

CONTEMPORARY
COMPOSED
MUSIC
IN THE CZECH
REPUBLIC
ENSEMBLES
FESTIVALS
CONCERT SERIES
2025

Deadline: August 2025. NOT FOR SALE.

Compiled by Adam Riethof
Translated by Ian Mikyska

Supported by the Foundation of the Czech Music Fund, the Ministry
of Culture of the Czech Republic, and Prague City Council

Besední 3, 118 00 Praha 1
www.musica.cz
e-mail: his@musica.cz
tel.: 257 312 422



MINISTRY OF CULTURE
CZECH REPUBLIC



When we published the first incarnation of this brochure in 2017, we introduced it with the following statement:

“What is happening in the field of contemporary composed music in the Czech Republic? You hold in your hand a publication whose aim is to answer this question by presenting the work of those who make these activities possible and push them forward: on the one hand, **ensembles focused on contemporary music**, on the other, **festivals, concert series, organisers and associations**. We tried to approach everyone on the Czech scene for whom contemporary notated music is, if not at the centre of their attention, then at least an important part of their activities. (...) The presentations are ordered alphabetically, with the same space for everyone: one page in Czech and English. The texts were polished by our editors, but the content of each individual contribution was left up to the discretion of the individual subjects – everyone said what they wanted to say about themselves.”

It is now 2025, and the brochure is conceived in the same manner, but it is much thicker. There is more music and more active individuals; the scene is not stagnating; there is much to discover. The current state we aimed to capture, that is, the 2025/2026 season, will inevitably change in the future. We do not know how or in which direction. But this is precisely why – and also if, perhaps, the egalitarian nature of the publication makes you feel helpless – the Czech Music Information Centre is here for your immediate use. Write to us, call, visit us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Petr Bakla
Adam Riethof

- 4 Agon Orchestra
- 5 Ateliér '90
- 6 Brno Contemporary Orchestra
- 7 Contriology
- 8 Contemporary Music Series S
- 9 Days of Contemporary Music
- 10 Dust in the Groove
- 11 Dystopic Requiem Quartet
- 12 Echofluxx Festival
- 13 Ensemble Damian / Festival Opera
Schrattenbach
- 14 Ensemble Marijan
- 15 Ensemble Opera Diversa
- 16 Ensemble Terrible
- 17 Exposition of New Music
- 18 fama Q
- 19 Forfest
- 20 Music in Contexts
- 21 Music Forum Hradec Králové
- 22 Music Present Ostrava / Sounds of Diversity
- 23 ISHA Trio
- 24 Klang Systematiek
- 25 Konvergence
- 26 Laug.sonoris
- 27 Lichtzwang
- 28 Bridges of Contemporary Music
- 29 MusicOlomouc
- 30 NODO
- 31 New Music in the Atrium
- 32 Berg Orchestra

- 33 Ostrava Days
- 34 Ostravská banda
- 35 ONO – Ostrava New Orchestra
- 36 Prague Modern
- 37 Prague Music Performance
- 38 Prague Offspring
- 39 Prague Quiet Music Collective
- 40 Prague Quiet Music Festival
- 41 Prague Sounds
- 42 Encountres of New Music Plus
- 43 Stro.My Ensemble
- 44 Trio Aperto
- 45 Umělecká beseda Tuesdays

AGON ORCHESTRA

ENSEMBLE FOR NEW MUSIC

facebook.com/agonorchestra

The Agon Orchestra (formerly the Agon Ensemble) was established in the 1980s as a platform for young composer. Under semi-official conditions, they presented music by P. Kofroň, M. Smolka, M. Pudlák, and composers from abroad – J. Cage, M. Feldman, A. Pärt, S. Reich, G. Scelsi, and K. Stockhausen, among others. After 1989, the group began performing on stages both at home and abroad. Petr Kofroň became the conductor and Martin Smolka the artistic director. Several critically acclaimed CDs were published on Arta Records and Audio Ego. This period concluded with an album of music by M. Smolka.

After his departure in 1998, the group was principally led by Petr Kofroň (artistic director and conductor) and Ivan Bierhanzl (dramaturgy and production). This period also saw the birth of a connection with New York composers (E. Sharp, J. Zorn, D. Lang, M. Gordon). The Agon Orchestra presented three operas by P. Glass (*The Fall of the House of Usher*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *In the Penal Colony*). An important source of inspiration for the group was the Czech rock underground. There were new versions of compositions by F. Topol, M. Hlavsa, and DG 307, as well as settings of poems by I. M. Jirous. The album *Typornamento* contains realisations of graphic scores by M. Adamčiak.

In the 2025/2026 season, on the occasion of its 40th anniversary, the Agon Orchestra will present a series of concerts at the Komedie Theatre in Prague that will present music by I. Acher, J. Adamík, P. Glass, V. Havel, M. Ivanović, J. Klusák, P. Kofroň, M. Nejtěk, M. Pudlák, S. Reich, M. Smolka, and P. Wajsar, including several premieres.

Discography: *Agon* (Arta Records, 1991), *Česká nová hudba 60. let* (Arta Records, 1994), *Grafické partitury a koncepty* (Audio Ego, 1996), *Red & Black* (Audio Ego, 1997), *Martin Smolka* (Audio Ego, 1998), *Filip Topol & Agon Orchestra* (Indies Records, 2001), *Pašijové hry* (Knihy Hana, 2004), *Obešel já polí pět* (Guerilla Records, 2009), *Magorova Summa* (Guerilla Records, 2009), *Typornamento* (Guerilla Records, 2012), *Petr Kofroň: Symfonie Titan* (CZMIC, 2015), *Jak sup letící nad krajinou snu* (Guerilla Records, 2021)

ATELIÉR 90

ASSOCIATION OF COMPOSERS, PERFORMERS, AND MUSICOLOGISTS; TŘÍDENÍ FESTIVAL

Ateliér '90 (Studio 90) is an association of composers, performers, and musicologists dedicated to non-standard contemporary music. It was established around 1990 as a response to the practices of the Union of Czechoslovak Composers and its attempts to organise musical life according to its rigid principles. Freedom of expression and support for unconventional current stylistic trends are its principal missions. The activities of Ateliér '90 are overseen by an elected committee. Marek Kopelent chaired the committee for many years, a responsibility that has now passed on to Kristýna Valoušková.

The association brings together individuals from various musical professions who share a focus on progressive directions in contemporary classical music. It continues the tradition of avant-garde associations, clubs, and creative groups. Based in Prague, it is active throughout Czechia. Its mission is to create spaces for exchange, confrontation, and refinement of exploratory poetics and artistic positions. The association aims to champion approaches that aid the development and application of new art, protect minority radical activities from the conservative mainstream, and preserve the legacy of figures who have not received due recognition in Czech music because of their unconventional and nonconformist positions. The group also collaborates with related organisations in other cultural spheres.

The principal activity of Ateliér '90 is the publication of works by its members and the international exchange of compositions and performers. These goals are primarily achieved through concerts. In addition to individual concert evenings, there is also a small multi-day festival called Třídění. The program features not only pieces by members but also music by prominent 20th-century composers and selected works by international composers, along with seminars and talks.

