

**Music for Eternal Hope Foundation,
organizer of the Eternal Hope International Music Festival**

ANNOUNCES
The 3rd annual composition competition
Competition theme – Eternal Hope

Competition terms and conditions:

- A composition for piano that has never been performed publicly
- Each applicant may submit only one original composition of their own that does not infringe on copyright or the rights of third parties
- The work must be performable live by a piano player only
- The length of the composition must be 8–11 minutes
- The score must be submitted in standard Western notation (graphic notation is not permitted)
- The composition will be accepted in PDF format, and the electronic recording in MP3/WAV format
- The competition has no age or territorial restrictions

The expert jury for the third year of the competition consists of composer and guitarist **Lukáš Sommer (CZ)**, composer and pianist **Adam Skoumal (CZ)**, member of the board of trustees of the Music for Eternal Hope Foundation **Martina Jankovská (CZ)**, dramaturge of the Eternal Hope Festival **Kristina Vocetková (CZ)**, composer **Yuval Shaked (IL)**, composer and pianist **Lee Bradshaw (AUS)**, and pianist **Johanna Haniková (CZ)**.

The results of the competition will be announced as part of the **9th annual** Music Festival Eternal Hope in 2026 in Prague. **Johanna Haniková** will perform at this concert and thus also perform the winning composition.

Prizes for winners:

- The winning composition will be announced and performed by Johanna Haniková at the 9th annual Eternal Hope music festival in Prague in spring 2026.
- The winning composition will receive a prize of CZK 10,000.
- Presentation of the composition and the winner during the Věčná naděje festival and as part of the PR campaign for the 9th edition of the festival.
- Transport and accommodation for the winner for the award ceremony and performance of the composition
- Publication of the sheet music for the composition by the Czech Radio publishing house

Please send the sheet music for the composition together with an electronic recording (MP3/WAV), along with your name and contact details (email and mobile phone number) in electronic form **by 11:59 p.m. on October 31, 2025**, to the email address **irma.mrazkova@vecnanadeje.org**.

For the sake of objective evaluation, please do not sign the sheet music. It will be marked with a numerical combination related to the date of submission.

About the competition theme of eternal hope

Hope is an extremely interesting substance: immeasurable and intangible, but immensely necessary, especially in moments when we are in danger of losing it. Like love, we can give hope to others without having it ourselves, and conversely, we can have it even when it no longer exists in reality.

*It is no coincidence that Dante Alighieri placed the inscription "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here" above the entrance to hell in *The Divine Comedy*, because the awareness that all fears, torments, and pains are eternal and that there is no hope for change or salvation is worse than death itself. In another hell—here on earth—they also worked with the substance of hope: above the entrance to the Auschwitz concentration camp, the Nazis had the inscription "Arbeit macht frei" ("Work sets you free") forged. Rudolf Vrba, one of the few who managed to escape from Auschwitz and pass on the message about the atrocities committed there, recalled in his later book how beneficially those three words affected him: they want work, they shall have it, so perhaps it won't be so bad, he thought. After an exhausting journey into the unknown, he reportedly felt a surge of energy – because he had been given hope. False hope, of course, but he and thousands of others who passed through that gate clung to it because people simply need hope.*

And so it is wonderful and fitting that the foundation and festival established by Jiří Polák are called Eternal Hope. They primarily commemorate the so-called Terezín authors and other composers and their works created in times of oppression and hardship. The festival gives them hope that they will not be forgotten and that we will perhaps be able to learn from their suffering. Perhaps so: it really seems that the names of composers who were supposed to be silenced are being remembered and revived thanks to Eternal Hope, because there are more and more opportunities to hear the music of Pavel Haas, Gideon Klein, Hans Krása, Viktor Ullmann, and others, even outside the festival stages. This is good and hopeful news.

In addition to the obligatory good health, we should wish for hope more often and more hope, because in times when, for whatever reason, darkness descends on the soul, hope is needed like salt. See you at one of the concerts of the festival that does not forget this, the Eternal Hope Festival.

Eva Hazdrová Kopecká, musicologist

The jury of the Eternal Hope 2026 composition competition

Martina Jankovská has been managing the Eternal Hope Festival since 2020, taking over from its founder Jiří Polák (+ 2021). She is a member of the board of trustees of the Music for Eternal Hope Foundation. A lawyer by profession, she has been working in her own office under the Exlure brand since 2014, having previously worked in international law firms in Brno and Prague. For her, the arts, whether musical, visual, or dramatic, are an integral part of the creation and perception of beauty in life, serving to uplift the human spirit.

