

The Kapralova Society Newsletter

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Special points of interest:

- The “Julietta motive” in the music of Martinu and Kapralova

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“To je Julietta”: Martinu, Kapralova and Musical Symbolism

By Erik Entwistle

Scholars and music lovers have often struggled to understand the significance of events in a composer's life in relation to his or her creative work. This pertains to general stylistic traits as well as specific aspects that might stand out in a particular piece or body of compositions. For example, Beethoven's *Für Elise* might be appreciated more fully knowing that it was a gift from the composer to one of his pupils, to whom he would later propose marriage. Or, in the case of Janacek, a deeper understanding of his late operas, with their strong female characters, could be gained by examining his relationship with Kamila Stosslova. In such cases the question always remains, however, as to how far biographical circumstance can be taken in an attempt to understand the music itself.

The complex relationship between Martinu and Kapralova, with its ramifications in the music of both artists, makes for a particularly fascinating study in this context. It is a subject that has been broached before, but rarely has the music of both composers been examined together in any detail. In doing so, it becomes evident that certain musical symbols can be found in the works of both Kapralova and Martinu as they pertain to their own relationship amidst the unfolding events leading to the Second World War and Kapralova's premature death in 1940. From Martinu's subsequent escape from Europe to America, through his last years spent in exile from his beloved homeland, the same musical gestures that gained potency during his time with Kapralova in Paris resonate powerfully in the composer's music in this broader biographical context.

Martinu's opera *Julietta* was to become the one work most closely associated with Kapralova, although this happened only after the opera was finished. Martinu had completed the score on January 24, 1937, ironically the day of Kapralova's birthday;¹ the two would not meet until several months later. In October of that same year Kapralova arrived in Paris to begin her studies with Martinu, and by the time of the opera's premiere the following spring their relationship had developed beyond that of teacher and pupil. Musical echoes from the score of *Julietta* had already begun to appear in the works of both composers by this time, underscoring the symbolic significance that the opera must have held for the two lovers.

The premiere of *Julietta* at the National Theater in Prague in March 1938 was one of the great triumphs to take place during the composer's residence in Paris. A setting of a surrealist play by the French writer Georges Neveux, the opera explores themes of love and longing within the psychologically charged context of a dream. Arriving at an unnamed fishing village, the protagonist Michel seems to be the only character who possesses rationality, while the townspeople muddle through absurd lives without memories. The haunting dream music associated with the title character, Julietta, underscores the opera's twin *idées fixes* of desire versus rationality and dream versus reality. Having apparently fallen in love with her (or with the *idea* of her), Michel is irresistibly drawn to Julietta. But she does not represent reality, cannot truly be grasped, and cannot love him in return since she does not possess any memories. Like a pastoral image, she and the dream music associated with her are idealized, destined to evaporate, just as

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a dream ceases to exist when the dreamer awakens. At the end of the opera Michel realizes that all that has happened was indeed a dream, but he is given a final opportunity to choose between reality and fantasy, with no turning back. He chooses the latter.

The dream world of Julietta is conjured by her unaccompanied love song, the first music given to her character. This is the song that has driven Michel to return to the village to once again seek her out. The opening three notes attain such importance in the work that henceforth they will be referred to as the “Julietta motive”. They are initially joined to a fourth note to set the words “Moje laska” (My love), but Martinu treats the first three notes as a separate motive, itself a fragment, or memory, of the original four. It is a simple descending figure, melancholy in character. At the end of Julietta’s song the motive returns, now set only to the word “laska” in a chromatic transformation, ultimately giving the tune an almost dangerous, exotic quality. One is reminded of Janacek’s enticing Gypsy woman who briefly sings in the middle of the song cycle, *The Diary of One Who Vanished*. Here is Julietta’s song:

Poco Andante



Mo-je lá - ska vdál-ce se ztráti-la, za širé mo-ře, té-to no-ci.

S návratem hvězdy na nebi,zda vrátí se, vrá-tí i moje lá - ska!

(“My love is lost far away, over the wide sea he’s gone tonight. With the return of the star up in the sky, may he come back, may my love come back too!”)

Complementing the Julietta motive is a second, symbolically related gesture that has often been termed the “Julietta chords”. It is a distinctive, uncannily memorable modified plagal cadence, and again there is a connection to Janacek, who used the progression to stirring effect in the finale of his *Taras Bulba*. In the case of *Julietta*, it seems to represent an onrush of emotion, a heady combination of longing and romantic desire. In its initial appearance, the orchestra (piano reduction) loudly proclaims the chords just as Julietta enters the stage for the first time:

(The door to the house (under the window) opens, and Julietta comes out.)