BRNO CONTEMPORARY ORCHESTRA

ENSEMBLE SPECIALISING IN THE PERFORMANCE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

bcorchestra.cz

The Brno Contemporary Orchestra was established in 2011 with the goal of performing contemporary music from around the world in Czechia, as well as Czech music internationally, occasionally including works from the 20th century. The ensemble aims to demonstrate that contemporary classical music can be an integral part of everyday life. The founder, artistic director, and principal conductor of the BCO is Pavel Šnajdr.

The group organises an annual subscriber program featuring a carefully crafted concept and dramaturgy. Each season follows original themes designed to explore new and unfamiliar phenomena. By connecting music with other art forms – spoken word, dance, film, visual art, and architecture – it creates cohesive, engaging programs. The orchestra's projects appeal not only to audiences but also inspire composers to create new works specifically for the ensemble.

BCO aims to bring music out of concert halls and opera houses and closer to the people. The world of classical music is often shrouded in exclusivity, typically intended for a narrow group of connoisseurs. The orchestra offers a wide range of contemporary autonomous music at various venues to anyone with an open mind. One example is the concert *Six-legged Heroes*, which features “insect” compositions commissioned by BCO. This concert will take place in the Worker's House in Židenice, Brno, in October 2025, accompanied by an exhibition of entomological boxes by artist Jan Zuziak, as well as boxes on loan from the Department of Entomology at the Moravian Museum.

BCO regularly collaborates with the Centre for Experimental Theatre, the National Theatre in Brno, the Brno Philharmonic, the Leitnerka club, and the National Theatre in Prague.

CONTRIOLOGY

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE SPECIALISING IN CONTEMPORARY AND IMPROVISED MUSIC

janavondru.com/contriology

This trio, consisting of cimbalom, accordion, and voice, focuses on the interpretation of contemporary classical music and improvisation. ConTRIology was established in 2016 at Brno's Janáček Academy of Performing Arts with the goal of creating opportunities for new compositions. Their distinctive instrumentation and use of extended playing techniques offer unique timbral possibilities, which are explored by both established and emerging composers who have written for them.

The trio's repertoire includes works by Peter Graham, Daniel Skála, Ondřej Kyas, Michal Wróblewski, Ian Mikyska, Radim Hanousek, Jiří Lukeš, and others. In addition to concerts organised by Opera Diversa, they have also performed at the International Festival of Slavic Music, the Showcase of Classical Music, and the Alternativa Festival.

In 2024, ConTRIology released their debut album, *Minulo*, which blends folk songs with their own unique compositional style and improvisation. The album also features electronics by Tomáš Vtípil, who contributed as both arranger and performer.

→ Jana Vondrů – voice, Žaneta Vítová – accordion, Michal Grombiřík – cimbalom

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SERIES S

SUBSCRIBERS' SERIES FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

BY THE PRAGUE PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

prgphil.cz

For over two decades, the Contemporary Music Series S has been one of the principal subscription series of the Prague Philharmonia (formerly the Prague Chamber Philharmonic). The series is currently curated by Hana Dohnálková as a “musical talk show”, where music is not only performed but also discussed. In the 2025/2026 season, the series will continue with six concerts featuring some of the most interesting figures in Czech and Slovak music, primarily composers, along with their special guests on three occasions. Concerts S1 through S5 will be held at the Studio of the Švanda Theatre in Prague, with the final concert on 4 June 2026 taking place on the theatre's main stage.

Multiple Czech and world premieres will take place over the course of six evenings. The talks will explore the composers' working methods, styles, and inspirations, while their music is performed by members of the Prague Philharmonia and guests. For the upcoming season, the evenings will highlight composer and sound designer Jakub Rataj; composer Zdenek Merta; Slovak composer Tímea Urban Hvozdková; composer Pavel Trojan and his son, conductor, composer, and former director of the Prague Spring festival, Pavel Trojan Jr.; and finally, composer, performer and interdisciplinary artist Ian Mikyska. Continuing a concept successfully introduced last year with a special programme dedicated to the New York avant-garde, this year's final concert is titled CAGE / FELDMAN / KOTÍK: A NEW BEGINNING, featuring music by John Cage and Morton Feldman performed by Petr Kotík, composer and long-time collaborator of both these giants of the 20th century.

DAYS OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL WITH A FOCUS ON PREMIERES

ahuv.cz/dsh

Since 1990, the Days of Contemporary Music Festival has been organised by the Association of Czech Composers, the largest professional organisation for composers in Czechia and abroad. The Association of Czech Composers forms part of the Association of Musicians and Musicologists, and the programming also involves other organisations within the Association: the West Bohemian Music Centre in Plzeň, the Club of Moravian Composers in Brno, and the Creative Centres in Olomouc and Ostrava. The festival also collaborates with the Society for Sacred Music.

The compositions for the festival are commissioned from composers according to fixed criteria. These composers usually also propose the performers. Each year, approximately 120 performers participate, including a chamber orchestra and choirs. Around 40 works are premiered at each edition. The character and style of the works recommended by the committee are particularly diverse, encompassing instrumental and vocal music rooted in the traditions of late Romanticism, Neoclassicism, and 1960s avant-garde music. Additionally, there are works experimenting with postmodernism, including electronic music. The festival is a broad and now traditional annual presentation of Czech chamber music, both instrumental and vocal, composed by Czech composers of all generations. Recently, the festival began a collaboration with Czech Radio D-dur, which broadcasts the festival concerts.

The Association of Czech Composers also regularly organises anniversary concerts for its members, memorial concerts, and a concert series in collaboration with music schools in Prague and other locations, titled “Composers for Children – Children for Composers.” In this series, children and young adults perform works by contemporary Czech composers.

DUST IN THE GROOVE

AUTHORIAL ENSEMBLE FOR EXPERIMENTAL JAZZ,
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC, AND IMPROVISATION

dustinthegroove.cz

Dust in the Groove, a project exploring the boundaries of experimental jazz and contemporary music, has operated in various line-ups since 2014. The music of Radim Hanousek, the group's leader, provides ample space for both individual and collective improvisation, as well as the exploration of new sonic possibilities. Most members are active in both experimental jazz and contemporary music, enabling the group to incorporate two emotional interpretive dimensions: the expressivity of jazz and the precision and timbral subtlety of contemporary music.

They have collaborated repeatedly with Norwegian composer and trumpet player Didrik Ingvaldsen, Swiss composer and trombonist Roland Dahinden, and Austrian saxophonist and leader of the Vienna Improvisers Orchestra, Michael Fischer. They have also worked with several visual artists (Natalie Perkof, Olga Piperová, Veronika Vlková, Lenka Pilařová) and dancers (Orbita, Filigrán).