Kristina Vocetková is one of the most promising Czech cellists of her generation. In 2019, she founded the piano trio Trio Bohémo with violinist Matouš Pěruška and pianist Jan Vojtek. In a short time, they have won several international prizes in competitions such as the Joseph Haydn International Chamber Music Competition in Vienna, the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition in Australia, the Parkhouse Award in London, and the Joseph Joachim Chamber Music Competition in Germany. In 2023, the trio was awarded the Czech Chamber Music Society Prize and appeared as guests on BBC Radio 3's In Tune program. They have made their debut at venues such as Wigmore Hall in London, the Musikverein in Vienna, and Stoller Hall in Manchester. They have performed at festivals such as Prague Spring, Gent Festival van Vlaanderen in Belgium, and Schwarzwald Musikfest in Germany. Several tours of the US and Australia await them in the coming season.

Leading Czech pianist **Adam Skoumal** won first prize at the conservatory competition, second and the title of laureate at the Prague Spring International Competition, in Italy, Portugal, and the US, and is a finalist in many other prestigious competitions (e.g., the Naumburg Competition, etc.). He first attracted attention as a composer at the Prague Spring competition (1998), where he won the prize for the best performance of a Czech contemporary composition with his composition. Another of Skoumal's compositions, Variations on a Gypsy Melody, was selected as a compulsory piece for the Concours International de Violon in Sion, Switzerland, and also for the international violin competition in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Adam Skoumal has recorded several CDs with works by Schumann, Dvořák, Smetana, Janáček, Rejcha, Bach, and Rachmaninoff. He passes on his wealth of experience to students at the Prague Conservatory, where he has been teaching piano since 2013.

Yuval Shaked is an Israeli composer and musicologist. He studied at the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel Aviv University and from 1981 to 1984 with Mauricio Kagel at the Musikhochschule Köln. From 1985 to 2005, he lectured at Kibbutzim College in Tel Aviv and from 2000 to 2023 at the University of Haifa (2011-15 head of the music department; 2016-2020 head of the art school). From 1990 to 1996, he was editor of the publications of the Israel Music Institute, and from 2000 to 2008, he directed the Feher Jewish Music Center at the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv. In 2010, 2012, and 2014, he was a lecturer at the International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt. He has produced numerous concerts and recordings. His texts have been published in several magazines, books, and encyclopedias. His compositions have been widely performed at renowned festivals.

Lukáš Sommer is one of the leading figures of the current generation of young composers. From 1998, he studied guitar with Prof. Vilma Manová and composition with Prof. Jiří Churáček at the Conservatory in České Budějovice. In 2003, he studied for one year at the Prague Conservatory with Professor Věroslav Neumann. In 2009, he graduated from the Academy of Performing Arts, where he studied composition with Professor Ivan Kurz. He is the author of more than fifty opuses of various genres. In addition to orchestral music (e.g., Cantata Trny v závoji, Concerto for Harp and Orchestra,

Monolit for Wind Orchestra and Percussion Instruments, Concerto for Orchestra, and others), Sommer focuses on chamber music (e.g., Two String Quartets, Piano Trio "Xcape," Labyrinth – Sonata for Harpsichord, Gypsy, and Odysseus). Another line of Sommer's work is vocal music, often using texts by contemporary poets (e.g., the song cycle Headland, Floating Island, the melodrama Nikdo mě dlouho nepohládil [No One Has Caressed Me in a Long Time], Song of the Gallows, ABC). The opera Ela, Hela a Stop, based on a libretto by Václav Havel, occupies a special place among his works. He also composes works for children, specifically the children's opera Herkules and the musical Sindibad. His music has been performed by Sir Nicolas Daniel, Carlo Jans, Jana Boušková, Vilém Veverka, Pavel Šporcl, Jan Mikušek, Sebastien Bagnout, Jan Kučera, the Sednunum Orchestra, the Bremerhaven Orchestra, the Czech Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Prague Philharmonic Choir, and others. In addition to regular performances on the domestic scene, he has performed his music in more than 15 countries.

Lee Bradshaw is an Australian composer whose extensive catalog includes sonatas, chamber music, and orchestral works. Notable compositions include the string trio "Trigon" (2003), commissioned and premiered by Ivan Vukčević, the string quartet "Images" (2018), premiered by the Flinders Quartet, and "The Language of Trees" for oboe and strings, commissioned by the Fidelio ensemble. His piano works include Sonata (2017-2018), which was premiered in Singapore by Anna Sleptsova and later by Stefan Cassomenos.