Dvěře domu (pod oknem) se otevrou a vyjde Juliette.

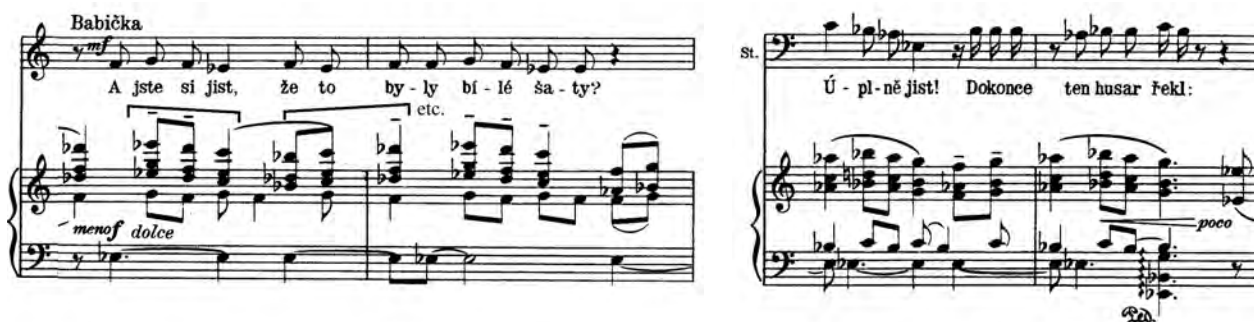


Both ideas occur throughout the opera,² often in crucial dramatic moments, reflecting the allure of this dream world as well as its darker side. In Act 2, scene 5, when Michel and Julietta at last find themselves alone together, the Julietta motive appears warmly in the orchestra, apparently reflecting the couple’s happiness. But as Julietta sings “But now I’ve got you here! In my arms! (Captive, and we are alone, just the two of us!)”, several dissonant harmonizations of the motive reflect the strangeness of this surreal place and anticipate the tragic trajectory of the opera. Michel, in Julietta’s clutches, is in danger of becoming a prisoner of her world without real memories, but he is not yet aware of it. The passage also underlines the freedom with which Martinu treats this descending motive throughout the opera; here the falling three notes are no longer stepwise, but are expressed in a variety of intervallic configurations:

Bohuslav Martinu and Vitezslava Kapralova



The motive also appears memorably in a scene with minor characters. An older couple is buying memories from a souvenir vendor (literally), who invents interesting details of a past they cannot remember. They are overjoyed at receiving these, even if they question the authenticity of the seller’s wares (“Are you quite sure the dress was white?” asks the grandmother. “Quite sure!” is the vendor’s confident reply). The motive once again appears stepwise in this scene (accompanied by piano solo), and also in inversion. This is in clear folk style with conspicuous parallel thirds and sixths, perhaps reflecting the hopeless naïveté of the couple, but also containing an emotional poignancy:³



A crucial appearance of the Julietta motive occurs at the end of the opera, when Michel sees a frightening vision of other men who never woke up from their dreams and have been lost forever to reality. As they disappear behind a closing door to the dream world, the motive is heard chromatically descending, underscoring the fate of these hapless souls who are now dead to reality:



As the climax of the opera approaches, Michel must choose between worlds once and for all, but cannot seem to make up his mind. The Julietta chords return in tandem with the descending motive as Michel laments, “I am afraid...that as soon as I leave I will forget it all! And I do not want to forget!” These words demonstrate the irony upon which the entire opera is based. Michel’s very existence is defined by his memories, yet he is moved to sacrifice them in order to join Julietta in her world. He loses in either case, because Julietta is not real and he cannot grasp her in dreams any more than in reality. Thus, with the appearance of the Julietta chords in this passage the link to Michel’s desire for her is made clear:

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Musical score for a vocal piece with piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "Bojím se... jak mi le o-de-jdu, že za-po-me-nu všechno! A já ne-choč za-po-menou-ti!". The piano accompaniment features dynamic markings like *poco f* and *f*, and includes a *Timp.* (Tympani) part.