Following a commission from the FAUN 23 festival, DITG performed as part of the FAUN ensemble, a collaborative project with Norwegian artists Andreas Røysum, Signe Emmeluth, Christian Meaas Svendsen, and Jan Martin Gismervik. In November 2024, DITG presented a joint project with the Vienna Improvisers Orchestra. The group participated in residencies in Switzerland in 2018 and again in 2021. In addition to concerts, DITG also offers workshops for children and neurodivergent individuals. In July 2020, the collective released their second album on the Slovak label Hevhetia. The group has performed at numerous festivals, including Exposition of New Music, Ostrava Days, Prague Music Performance, FAUN, Bach's Organ Autumn, Encounters of New Music Plus, Žižkov meets jazz, United Islands, Melománia, and Freejazz Praha.

DYSTOPIC REQUIEM QUARTET

AUTHORIAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

The Dystopic Requiem Quartet is a Slovak-Czech collective of musicians dedicated to the work of composer Miroslav Tóth, who founded the group in 2019. Recently, DRQ provided the music for a podcast by Pavla Holcová and premiered *Silent Like a Hurricane*, a piece dedicated to the victims of the shootings at Charles University and in Klánovice. The premiere took place in December 2024 at the Year After event held at the Church of St. Salvator.

In 2019, the group released their debut album, *Black Angel Songs*, on tothem records. DRQ has performed *Black Angel Songs* extensively across Europe, including in Sweden, Germany, Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia, and Czechia. Their performances included special school concerts in Slovakia, which were accompanied by discussions on the Holocaust and various forms of extremism, as well as a performance at *Transparent Sound New Music* at the Budapest Music Centre. The group also contributed to Tóth's music for Anna Grusková's 2022 film about Alžběta Gwerková, *Woman of the New Age*, and recorded *Nénia* (2022), a piece dedicated to Ukraine. In 2023, the group released *Nemiesta* on Next Festival Records; the album received the Radio Head Award for Best Experimental Recording of the Year.

→ Miroslav Tóth – artistic director, composer, performer, David Danel, Anna Veverková – violins, Adam Pechočiak – viola, Andrej Gál – cello

ECHOFLUXX

FESTIVAL FOR NEW MEDIA, VISUAL ART,
AND EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC

echofluxx.org

Echofluxx is an international festival of new media with a focus on experimental music, sound art, and film. It takes place in Prague. Echofluxx explores the ongoing influence of the Fluxus movement on the boundless parameters of the composed music of today, including the use of any sounding objects in improvisation, film, and scores that also function as static pieces of visual art. The festival embraces resistance against the exclusivity of music and art defined by genre. While the Fluxus movement encompasses all art forms, the festival specifically highlights several forms of time-based media.

Echofluxx is organised by FMErá and is freely accessible to the public. It is led by multimedia artist and co-founder of Roulette Intermedium in Brooklyn, Dan Senn. Since its establishment in 2011, Echofluxx has been held at Trafačka Aréna, then Paralelní Polis, and most recently relocated to the Church of St. Clement. Artists who have performed at the festival include Prague Modern, Lucie Vítková, Joanna Adamczewska, Ensemble Terrible, Martin Janíček, fama Q, KlangWesen, Stratocluster, Phill Niblock, the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble, Camilla Hoytenga, the Maciunas Ensemble, Martin Zet, Brigid Burke, and Jaap Blonk. Recordings of all performances are freely available on the festival's YouTube channel.

Echofluxx 25 will take place in November 2025 at the Church of the Brethren in Prague 1. The event will feature the laug.sonoris ensemble, Lenka Kozderková and friends, as well as short experimental films and works made from found objects, created in response to an international open call.

ENSEMBLE DAMIAN

OPERA SCHRATTENBACH FESTIVAL

ENSEMBLE AND FESTIVAL SPECIALISING IN EARLY AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

ensembledamian.cz

Ensemble Damian is a group specialising in the historically informed performance of early music that also presents contemporary operatic and instrumental works, often based on the principles of “Baroque minimalism”. The ensemble was established in 1995 by artistic director and conductor Tomáš Hanzlík, who is also the composer or co-composer and director of most of the modern operas presented by the group. A distinctive feature of Ensemble Damian is their commitment to reviving the genre of Baroque opera and presenting it in a fully staged, theatrical form. The group frequently collaborates with international artists and musicians.

A key platform for presenting the work of Ensemble Damian is the Opera Schrattenbach Festival in Olomouc. This festival primarily focuses on Baroque and contemporary opera and is named after Count Schrattenbach, an important patron of the arts and Prince-Bishop of Olomouc. In addition to showcasing forgotten Baroque operas and oratorios, the festival also presents world premieres of operas by Vít Zouhar, Tomáš Hanzlík, and other contemporary composers inspired by Baroque principles.

The Opera Schrattenbach Festival aims to enrich the cultural life of Olomouc and demonstrate that early music remains vibrant, relevant, and inspiring for today's artists and audiences.

ENSEMBLE MARIJAN

ENSEMBLE FOCUSED ON ORIGINAL MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTIONS

marijan.cz

Ensemble Marijan was founded in 1999 and originally comprised Markéta Dvořáková, Ivo Medek, and Jan Kavan. The group focuses on performing contemporary music that explores the boundaries between improvisation and composition, as well as realising multimedia works. Currently, they perform in various line-ups featuring Sára Medková (piano and voice), Jan Kavan (cello and electronics), Ivo Medek (inside piano, percussion, and children's toys), Hana Hána (flute and voice), and Vít Zouhar (laptop). The ensemble also collaborates with visual artist and game designer Lukáš Medek and Slovenian opera director Rocc.

Over the past ten years, members of Ensemble Marijan have dedicated themselves to producing original works and creating evening-length multimedia projects collaboratively developed by the entire team. These projects include *MarISHA* (featuring special guest, American performer Carmina Escobar), *TiAmo* (a joint venture with the ISHA trio), and *Sara'Smile*. Their most recent project, *LeavingRoom*, was created in Porto in 2024 in collaboration with Greek composer and violist Dimitris Andrikopoulos. Also worth mentioning among the group's earlier team projects is *MrTVÁ?*, an "operatic hallucination in 38 scenes" that premiered in October 2004 at the Estates Theatre in Prague. It was subsequently performed at the Warsaw Autumn in 2007 and later at festivals in Ostrava, Brno, and Opava in 2024. Additionally, the interactive multimedia project *OT 301* was performed at Wiener Festwochen, Kraakguiden Fest, and numerous other venues across Europe.

The group has collaborated with numerous Czech and international artists, including Iva Bittová, David Šubík, Tomáš Hrůza, Dan Dlouhý, Gabriela Vermelho, Vinny Golia, Marek Choloniewski, Krzysztof Knittel, Nick Chase, and many others. The ensemble has performed at festivals including Wiener Festwochen, Audio Art Krakow, New Music Series in Los Angeles, and Warsaw Autumn, as well as at numerous festivals specialising in contemporary artificial club music and improvised music (Kraakguiden Amsterdam, Ad libitum Warsaw, and festivals in Dortmund, Enschede, Kyiv, and Vienna).

ENSEMBLE OPERA DIVERSA

ENSEMBLE FOCUSED ON ORIGINAL MUSICAL THEATRE

operadiversa.cz

Ensemble Opera Diversa specialises in innovative music and theatre programmes. Over more than two decades, the group has matured into a vibrant musical society, producing approximately twenty performances annually, primarily in Brno. Opera Diversa has presented 15 full-length operas, over 20 mini-operas, numerous premieres of orchestral commissions, and a diverse repertoire of works.

