



## PKF — PRAGUE PHILHARMONIA

PKF — Prague Philharmonia is considered one of the greatest cultural phenomena in the recent history of the Czech Republic, after 1989. It was founded in 1994 on the initiative of the conductor Jiří Bělohlávek (1946–2017) under the name Prague Chamber Philharmonic. Today it is one of the most recognised orchestras, not only among Czech but also among world ensembles. Regular invitations to tour abroad as well as recording projects with the most prestigious international labels bear testimony to this. Since 2015–2016 season the orchestra has been led by the French conductor Emmanuel Villaume.

PKF — Prague Philharmonia is a frequent partner of renowned conductors and soloists, including Harry Bicket, Jakub Hrůša, Tomáš Hanus, Tomáš Netopil, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, David Newman, Paul McCreech, Milan Turkovič, Ben Glassberg, Julian Rachlin, Gil Shaham, Vladimir Spivakov, Maxim Vengerov, Daniel Müller-Schott, Mischa Maisky, Sarah Chang, Isabelle Faust, Katia & Marielle Labèque, Gábor Boldoczki, Emmanuel Pahud, Gautier Capuçon, Jonas Kaufmann, Diana Damrau, Anna Netrebko, Ailyn Pérez, Benjamin Bernheim, Bryn Terfel, Javier Camarena and many others. The orchestra had the privilege of cooperating also with Christopher Hogwood, Martha Argerich, Yefim Bronfman, András Schiff, Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, Angela Gheorghiu, Elina Garanča, Juan Diego Flórez, Thomas Hampson, Magdalena Kožená, Rolando Villazón and others. The orchestra is regularly invited to international music festivals and gives concerts at top world venues (BBC Proms, Dresdner Musikfestspiele, MITO Settembre Musica, Prague Spring, Berliner Philharmonie, Festspielhaus Baden Baden, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Gasteig Munich, Tokyo Suntory Hall and Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman, among others). In the 25th Jubilee season 2018–2019 listeners in Spain and France (at the Festival international de musique de Besançon Franche-Comté), Austria, China and Oman had an opportunity to hear the orchestra, and there were two major tours to Germany: the first with Jonas Kaufmann and the second with Gábor Boldoczki and Soyoung Yoon.

Over the period of its existence, the ensemble has recorded over 90 CDs, released by leading Czech and world music publishers, such as Deutsche Grammophon, Warner Classics, Decca, Supraphon, EMI, Sony Classical and Harmonia Mundi. Among the numerous prizes the recordings have garnered are: the Gold Record RAC Canada in 2000, Harmony Award 2001 and Diapason d'Or in 2007. The CD *Héroïque* with Bryan Hymel was in 2016 nominated for the International Opera Award and in 2017 the recording of *Bohemian Rhapsody* with Gábor Boldoczki was nominated at the International Classical Music Award (ICMA). Its most recent 'profile' recording Ravel-Debussy-Bizet with Emmanuel Villaume released by Warner Classics received excellent reviews from the London Sunday Times, Gramophone and the BBC Music Magazine, which included it in its top ten recordings of the week. In November 2019 saw the release of the long-awaited debut album by the tenor Benjamin Bernheim in collaboration with the PKF by Deutsche Grammophon.

The Czech conductor and founder of the orchestra, Jiří Bělohlávek (1946–2017), was head of the PKF — Prague Philharmonia from 1994 to 2005, and later became its honorary musical director. The second chief conductor of the PKF from 2005 to 2008 was the Swiss conductor and flautist Kaspar Zehnder. From 2008 to 2015 the ensemble was led by the outstanding young Czech conductor Jakub Hrůša.

Freshness, energy and perfectionism are characteristics inscribed in the orchestra's 'Birth Certificate', as well as a love of music expressed in each of their concerts. Behind the highly valued distinctive sound of the PKF — Prague Philharmonia is partly its key repertoire, which has been from the beginning Viennese Classicism, namely compositions by Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven. As far as Czech composers are concerned, the orchestra finds itself most 'at home' with the work of Bohuslav Martinů.

The Municipality of Prague and the Czech Ministry of Culture have been long-term supporters of PKF — Prague Philharmonia.

[www.praguephilharmonia.com](http://www.praguephilharmonia.com)

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