For Martinu the symbolic meanings behind the opera acquired a deeply personal significance when Kapralova entered his life. As their relationship developed, it was almost as if Julietta's dream world had become real for Martinu, and the music of the opera came to reflect the composer's own longing directed toward his new pupil. Indeed, their developing relationship coincides with a striking usage of the Julietta motive in new works written by both composers in the wake of the opera's completion and first performance. Just after their first lessons together in the fall of 1937 Martinu began work on his *Concerto Grosso*, which features the Julietta motive in the first movement combined with a fragment of that most Czech of musical symbols, the *Svaty Vaclave* chorale⁴ (marked in brackets). It is significant that this is the only *cantabile* melody in the movement, and the *espressivo* indication is also telling:

Musical score for a piano piece. The top staff is marked *f (poco) espr.* and the bottom staff is marked *più f* and *f*. The music is in a minor key and features a chromatic, expressive melody.

Apparently Martinu was already beginning to associate the Julietta motive with his personal feelings for Kapralova as early as the time of the *Concerto Grosso*'s composition, but the connection becomes much more apparent in the following year with the *Tre ricercari*. As Martinu worked on the *Ricercari* while incorporating feedback from Kapralova, preparations were meanwhile being made for the premiere of *Julietta* in Prague. Alongside the numerous quotations of *Svaty Vaclave* in the *Tre ricercari*, the Julietta motive also appears with particular potency, and seems to reflect the blossoming romance between teacher and pupil. In the first movement the Julietta motive appears significantly at the first sign of an *espressivo* marking, rather chromatic and rhythmically chaotic:

Musical score for a piano piece. The top staff is marked *f espress* and features a chromatic, expressive melody.

In the second movement, however, it occurs in the guise of a pastoral. The following passage is essentially a bucolic love duet between the flute and oboe, and it is possible to imagine one representing Martinu and the other Kapralova. It extends to four descending notes but the kinship with the Julietta motive is nevertheless clear. As if to underscore its importance, the passage occurs three times during the movement, extremely unusual for Martinu in this type of continuously developing neo-Baroque work:⁵

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Fl. I. *p*

Oboe I *p molto dolce*

Later in the movement the reference to the Julietta motive is even more explicit, and again the instrumentation (two pianos this time) appears symbolic. The passage, with numerous repetitions of the Julietta motive harmonized in sixths, is purely transitional, a moment of absolute repose which shimmers rapturously:

Piano I *pp* etc. *poco*

Piano II *pp* *poco*

After the *Ricercari* were completed, Kapralova began composing works that also included the Julietta motive, confirming that the motive had become a musical code for their mutual affection. She produced her own setting of the amorous text Martinu had used in his recently completed “Love Carol”, which itself is full of references to the Julietta motive. Here is the conclusion of Martinu’s vocal part:

f

A kdož ji-nej než můj mi-lej!
Blož der eř-ne, bloř der mei-ne!

(“And who else, but my love!”)

In Kapralova’s version, she deliberately quotes a portion of the Martinu that includes the Julietta motive. In her reharmonization of the same melody, she is less explicit in outlining the Julietta motive in the piano chords while the voice rests, but the reminiscence in any case remains in the vocal part itself. Here is Martinu’s version, followed by Kapralova’s parody:

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p Svi-ti-lo se po všem dvo-ře, po všem dvo-ře až v ko-mo-ře. V té
Licht war es, so sang die Am-mer, in dem Hof und in der Kam-mer. Drin

mf

Meno mosso

mp Svi-ti-lo se po všem dvo-ře, po všem dvo-ře až v ko-mo-ře. V té
Licht war es, so sang die Am-mer, in dem Hof und in der Kam-mer. Drin

p *mp*

Two other works composed by Kapralova during this same period include the *Variations sur le carillon de l'église Saint-Etienne-du-Mont* and the *Partita for Piano and String Orchestra*. In the former work for piano solo, the theme is derived from the chimes of a church not far from Kapralova's flat in Paris at the time, and the bells could be heard outside the window of the apartment. By coincidence the pattern of chimes quite obviously resembled the Julietta motive, a fact that must have amused Martinu and Kapralova. Here is the brief theme:

Andante

Kapralova's *Partita*, begun around the time of *Julietta's* premiere, also features the Julietta motive prominently. Their appearances stand out conspicuously from the otherwise impersonal neo-Baroque language modeled after her teacher. In the first excerpt below the treatment is more melodic, but also displays another characteristic apparently borrowed from Martinu - secondary ragtime (repeated, syncopated groupings of three). In the second example percussive patterns of the Julietta motive in the piano contrast with a more legato version in the first violins:

Piano

Viol. I.