The activities of EOD can be divided into three areas: original musical theatre, orchestral and chamber concerts, and performances by the Ensemble Versus chamber group. In the autumn of 2022, a string quartet called the Diversa Quartet was founded within the ensemble, primarily focusing on contemporary Czech and international quartet repertoire. EOD also initiates and participates in the production of CDs and radio broadcasts. The group's programming, commissions, and interpretive dedication all aim to establish a dialogue with an open-minded audience.

The core of EOD's activities centres on the musical and dramaturgical work of founding members Ondřej Kyas and Pavel Drábek. The group has also presented works by Miloš Štědroň, Ivo Medek, Alois Piňos, Jiří Bulis, Jan Novák, Vojtěch Dlask, Lukáš Sommer, Marek Doubrava, Zdeněk Král, Markéta Brothánková, Filip Holacký, Adam Závodský, and others. Recently, the ensemble has begun collaborating with librettists Martin Kyšperský and Vendula Borůvková.

→ Sylva Marková – secretary, leader of the theatre section, set designer,
Jiří Čevela – head of the music section, head of programming for the orchestra,
Gabriela Tardonová – conductor, Jan Bělohávek – orchestra manager, Vladimír
Mañas – choirmaster, Kateřina Křivánková – director, Tomáš Studený – director

ENSEMBLE TERRIBLE

ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

ensembleterrible.cz

The Ensemble Terrible chamber ensemble was established in 2015 by students from the composition department at the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (HAMU) as a platform to showcase the latest works of contemporary concert music. Over time, the group evolved into a distinctive chamber ensemble primarily composed of HAMU students and graduates. The ensemble focuses on progressive programming and actively supports emerging composers. In addition to attracting an expert audience, the group also appeals to young listeners who often approach new music with an openness to experimentation. This inclusive approach is reflected in their choice of venues. Besides cultural spaces such as MeetFactory, Venuše ve Švehlovce, and the Alfred ve dvoře Theatre, the ensemble has performed at unusual venues including the Old Burgrave's House at Vyšehrad, the Czech Museum of Music, and Gabriel Loci. Their goal is to bring contemporary music beyond its academic confines and present it to a broader audience in more informal settings.

Ensemble Terrible frequently collaborates with leading figures from both the Czech and international music scenes, including bassoonist Pascal Gallois, clarinetist Martin Adámek, violinist David Danel, and composer Panayiotis Kokoras. The group also regularly participates in prominent festivals such as Echofluxx and MusicOlomouc.

In 2025, Ensemble Terrible will celebrate its tenth anniversary. The anniversary concert will be held at Atrium Žižkov and will focus on microtonal music – a field that remains marginal in Czechia even today, despite offering a fascinating spectrum of sonic possibilities. The programme will feature five premieres by young composers: Štěpán Janoušek, Adam Štefunko, John Franek, Marie Nečasová, and Klára Pudláková – five composers with diverse musical roots who share a keen interest in microtonality.

EXPOSITION OF NEW MUSIC

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL

filharmonie-brno.cz/expozice-nove-hudby

Exposition of New Music is a contemporary music festival established in 1987 and organised by the Brno Philharmonic since 2012. The festival interprets the word “exposé” in its name not only as a presentation but also as interaction, participation, and communication with public spaces and the general public. Its programming follows various themes derived from a wide range of trends in contemporary music. In addition to concerts, the festival features sound installations, noise compositions, and interventions in public spaces. Since 2020, Slovak composer, performer, and educator Daniel Matej has served as the festival programming director, with Matej Sloboda and Otto Wanke set to assume the position starting in the 2025/2026 season.

Every year, several commissions are premiered at the festival. The 36th edition (2024) celebrated the Year of Czech Music, featuring eighteen Czech composers in festival productions. Another notable event at last year’s edition was the Czech premiere of Karlheinz Stockhausen’s five-hour *Fresco*, which took place at several locations within Besední dům, the home of the Brno Philharmonic.

The 2025 edition was dedicated to Erik Satie, a musical visionary who laid the foundations of minimalism, ambient music, and conceptual music long before these terms existed. His legacy came to life in trams, streets, a church, villas, a cabaret, and a concert hall, both in its original form and through the work of contemporary composers he inspired.

FAMA Q

STRING QUARTET FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

praguemodern@gmail.com

The fama Q string quartet was established in Prague in 2005 and is composed of members from leading Czech orchestras. The quartet regularly performs works by prominent 20th-century composers, including A. Schoenberg, A. Webern, J. Cage, M. Feldman, G. Ligeti, W. Lutosławski, L. Nono, G. Scelsi, G. Kurtág, I. Xenakis, among others. They also feature music by leading Czech and European composers such as G. F. Haas, M. Lévinas, W. Rihm, T. Simaku, O. Adámek, P. Graham, K. Husa, J. Klusák, M. Knížák, M. Kopelent, I. Loudová, M. Marek, M. Pudlák, M. Smolka, M. Srnka, P. Zemek, as well as works by young composers from Czechia and abroad.

fama Q is a frequent guest at concert series in Prague, including Umělecká beseda, the Prague Philharmonia chamber series, Music in Contexts, and Přítomnost. The group has repeatedly performed at festivals such as Prague Spring, Contempuls, Everlasting Hope, Ostrava Days, Janáček's May Ostrava, New Music Marathon, Třídění, Exposition of New Music Brno, MusicOlomouc, Forfest, ISCM World New Music Days, Cluj Modern, Israel Festival Jerusalem, Poznańska Wiosna Muzyczna, Magister Ludi Moskva, Melos-Étos Bratislava, Večery novej hudby, and others. Other significant performances have taken place in France, Italy, Japan, Germany, Romania, the United States, as well as in Prague and Terezín as part of the Performing the Jewish Archive international project. The quartet has collaborated with artists including the Signum Quartett, Capella Mariana, Kenichi Furuya, Jonathan Powell, Ivan Šiller, Bethany Danel Brooks, Magdaléna Bajuszová, Thomas Martin, Irena Troupová, and Markéta Othová. fama Q has also produced multiple recordings of new music.

→ David Danel, Roman Hranička – violins, Ondřej Martinovský – viola,
Balázs Adorján – cello

FORFEST

FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART WITH A SPIRITUAL FOCUS

forfest.cz

Forfest first appeared on the international scene in the mid-1990s, with the aim of connecting progressive trends in contemporary music and visual art, both of which embrace new and current approaches to profound spiritual themes in the history of art. Since then, the festival has maintained a singular focus. Its programming features works by international composers within a relatively broad philosophical framework. In doing so, it creates a space for a vital dialogue between art and our predominantly consumerist society, as well as a conversation among the major world religions addressing the pressing issues of today.

Forfest is a recipient of the Award of the Czech Music Council and has been a member of the prestigious European Conference of New Music for over three decades. In 2015, the festival joined the association Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe. The event features numerous exhibitions and concerts, including premieres of works by contemporary composers, and showcases leading soloists, ensembles, and artists from Europe and North America.

