs* by a contemporary American composer and conductor Eric Whitacre. The songs were performed by the mixed choir and by the **Bennewitz** **Quartet**. The Quartet also presented the *Theme with Variations* by Hans Krása. In addition, the Martinů Voices vocal choir performed a selection from the famous Martinů cycle of *Czech Madrigals* which were created shortly before Klein's choral compositions.

**Activities accompanying the festival**

The music festival, which is usually concentrated in the second half of August, reaches out with an accompanying program throughout the year. During the year, the Endowment Fund organizes concerts, music meetings and professional conferences both in Prague and Terezín.
The music of Terezín composers was in 2019 heard in May on the occasion of the Terezín Commemoration Ceremony, or in August at the Terezín House of Culture during the event “International Youth Encounters in Terezín”, organized by the closely co-operating Terezín Composers´´ Institute.

The Terezín Commemoration Ceremony, a regularly held ceremony, took place on the third Sunday of May. Three concerts were organized for this event. On Sunday, May 19, 2019, Terezín music was traditionally performed at two concerts, at the Terezín Memorial for invited guests and at the House of Culture for the public. A day earlier, a concert was newly organized in Prague. The concert was primarily intended for survivors and members of the older generations, for whom the trip to Terezín could be difficult. The musical program of these events was taken up by soprano Irena Troupová and pianist Jan Dušek.

In parallel with the August festival, an international meeting called “International Youth Encounters in Terezín” was held. The meeting was co-organized by the Endowment Fund. This year many interesting lectures, discussions, film screenings, guided tours of the city, and especially music production took place. The music program was presented by pianist Jiří Hrubý, flute player Kristina Vaculová or the Brno Children's Choir. This year we were able to welcome also lecturers from abroad. The event thus included lectures led by Dr. David Fligg (Great Britain), prof. Yuval Shakeda (Israel) and prof. Michael Beckerman (USA). The program focused on the life and work of Terezín composers and their contemporaries. The event took place at the House of Culture and at the Magdeburg Barracks.

In addition, cultural gatherings for supporters and friends of the Endowment Fund Eternal Hope are organized every year. The gatherings support fund´s objectives and accentuate its commitment. On February 26, 2018, a gala evening was held at the Mayor's Residence in Prague, where the pianist Ivo Kahánek was performing. A musical event *Encounters: Pavel Haas & Vilém Veverka* took place in the presence of the Mayor of Prague MUDr. Zdeněk Hřib on November 24, 2019 at the Mayor's Residence. The compositions by Pavel Haas and other composers were performed by the Czech oboist Vilém Veverka.

The music festival ETERNAL HOPE: Gustav Mahler and Terezín composers - 2019 was orgnaized under the auspices of the President of the Czech Republic Ing. Miloš Zeman, President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Mr. Jaroslav Kubera, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Mgr. Radek Vondráček, Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, President of the Constitutional Court JUDr. Pavel Rychetský, the Mayor of Prague MUDr. Zdeněk Hřib, President of the Ústí Region Mr. Oldřich Bubeníček, the Mayor of Terezín Mr. René Tomášek, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany Dr. Christoph Israng, United States Embassy in Prague, and Bohemian Heritage Fund.

Partners of the second year of the festival were Pražská energetika, a.s., ČEPS, a.s., UEPA lawyers s.r.o. and CertiCon a.s. The project was created with the support of the City of Prague and in cooperation with the Terezín Composers´ Institute and the Terezín Memorial. The ETERNAL HOPE Endowment Fund would like to extend its gratitude to all partners and sponsoring institutions for their support and partnership.

Selected media coverage of the second year of the music festival:

* **NACHMILNEROVÁ**, Eva. *S Lubomírem Spurným o hudebním festivalu Věčná naděje*. OperaPlus. [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://operaplus.cz/s-lubomirem-spurnym-o-hudebnim-festivalu-vecna-nadeje/?pa=1>.
* **ŠVAGROVÁ**, Marta. *Židovští autoři na festivalu Věčná naděje*. Lidové noviny: Kultura. 16.08.2019. Dostupné z: <https://vecnanadeje.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/LN-16.8..pdf>.
* **DRÁPELOVÁ**, Věra. *Festival připomene dílo terezínských skladatelů*. Mladá fronta DNES: Scéna. 17.08.2019. Dostupné z: <https://vecnanadeje.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/MFD-17.8..pdf>.
* **ČESKÁ TELEVIZE**. *Festival VĚČNÁ NADĚJE*. Události v kultuře. 18.08.2019 [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/1097206490-udalosti-v-kulture/219411000120818/video/713957>.
* **OperaPlus**. *V Praze dnes začíná druhý ročník hudebního festivalu Věčná naděje*. OperaPlus. [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://operaplus.cz/v-praze-dnes-zacina-druhy-rocnik-hudebniho-festivalu-vecna-nadeje/>.
* **PINCOVÁ**, Kateřina. *Věčná naděje, festival s mrazivou tématikou uprostřed parného léta.* OperaPlus. [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://operaplus.cz/vecna-nadeje-festival-s-mrazivou-tematikou-uprostred-parneho-leta/>.
* **PAVLICA**, Lukáš. *Věčná naděje vol. 2*. Časopis Harmonie: Kritiky. [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://www.casopisharmonie.cz/kritiky/vecna-nadeje-vol-2.html>.
* **PAVLICA**, Lukáš. *Terezín ožívá festivalem a konferencemi*. Časopis Harmonie: Kritiky. [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://www.casopisharmonie.cz/reportaze/terezin-oziva-festivalem-a-konferencemi.html>.
* **PRÁVO**. *Hlasová hostina s Martinů Voices.* Rubrika Kultura. 28.08.2019[cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://vecnanadeje.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Pr%C3%A1vo.pdf>.
* **PAVLICA**, Lukáš. *S Věčnou nadějí opět v Praze*. Časopis Harmonie: Kritiky. [online]. [cit. 27.09.2019]. Dostupné z: <https://www.casopisharmonie.cz/kritiky/s-vecnou-nadeji-opet-v-praze.html>.
* **SCHINDLER**, Agata. *Večná nádej a morálny záväzok – festival v Prahe a Terezíne*. Časopis Hudobný život 10/2019. Dostupné z: <https://vecnanadeje.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Recenze_Hudobn%C3%BD-%C5%BEivot.pdf>.

A complete list of media coverage including a festival photo gallery can be found on our website [www.vecnanadeje.org](http://www.vecnanadeje.org/).