Piano

Martinu and Kapralova's relationship experienced many difficulties. Like that between Julietta and Michel, its irrationality flew in the face of logic. Martinu was unable to leave his wife Charlotte, and there was a limit to Kapralova's patience with her married lover. A crisis ensued, and Kapralova left in April 1938 on an extended holiday with another potential suitor. When Martinu composed the *String Quartet No. 5* at this time, the anguish he was experiencing found its way into the piece. Indeed, he even inscribed a sketch of the work to Kapralova, in which numerous drawings and annotations dramatize the situation.

Bohuslav Martinu and Vitezslava Kapralova

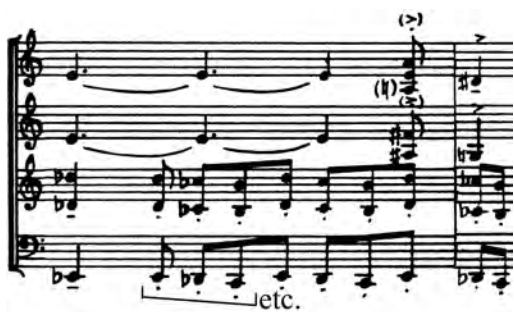
Not surprisingly, the Julietta motive emerges in the work in emotionally marked contexts, as the following sampling from each movement demonstrates. In the first movement the viola expresses the Julietta motive in long notes against secondary ragtime in the first violin with an oscillating blues inflection:



An agitated appearance can be seen in the second movement, an equally familiar chromatically descending figure in the second violin:



In the scherzo the motive acts as an accompaniment in a grotesque *danse macabre* as pessimism continues to dominate:



Only in the finale does the Julietta motive finally emerge as the principal material, after which it undergoes a series of fascinating transformations. The melancholy tune in the first violin that begins the movement is obviously based upon it:



The return of a chromatically descending version adds to the desolate character, while the first violin melody is altered to no longer explicitly outline the Julietta motive:

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The three chromatically descending notes then develop into a lugubrious four-note ostinato that is not entirely regular:



Another additive technique is featured in this movement as the Julietta motive is extended by chromatic increments from its original three-note guise:



In the last measures of the quartet the Julietta motive leads to desperate, anguished chords, while the chromatically descending pattern can be seen one last time in the cello part's penultimate bar:



The use of the Julietta motive to reflect anger and despair is more balanced with lyrical tendencies in Martinu's next work, the *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra*. There are still grotesque permutations of the Julietta motive, as for example in the climax of the first movement:



But Martinu also introduces the Julietta motive as a syncopated, yet lyrical tune with the characteristic long-short-long pattern:

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This returns in the finale as a cyclic gesture:



These lyrical passages show a more relaxed approach to the motive, and seem to reflect the fact that Martinu’s relationship with Kapralova had regained some stability. Another conciliatory gesture may be found in the slow movement of this work, where Martinu includes a passage resembling the third variation from Kapralova’s *Variations sur le carillon*. If deliberate, it is a touching example of reciprocal inspiration, from pupil to composer. Here is an excerpt from Kapralova’s variation, followed by the slow movement of the *Concertino*:



Martinu’s next work, the piano cycle *Fenêtre sur le jardin*, written in the summer of 1938 while the composer awaited Kapralova’s safe return to Paris from her home in Moravia, also features the Julietta motive. It was a time of great anxiety for Martinu brought about by Kapralova’s absence and the deteriorating political situation in Europe leading up to the Munich Agreement that proved disastrous for Czechoslovakia. It is in Martinu’s next and perhaps most famous work, the *Double Concerto*, that the Julietta motive gains a universally expressive potency. It appears in the following disturbing passage from the first movement. As the polyphonic strands pursue their individual courses, the resulting vertical sonorities are excruciating in their dissonance:



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The Julietta motive emerges transformed in the left hand of the piano solo featured in the *Largo*. Now the motive is inverted,⁶ taking on the shape of a chromatically ascending three-note figure. This is the motive that returns urgently at the end of the finale: here, it accompanies a lugubrious melody where the original Julietta motive is prominent as well:



In January 1939, several months after the completion of the *Double Concerto*, Kapralova at last arrived to Paris, and Martinu gave her a piano sketch of *Julietta*. The sketch is touchingly inscribed with reminiscences of experiences the two shared. As Martinu wrote later to Kapralova, these joyful memories no longer seemed real in the face of the horrors of war.⁷

It is not surprising that as a musical symbol the Julietta motive becomes increasingly tied to the upheaval caused by world events that obviously had a direct bearing on Martinu and Kapralova's relationship. Kapralova eventually married Jiri Mucha, son of the painter Alfons Mucha, who had collaborated with Martinu on the text of his *Field Mass*. But composer and pupil remained very close, and Martinu was devastated by her sudden death in June of 1940 at the age of 25. According to Mucha her last words were "To je Julietta" ("It is Julietta"), as if she heard the notes of the opera one last time.

Martinu and his wife Charlotte themselves barely escaped the Nazis, fleeing Paris for the south of France only days before the Germans occupied the city. In these dire circumstances, while waiting for exit visas and the promise of a new life in America, Martinu composed the *Fantasy and Toccata* for Czech pianist Rudolf Firkusny, who had recently brought the news to Martinu of Kapralova's death. Firkusny's connection to Julietta was significant, for he had attended the premiere in Prague and knew how much the opera meant to Martinu.⁸

The *Fantasy and Toccata* is Martinu's first composition after Kapralova's death, and the music does not hide the fact. Now Kapralova was only a memory, no longer a part of the real world. In the work's opening bars the Julietta chords (marked in brackets) are wedded to the Julietta motive (descending B-F#-E) in a single, clearly symbolic gesture:



Later in the *Fantasy* movement the Julietta motive is featured as a lyrical oasis amidst much dissonant writing. The excerpt below is typical, as it begins vulnerably but soon increases in intensity until, in subsequent measures, the lyrical element (and the Julietta motive) disintegrates. Both hands feature the motive, with the left hand in diminution:



Bohuslav Martinu and Vitezslava Kapralova



Martinu (at the very back) and Kapralova (second in the second row) with brothers Kricka (the last two in the second row) and other friends at Tri Studne in July 1938. Photo: Oldrich Duchoslav. Courtesy of the Duchoslav Family.

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When Martinu finally arrived safely in America on March 31, 1941, the ghost of Julietta (and, presumably, Kapralova) continued to haunt him. The score to his beloved opera lay hidden somewhere in Europe and like so many of his scores it would be inaccessible until after the end of the war. When the composer was asked to write an homage to Paderewski who had recently died, he responded with a *Mazurka*. But this piece, Martinu's first to be written in America, is haunted by Czech, not Polish, ghosts. The Julietta motive appears in mazurka rhythm, accompanied by the related, rising three-note chromatic figure from the *Double Concerto* in the left hand:



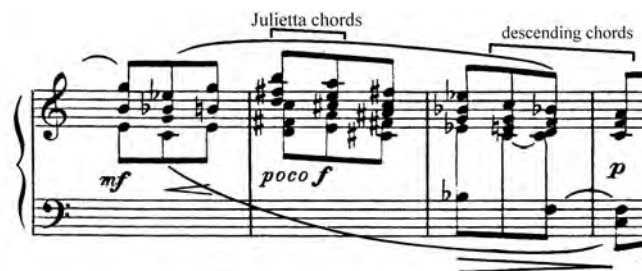
In the slow movement of the *Concerto da Camera* for violin, piano, timpani and strings, composed soon afterward, the Julietta motive is heard very conspicuously in a powerfully symbolic passage. After a devastating climax of noisy chaos - an utter breakdown of musical coherence - the Julietta motive emerges in the solo violin, in minor mode - just as it initially appeared in the opera, but now repeated almost endlessly:



This lonely voice, seeming to rise out of the ashes, becomes much brighter in the finale, where the Julietta motive is transformed into a cheerful, syncopated dance tune:



Martinu also wrote a *Dumka* for piano during this period, recalling the two works composed alongside *Julietta* in Paris. Of the three this is the most moving, with the Julietta chords appearing alongside the Julietta motive in a very bittersweet musical remembrance:



In the *Memorial to Lidice* from 1943, Martinu's deeply felt meditation on the destruction of the Czech village of Lidice by the Nazis,⁹ we hear the descending melodic pattern as the work builds to its climax. Its presence lends further support that Martinu was consciously using the Julietta motive in a broader symbolic context:



Bohuslav Martinu and Vitezslava Kapralova

If all of the evidence cited above is not conclusive proof of Martinu's symbolic association of the Julietta motive with Kapralova and the life-changing events that brought an end to his years in Paris, examining one last work helps to resolve the question. This is the *Adagio* for piano written in 1957 in memory of Kapralova and her father Vaclav Kapral. 1957 was the tenth anniversary of Kapral's death, and Kapralova's mother asked Martinu to write a piece in memory of her daughter and husband, especially recalling the summer of 1938 which they all spent together at the Kaprals' summer residence at Tri Studne. After this idyllic holiday Martinu never again set foot in his native country.