An important part of the festival for many years has been POSTFEST, a course for young composers featuring an international teaching team, as well as informal meetings between musicians and artists in the Garden Studio. In 2025, the course will be led by composers Pavel Zemek Novák, Radim Bednařík, and Vojtěch Mojžíš. For the general public, there are the Conversations on Music, which provide opportunities for composers from Czechia and abroad to present their music.

The 2025 edition was produced in collaboration with leading Czech and international institutions and artistic associations. Performers included Nicola Baroni, Massimiliano Messieri, Ondrej Olos, VOX IUVENALIS, Ensemble OYO San Marino, the Sedláček Quartet, Jozef Lupták, Hana Ryšavá, Milan Pařa, Lukáš Herůdek, Pavel Popelka, Barbara Sabella, Jan Meisl, Barbora Šteflová, and others.

MUSIC IN CONTEXTS

CONCERT SERIES

souvislosti.eu

Music in Contexts is conceived as a year-long concert series in which music is either juxtaposed with other art forms or presented in relation to the ideological or broader context of the time in which it was created. The aim of the project is to highlight the fact that artistic presentations are rarely experienced within their full context. This often leads individuals interested in the newest art – and the producers themselves – to create their own isolated worlds, or “shells,” from which they seldom explore other artistic fields. Music in Contexts seeks to establish a platform for such intersections, where the newest music can engage with the artistic, cinematic, dramatic, or literary spheres. The project’s underlying idea is to create a complex cultural image that transcends a single art form, thereby attracting those interested in gaining a deeper understanding of new music and culture more broadly.

The series features concerts accompanied by cinematic visuals (e.g., music for silent films), experimental music theatre, and performances in collaboration with visual artists, writers, and other creatives. It also includes more traditional concerts with a focus on ideological or historical contexts. The result is a diverse blend of old and new music, presenting works connected by their purpose (e.g., sacred music); historical contexts (e.g., avant-garde movements); extra-musical concepts; specific literary figures; inspirations from ethnic music; or particular compositional approaches (e.g., aleatoric techniques).

The series takes place in Prague and typically features four to five concerts each season. Ensemble Coccinelle, a vocal sextet specialising in contemporary and Renaissance music, is a regular fixture in the series. Other performers include fama Q, Prague Modern, the improvising trio Romanovská–Tichý–Hrubý, and pianists Nina Honová and Eva Hutýrová.

MUSIC FORUM HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

fhk.cz/hfhk

Music Forum Hradec Králové is a festival dedicated to showcasing international symphonic music of the 21st century. It is organised by the Hradec Králové Philharmonic in collaboration with Czech Radio, so the festival's music is subsequently abroad through broadcasts by Czech Radio and the European Broadcasting Union. The programming centers on works that have received widespread acclaim worldwide, often by composers who have been awarded the Pulitzer or Grawemeyer Prize.

The festival has presented Czech premieres of works by J. Adams, L. Andriessen, J. Corigliano, M. A. Dalbavie, B. Dean, P. Eötvös, O. Golijov, S. Gubaidulina, HK Gruber, G. F. Haas, H. W. Henze, A. Hillborg, G. Kančeli, M. Lindberg, W. Lutosławski, A. Pärt, K. Penderecki, S. Reich, K. Saariaho, E. P. Salonen, A. Schnittke, V. Silvestrov, T. Dun, P. Vasks, J. Widmann, H. Zender, and many others. Performers have included Krzysztof Penderecki, David Geringas, Tatiana Grindenko, Vladimir Tarasov, Lauren Flanigan, and Christoph Sietzen.

The programming of the 21st edition, scheduled for October 2025, is somewhat unusual for the festival, as it commemorates the centenary of several important avant-garde composers: Pierre Boulez, Luciano Berio, Friedrich Cerha, György Kurtág, and Hans Werner Henze. Their works significantly influenced the development of music history after World War II and profoundly expanded the range of compositional possibilities.

In addition to the Hradec Králové Philharmonic, the festival regularly features concerts by the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Prague Symphony Orchestra, the Brno Philharmonic, and the Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra. The festival also collaborates with the art departments at the University of Hradec Králové to create lighting and set designs, animations, video projections, and choreographies for the festival concerts.

MUSICAL PRESENT OSTRAVA/ SOUNDS OF DIVERSITY

A SPACE FOR DIALOGUE, CREATIVITY, AND ART WITHOUT BORDERS

hudebnisoucasnost.cz

Musical Present Ostrava is a platform for the presentation of contemporary art – music, performance, and interdisciplinary work. It has been organised for 51 years by the Ostrava Creative Centre, an association that brings together composers and performers from Ostrava and the surrounding region. In recent years, the festival has evolved into a space for experimentation and dialogue, attracting both expert audiences and members of the general public interested in new artistic impulses.

An important aspect of the festival programming is supporting composers and performers from the region, as well as fostering connections between Czech artists and those from Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary. A notable example is the Sounds of Diversity project, which emerged from the need to reestablish artistic dialogue among the Visegrád Four countries. Shared cultural history and traditions inspired the formation of an international ensemble composed of fourteen musicians from all four nations. The ensemble presented a programme of new compositions on a mini-tour through Ostrava, Katowice, Žilina, and Budapest. One composer from each country contributed a new piece. Equally important are the set and visual designs of the concerts, which are tailored to each particular hall.

The Musical Present Ostrava festival and the Sounds of Diversity project create spaces for sharing, collaboration, and cultural connection. They challenge the boundaries of geography, genre, and thought, offering an opportunity to experience authentic artistry grounded in diversity, mutual respect, and creativity.

ISHA TRIO

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

ishatrio.cz

The ISHA trio was founded in 2007 at the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno. It quickly became one of the leading ensembles of its kind both in Czechia and internationally. The trio's repertoire spans from the Baroque period to contemporary works, with a particular specialization in modern compositions. The three members have received awards at numerous international competitions in both solo and chamber playing, including the AngloCzechoslovak Trust of Great Britain, Concertino Praga, Uelzen (Germany), Concorso Argento (Italy), Yamaha (Czechia), the Leoš Janáček International Competition in Brno, and the International Josef Suk Competition, among others. As soloists, they perform with leading orchestras in Czechia and abroad.

The ISHA trio has performed at numerous international festivals, including Moravian Autumn, Audio Art Krakow, Smetana Days, Encounters of New Music Plus, Přítomnost Prague, Charterhouse International Music Festival, Janáček Brno, Leoš Janáček: Life, Work, & Contribution conference in Texas, Days of Contemporary Music, Schrattenbach Olomouc, and the renowned Roy O. Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. The group primarily tours in Europe and the United States. Both of their CDs (*Ancient Stories* and *Love Stories*) have been positively received by critics and the general public alike.

→ Lucie Rozsnyó – soprano, Kristina Vaculová – flute, Sára Medková – piano

KLANG SYSTEMATIEK

INTERNATIONAL ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

klangsystematiek.com

Klang Systematiek is a European ensemble for contemporary music based in Prague. It was founded by bass clarinetist Gareth Davis, who also serves as its artistic director. The group consists of musicians who have spent years performing in various formats and come from a diverse and eclectic mix of ensembles, bands, and collectives, including Klangforum Wien, Musikfabrik, Motorpsycho, Raster-Noton, Instant Composers Pool, and others. By bringing together these varied experiences, the ensemble explores the intersections between different styles and compositional approaches in contemporary music and art. Klang Systematiek organizes a concert series in Prague that reflects the diverse backgrounds of its members. The programming in this series connects the established modern and contemporary repertoire with experimental music, sound art, and new compositions, thereby exploring the identity of this emerging ensemble.

Previously realised projects include an installation performance of Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Aus Den Sieben Tagen*, music by William Basinski and La Monte Young, retrospectives of James Tenney and Pauline Oliveros, new commissions by Annea Lockwood and Bernhard Lang, collaborations with Christian Marclay and Peter Greenaway, and evenings dedicated to the music of John Cage, Luigi Nono, and Gavin Bryars. In 2025, the concert series will continue in September (DOX+) and in November and December (Divadlo X10) in Prague.

KONVERGENCE

COMPOSERS' COLLECTIVE AND CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

konvergence.org

The Konvergence composers' collective was established in 2002 and remains – along with its eponymous ensemble – a well-known and respected group for contemporary music. Every year, Konvergence organises a chamber music series that features both its own ensemble and other Czech and international groups, focusing on the newest music composed in Czechia and abroad. Konvergence initiates the creation of new works and introduces relatively unknown composers to Czech audiences. A hallmark of Konvergence's activities is dramaturgically interconnected concerts and sensitive interpretations, ensuring that all the works on the programme form a meaningful whole.

The composers' collective currently consists of five members from the younger and middle generations: Tomáš Pálka, chairperson; Ondřej Štochl, artistic director; Michaela Pálka Plachká; Jiří Lukeš; and Soňa Vetchá. Konvergence also produces projects that integrate dance, visual art, pantomime, and other art forms.


The Konvergence ensemble has premiered dozens of works by Czech and international composers, including Marek Kopelent, Pavel Zemek Novák, Hanuš Bartoň, Peter Graham, Michal Rataj, Albert Breier, Jakob Ullmann, Germán Toro-Pérez, and others. The group has performed at numerous Czech festivals including Prague Spring, Exposition of New Music, Forfest, Opera Schratzenbach, MusicOlomouc, and more. In 2014, Konvergence represented Czechia at the APAP festival in New York. Through their Call-4-Scores project, Konvergence offers composers from Czechia and abroad the opportunity to have their works performed as part of the series. Overall, the group aims to build bridges between various collectives, not only musical ones.

→ Jiří Mráz – clarinet, David Danel, Matěj Vlk – violins, Ondřej Štochl – viola, Sebastian Tóth – cello, Ondřej Melecký – double bass, Egli Prifti – piano, Jan Tuláček – guitar, Jiří Lukeš – accordion

LAUG.SONORIS

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

[instagram.com/hlukzvuk](https://www.instagram.com/hlukzvuk)



Laug.sonoris is an ensemble for contemporary music composed of young musicians, founded in 2024 by composer and conductor Patrik Kako. The members have experiences from the Czech Philharmonic, the Berg Orchestra, and Ostravská banda, and part of them met in Ensemble Terrible, where they worked on contemporary music with more regularity. The group's aim is to present "music without compromises", often in regions where new works are heard all too rarely. The ensemble believes that a certain level of discomfort or difficulty among the selected works can serve as impulses that are necessary – for both listeners and performers – in order for new paths to be found. In a broader context, their music responds to conditions in culture and society at large. The group's activities are momentarily focused on Prague and Trenčín, Slovakia.

LICHTZWANG

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

marekkeprt.com/lichtzwang

Lichtzwang, a contemporary ensemble based in Olomouc, was established in 2016 by pianist and composer Marek Keprt with the aim of primarily promoting Czech contemporary music and inspiring the creation of new pieces for unusual instrumental combinations. The ensemble performs in a variable line-up, including voice, trumpet, cello, theremin, and piano. The name of the ensemble is derived from Paul Celan's eponymous collection of poetry: "in it dies away what also took you out of language with a gesture, which you let happen, like the dance of two words made entirely from autumns, silk, and nothinging".

Since 2017, Lichtzwang has produced its own concert series featuring music from the 20th and 21st centuries, highlighting interesting and often overlooked pieces and dramaturgical connections. The group primarily performs at the Artistic Centre of Palacký University in Olomouc, as well as in other cities such as Brno, Pardubice, Bruntál, Opava, and Zlaté Hory. Occasionally, they perform with expanded instrumentation alongside guest artists, including Monika Štreitová (flute), Daniel Skála (cimbalom), and Pavel Zlámal (saxophone). The Lichtzwang series also regularly showcases visiting performers, such as Trio Helix, Dust in the Groove, Critical Band, Katelyn Bouska, Mia Elezovic, and others.


Lichtzwang also performs as part of festivals and concert series including MusicOlomouc, Encounters of New Music Plus, Musical Present, Konvergence, and others. The group has premiered many compositions by composers from Czechia and abroad, such as F. Chaloupka, M. Keprt, R. Hanousek, D. Skála, J. Vičar, and S. Ratniece.

→ Aneta Podracká-Bendová – voice, Jan Přebil – trumpet, Jiří Fajkus – cello, Eva Balcárková – theremin, Marek Keprt – piano

BRIDGES OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

CONCERT SERIES WITH A FOCUS ON WORLD PREMIERES

terezahorakova.cz



Bridges of Contemporary Music is a new concert series created by violinist Tereza Horáková. The series features world premieres by contemporary composers alongside well-known, time-tested pieces – hence the “bridges” in the series title. Horáková’s goal is to make contemporary music more accessible and to introduce new sound worlds to her audiences. The choice of concert venues is also crucial, with performances often held in spaces that complement the atmosphere of the programme and hold special significance for the performers.

The first concert in the series, held in March 2025, celebrated Czech-German dialogue with premieres by composers Albert Breier and Arne Sanders. One of the highlights of this year’s programme is the October concert at the Werich Villa, titled *Oh, Seeing the Human Voice*, dedicated to the poetry of Vladimír Holan. The poet lived in the villa from 1948 to 1968, and the concert will commemorate the 120th anniversary of his birth. The programme will feature music by J. S. Bach, a new composition by Jáchym Novotný, and readings of Holan’s poems.

MUSICOLOMOUC

INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL

musicolomouc.cz

MusicOlomouc is an international festival of contemporary progressive art music dedicated to raising awareness of new music created in Czechia and abroad. The festival achieves this goal through inspiring programming, top-tier performers, and numerous world premieres. Established in 2009, MusicOlomouc is held annually, taking place in late October and early November since 2016. Since 2019, the festival has focused on a specific theme each year, such as Colours of Piano, Schnee, Women, Into the Darkness, and Composers, Czech It.