The *Adagio* begins with the Julietta motive in the left hand, descending chromatically, a clear metaphor of death and loss and the same variant originally used to depict the lost souls in the opera:



After a dramatic arrival on G minor recalling the *Memorial to Lidice*, the Julietta motive rings out in major, but no less painfully. It is a desperate and lonely gesture, surrounded by rests:



The Julietta motive continues to dominate the musical material of this one-page work, and is notably transformed in a tender, almost pastoral passage, once again appearing cadentially:



The sense of tragedy proves inescapable, however, and the motive returns in its chromatic guise to close the work.

As a musical symbol the Julietta motive, and its presence in both Martinu's and Kapralova's music, demands our attention and contemplation. In Martinu's case particularly, the myriad cross-references and connections that resonate within the composer's oeuvre build a more complete picture of his aesthetic, and help to explain why his music sounds the way it does. Thus, when a listener hears the Julietta motive in the first violins at the beginning of the First Symphony and recognizes its symbolic significance, the musical experience is that much more enriched:¹⁰



When a variant of the above melody returns in the finale to cap the entire symphony, the Julietta motive resonates specifically, and emotionally, within the listener:¹¹



Musical Symbolism / Notes

For Martinù, a war refugee and later an exile from his homeland, such passages could be seen to represent not merely the memory of Kapralova and the love that they shared, but something more transcendent. Perhaps Kapralova herself came to symbolize, as the baritone soloist declares at the conclusion of *The Opening of the Wells*, “the keys to home”:



Endnotes:

¹ See *Kapralova: A Chronology of Life Events*, by Karla Hartl, at www.kapralova.org/CHRONOLOGY.htm

² If Martinù's use of the so-called Julietta chords appears for the first time in the opera, the three-note descending Julietta motive was long a favorite melodic gesture in Martinù's works. It appears to be derived from a simple melodic gesture common in Czech folk songs. Martinù arranged one such song in a set of children's pieces for piano, entitled *Bozankovi a Sonice* (To Bozanek and Sonicka), written in 1932. The folk song used by Martinù is "Jeste ja se podivam" (Now I'll Take a Look). The setting is as simple as possible, reflecting the work's young dedicatees. Here the descending pattern appears as a cadential gesture, as is frequently the case in *Julietta*:



Further examples of the melodic pattern may be found in other works from the twenties and thirties, including the *Dumkas Nos. 1 & 2* and *Listek do pamatniku*.

³ This is the scene that so deeply affected pianist Rudolf Firkusny at the opera's premiere that he asked Martinù's permission to perform it as a piano solo. The score to *Julietta* was left behind when Martinù fled Europe, but Firkusny would play this scene from the opera from memory as a consolation for Martinù when the two artists lived in New York during the war.

⁴ Beginning with the composition of the *Czech Rhapsody* in 1918, Martinù used the *Svaty Vaclave* chorale extensively as an overt - or covert - symbol of Czechness in his works. For a discussion of Martinù's use of this musical material please see my dissertation, "Martinù in Paris: A Synthesis of Musical Styles and Symbols".

⁵ After Kapralova's death this slow movement continued to have particular significance for the composer. Shortly after his arrival in America Martinù produced a domestic recording of himself playing a piano transcription of the opening of this movement, which includes the passage quoted here.

⁶ or retrograded, which in this case gives the same result.

⁷ Selected correspondence between Martinù and Kapralova is printed in Mucha, *Podivne Lasky* [Strange Loves].

⁸ See note 3.

⁹ in retaliation for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, who had been responsible for transforming Czechoslovakia into a brutal German Protectorate.

¹⁰ The lower bracket indicates a fragment of the *Svaty Vaclave* chorale that is combined here with the Julietta motive.