The programming includes solo recitals, chamber concerts, and orchestral evenings. The chamber concerts primarily take place at the Artistic Centre of Palacký University, a co-producer of the festival, while the orchestral concerts are held at the Reduta Hall of the Moravian Philharmonic. Selected concerts are recorded by Czech Radio and broadcast as part of the Futurissimo programme.

Leading Czech ensembles that have performed at MO include the Berg Orchestra, Ostravská banda, Prague Modern, fama Q, and Konvergence. International guests have included the Phase Ensemble, Ensemble Lux, the Mondrian Ensemble, Trio Catch, Auditiv Vokal Dresden, Quasars Ensemble, EnsembleSpectrum, Síntese, Ensemble for New Music Tallinn, and many others.

NODO

NEW OPERA DAYS OSTRAVA – INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY OPERA (BIENNIAL)

newmusicostrava.cz

NODO – New Opera Days Ostrava is an international opera festival organised by the Ostrava Center for New Music in collaboration with the National Moravian-Silesian Theatre (NDM). It is the only festival of its kind in Czechia. Since its establishment in 2012, NODO has been held in even-numbered years, alternating with the Ostrava Days festival in odd-numbered years, which focuses on concert music and orchestral compositions. NODO was initiated by Jiří Nekvasil, director of the NDM, and Dita Eibenová, who was responsible for special projects at the theatre. The festival's mission is to contribute to the development of the operatic genre. NODO explores new expressive means and techniques within the genre and examines the meaning of music theatre in the 21st century.

In its seven editions to date (2012–2024), NODO has presented 41 performances of opera and music theatre in traditional theatres, industrial spaces, and outdoor venues. These productions were created by composers and teams from Czechia, Poland, Austria, Great Britain, Germany, the United States, Iran, Israel, and China. Many of the works were Czech and world premieres, with some operas commissioned directly by NODO. Composers whose works have been performed at NODO include J. Cage, S. Sciarrino, M. Smolka, B. Lang, P. Kotík, R. Komorous, R. Ayres, G. Ligeti, P. Cígler, F. Chaloupka, I. Xenakis, A. Sokolović, L. Nono, and A. Cleare.

Additional collaborators include Wuppertaler Bühnen, Schwetzingen SWR Festspiele, and Neue Oper Wien. The festival fosters the creation of new productions by inviting directors and set designers such as Jiří Nekvasil, David Bazika, Jan Horák, Michal Pěchouček, Katharina Schmitt, Jiří Adámek, Petr Odo Macháček, Jan Nebeský, Vilma Bořkovec, Rocc, and Pia Partum, among others.

NEW MUSIC IN THE ATRIUM

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC CONCERT SERIES

atriumzizkov.cz/koncertni-rada/nova-hudba

The New Music in the Atrium series, established in 2023, showcases contemporary composed music as well as works of the 20th century. It also aims to present unique projects, such as concerts featuring pieces by members of the Fluxus movement or compositions for intonarumori, acoustic noise instruments associated with the Italian Futurists. The series focuses on Czech and world premieres and highlights lesser-known works that are typically absent from concert hall programming. One of its goals is to present challenging pieces that are both engaging to listeners and remain unfamiliar to the general public.

The concerts take place at Atrium Žižkov, which is housed in a deconsecrated and renovated Baroque church. Over the past two years, the Atrium has heard works by composers such as A. Hába, J. Cage, P. Ablinger, L. M. Young, J. Adams, H. Lachenmann, E. Sharpe, K. Tanaka, A. Demoč, P. Bakla, L. Mrkvička, P. Graham, O. Štochl, and many others.

Performers include Czech and international soloists and ensembles such as Agnese Toniutti, Luciano Chessa, Anna Clementi, Werner Durand, Marek Kepřt, Miroslav Beinbauer, and the Neues Klaviertrio Dresden.

BERG ORCHESTRA

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

berg.cz
musicforsirens.com

The Berg Orchestra is an ensemble dedicated to the performance of contemporary music, often in combination with other art forms. Founded in 1995 by conductor Peter Vrábel, who remains its artistic director, the orchestra has consistently commissioned and premiered new works by Czech composers, with nearly 300 pieces commissioned to date. Berg also presents Czech premieres of works by leading international composers and is in contact with them frequently. The ensemble has produced its own renditions of Heiner Goebbels's music theatre piece *Schwarz auf Weiss*, Michel van der Aa's cinema-music *Up-close*, Georg Friedrich Haas's evening-length *in vain*, Fausto Romitelli's video opera *An Index of Metals*, and György Ligeti's legendary *Poème symphonique*.

The Berg Orchestra has pioneered the presentation of contemporary music beyond traditional concert halls, even on an international scale. The group has performed in a variety of unconventional venues, including industrial spaces, galleries, a crematorium, and an unfinished subway station in Prague. Their performances often integrate contemporary dance, experimental theatre, film, and visual art. Additionally, Berg explores elements of acoustic ecology through projects such as Music for Sirens and various sound walks, while also developing new musical formats and immersive experiences.

The orchestra has presented numerous original projects in collaboration with exceptional Czech artists, including Spitfire Company, 420PEOPLE, Boca Loca Lab, choreographer Mirka Eliášová, the SKUTR directing duo, and others. The group also collaborates with the most prominent Czech cultural organisations, including the National Theatre, the National Gallery, the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Czech Radio, Czech Television, and the Prague Spring and Prague Sounds festivals. Berg also offers educational activities for children and young people of all ages. In 2021, the orchestra received the prestigious Prix Italia award for its Music for Sirens project.

OSTRAVA DAYS

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE AND FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC (BIENNIAL)

newmusicostrava.cz

Ostrava Days (OD) is an event that encompasses two closely related activities: an institute and a festival. Founded by composer, conductor, and flautist Petr Kotík, Ostrava Days has been held biennially since 2001 and is organised by the Ostrava Center for New Music (OCNM).

The three-week institute welcomes approximately 35 residents from around the world, primarily composers, along with some performers and researchers. Most participants are students or recent graduates of prestigious universities. The institute provides a work and study environment focused on fostering intense connections with leading contemporary composers and on performing the residents' compositions. The final ten days coincide with the festival, which features around 22 concerts showcasing music from the second half of the 20th century and the 21st century, mostly presented as Czech and world premieres. Visiting composers and lecturers at the institute have included Ch. Wolff, A. Lucier, R. Mitchell, F. Rzewski, P. Kotík, P. Niblock, L. Andriessen, R. Saunders, K. Saariaho, R. Ayres, B. Lang, P. Glass, P. Ablinger, G. Lewis, A. Sokolović, R. Chacon, M. Masaoka, C. Czernowin, and many others. Among Czech composers, the festival has highlighted the work of P. Bakla, L. Mrkvička, M. Srnka, P. Cígler, M. Rataj, L. Vítková, and M. Smolka. Numerous works, including orchestral pieces, have been composed for OD, a festival whose programming features both internationally renowned composers and early-career artists who demonstrate an original approach to their art.