¹¹ Again, a fragment of *Svaty Vaclave* appears, as indicated by the third bracket.

Musical Examples Cited

MUSICAL EXAMPLES CITED

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About the author

Erik Entwistle holds a Ph.D. in musicology from the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is on the faculty of the Longy School of Music and also teaches at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA.

As pianist and musicologist, Erik has devoted much of his performing and scholarly efforts to the music of Czech composers. He is particularly interested in the music of Bohuslav Martinu who was the subject of his doctoral dissertation, entitled "Martinu in Paris: A Synthesis of Musical Styles and Symbols". His writings have been featured in the *New York Times*, *Opera Quarterly* and *Slavic and East European Journal*.

Most of the piano solo works examined in this article (*Adagio*, *Dumka No. 3*, *Julietta - Act 2, Scene 3*, *Mazurka*) may be heard on Erik's new CD for Summit Records (SMT #407), scheduled to be released on November 2, 2004.



Martinu: Piano Works
Erik Entwistle, pianoforte

This adventurous new release includes a generous selection of nineteen works spanning over thirty years of the Czech composer's career. Ten of the pieces appear on disc for the first time. Included are the haunting *Mazurka* from 1941, Martinu's first work written on American soil as a refugee from war-torn Europe, and two delightful pieces for the holidays: *Vánoce* (Christmas) and *Merry Christmas 1941 to Hope Castagnola*. The most imposing work on the disc is the *Sonata No. 1*, written in 1954 as a virtuoso vehicle for Rudolf Serkin who performed it in Europe, Carnegie Hall, and at the Marlboro Festival. The connection to Kapralova is apparent in many of the works featured on the disc, as explained in the detailed program notes written by the artist. These include an excerpt from *Julietta*, the cycle *Fenêtre sur le jardin*, *Mazurka*, *Dumka No. 3*, and Martinu's last piano work, the 1957 *Adagio* in memory of Kapralova and her father.

VITEZSLAVA KAPRALOVA (1915-1940)

was born on 24 January 1915 as the only child of Brno composer Vaclav Kapral. Kapralova began her musical education at the Brno Conservatory, where she studied composition with Vilem Petrzelka and conducting with Zdenek Chalabala. She continued her studies at the Prague Conservatory, participating in the masterclasses of Vitezslav Novak (composition) and Vaclav Talich (conducting). In 1937 she received a scholarship to study in France, at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, where she became a pupil of Charles Münch. She also studied composition as a private student of Bohuslav Martinu. The most important influences on Kapralova's artistic development, besides the salient tonal qualities of the Moravian melodic and rhythmic idiom used with great versatility in her work, were the music of Martinu, Bartok, and Stravinsky, the 'Paris Six', as well as the whole French ambience of the highly refined cult of form. Following the German occupation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, Kapralova decided to stay in exile in France. In April 1940 she married the writer Jiri Mucha. A month later, she became gravely ill. Prior to the German invasion of Paris she was evacuated to Montpellier where she died in a local hospital on 16 June 1940.

CONCERTINO FOR VIOLIN, CLARINET AND ORCHESTRA, OP. 21

A fragment of Kapralova's *Concertino for Violin, Clarinet, and Orchestra, op. 21*, from 1939, represents the culmination of the composer's organic development towards both expressively rich and rationally disciplined modern polyphony and structure. The work was completed, based on the composer's sketch, by Prof. Milos Stedron of Masaryk University and Prof. Leos Faltus of Janacek Academy of Music.
H 7919, ISMN M-2601-0251-4, 56 pages, price: 11 EUR

RITORNEL, OP. 25

Ritornel for violoncello and piano is one of the two-piece set entitled *Deux ritournelles pour violoncelle et piano, op. 25*. Kapralova composed the two pieces in May 1940 in Paris (the autograph of the cello part of one of the ritornels is dated "Paris, Mai 1940"), finishing the set on or around 11 May 1940. Of the two ritornels, only one has survived, thanks to pianist Hermann Grab who brought its copy to the United States. The pieces were to be premiered by Karel Neumann (violoncello) and Hermann Grab (piano) in Paris on 29 May 1940, but, due to the rapidly worsening political situation, the concert had to be cancelled. Karel Neumann premiered the work later that year in London. This edition of the work was prepared by editors Prof. Milos Stedron and Prof. Leos Faltus.

H 7827, ISMN M-2601-0114-2, 28 pages, price: 9 EUR

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