OCNM also established an international chamber orchestra, Ostravská banda (2005) and an international symphonic orchestra, Ostrava New Orchestra (2017). The mixed choir Canticum Ostrava, led by Jurij Galatenko, was founded at the behest of OD in 2003. OCNM produces standalone concerts with Ostravská banda in both Europe and the United States. Since 2018, the organisation has produced a series of "Essential" concerts at DOX+ in Prague. OCNM publishes materials and recordings, co-produces documentary films, maintains a large archive of recordings and scores, and co-produces the New Opera Days Ostrava festival.

OSTRAVSKÁ BANDA

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

newmusicostrava.cz

Ostravská banda was founded in 2005 as the resident chamber orchestra of the Ostrava Days festival. Its founder and artistic director is Petr Kotík. Concertmaster Conrad Harris leads a group of approximately 36 musicians, all experts in contemporary music (often as soloists) from Europe and the United States. The ensemble is renowned for its ability to handle intense rehearsals and exceptionally demanding repertoire. Returning guest conductors include Johannes Kalitzke, Bruno Ferrandis, Jiří Rožeň, and Peter Rundel.

“The interesting thing about Ostravská banda is our working method. The ensemble’s members live in New York, Berlin, Budapest, and so on, as well as Ostrava and Prague, which creates a special relationship among the musicians, one based on mutual professional and personal respect, as well as the energy of the situation – when the Banda meets after some time and works together. Because it’s not a local group, there is a certain egalitarianism among the players that is also quite unusual,” says Petr Kotík.

Ostravská banda performs avant-garde works from the 20th century as well as compositions by contemporary composers, particularly from Europe and the United States. The group’s energy and virtuosity inspire composers to create new pieces specifically for Ostravská banda. Since 2012, Ostravská banda has also served as the opera orchestra for the NODO biennale. The ensemble performs at individual concerts across Europe and the United States, with recent appearances including the Czech Centre in New York and Cork University in Ireland. Additionally, Ostravská banda is the primary ensemble for the “Essential” concert series at DOX+ (e.g., Essential Rzewski, 2023; Essential Sciarrino, 2024).

ONO – OSTRAVA NEW ORCHESTRA

INTERNATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

newmusicostrava.cz

ONO – Ostrava New Orchestra is an international symphonic orchestra for new music, established to meet the needs of the Ostrava Days festival, which lacked a symphony orchestra in Czechia focused on performing contemporary music. The orchestra comprises approximately 85 musicians aged 20 to 35 from Europe and the United States. The determination to create this ensemble stemmed from a desire to unite young musicians who find joy and fulfillment in performing contemporary repertoire. The Ostrava Center for New Music aims to maintain a professional symphony orchestra whose energy, sound, work ethic, and dedication meet the most demanding standards of contemporary concert music.

Orchestra members are selected from leading conservatories and universities, including those in Prague, Berlin, Bratislava, Brno, Ostrava, Budapest, Cork, the Hague, Huddersfield, Kraków, Lugano, Madrid, Oslo, Boston, and others. ONO first performed at Ostrava Days 2017, presenting a programme featuring works by M. Feldman, O. Neuwirth, P. Niblock, S. Sciarrino, and I. Xenakis. In 2018, ONO made its debut at NODO, performing Alois Hába's sixth-tone opera *Thy Kingdom Come* under the direction of conductor Bruno Ferrandis. The "Essential Xenakis" concert at DOX+ in Prague, where ONO performed three orchestral works by Xenakis, was particularly well received. In autumn 2022, ONO returned to Prague to perform at the OCNM's "Essential Youth" concert, at which Petr Kotík conducted five world premieres by young composers. ONO performs both "classic" avant-garde works and pieces by the youngest generation, including world premieres. Additionally, ONO members frequently perform at Ostravská banda concerts.

PRAGUE MODERN

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

praguemodern.cz

Prague Modern is a flexible instrumentation ensemble composed of leading Czech instrumentalists. The group was established in 2008 by French conductor Michel Swierczewski within the PKF – Prague Philharmonia. Its repertoire includes works by renowned avant-garde composers as well as Czech music by O. Adámek, P. Bakla, H. Bartoň, F. Chaloupka, J. Kadeřábek, L. Matoušek, M. Nejtek, M. Rataj, J. Rybář, M. Smolka, M. Srnka, O. Štochl, and others. The ensemble also commemorates the life and work of the Theresienstadt composers in collaboration with the Defiant Requiem foundation.

The ensemble embraces various branches of art and collaborates with artists such as J. Švankmajer (film), K. Vincourová, M. Othová (visual art), and F. Ardant and A. Bennett (acting). Prague Modern has also worked with musicians including P. Gallois, Ch. Desjardins, R. Kluttig, M. Lejava, R. Hardy, M. Cluver, J. Janssen, F. Sarhan, S. Winkler, J. Powell, J. Talich, J. Bárta, I. Troupová, and E. Sušková. Members of Prague Modern regularly lead workshops on contemporary music performance. The group has performed at prestigious festivals such as Musica Strasbourg, the Besançon International Music Festival, Les Musicales de Quiberon, CaféFest Budapest, Cluj Modern, Contempuls, Prague Spring, Prague Premieres, MusicOlomouc, Space Festival, the Poznań Spring International Festival of Contemporary Music, and at the Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin. They frequently collaborate with international cultural institutions, including Czech Centres, the Goethe-Institut, Instituto Cervantes, Institut français, and the Romanian Institute.

In 2014, Prague Modern released a CD featuring the music of Dai Fujikura, conducted by Pascal Gallois, which received the Coup de Coeur from the Académie Charles Cros. This was followed in 2015, 2016, and 2017 by recordings of works by L. Berio, G. Grisey, A. Schönberg, M. Armanini, P. Plimley, and R. Ueda, and in 2024, the work of Nirmali Fenn.

PRAGUE MUSIC PERFORMANCE

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL AND INSTITUTE

pmpif.org

The Prague Music Performance (PMP) international institute and festival was established in 2011 by pianist Jan Bartoš. PMP thematically connects concerts, workshops, lectures, and residencies, focusing on contemporary classical, jazz, and experimental music, while also integrating visual art and film into its projects. Over the past fifteen years, the festival has welcomed many prominent artists, including John Zorn, the Kronos Quartet, Brad Mehldau, Esperanza Spalding, Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Uri Caine, Thurston Moore, Einstürzende Neubauten, David Thomas, Garth Knox, Mary Halvorson, Ikue Mori, Dave Douglas, Joey Baron, Alexander von Schlippenbach, Barry Guy, Gareth Davis, Roland Dahinden, Robin Rimbaud (aka Scanner), Marc Ribot, Julian Lage, Quatuor Diotima, Phantasm, and Mahan Esfahani.

The institute's activities primarily revolve around the establishment of the PMP Orchestra, the Prague Music Platform publishing house and label, the Ivan Moravec Academy, and the South-Bohemian Piano Courses and Festival. The PMP Orchestra specialises in world premieres of compositions that integrate various forms of conducted improvisation, traditional staff notation, graphic scores, aleatoric sections, and complete improvisation. This international ensemble comprises leading figures from the experimental and improvisation scenes, including Radim Hanousek, Didrik Ingvaldsen, George Cremaschi, Marcel Bárta, Michal Wroblewski, Andrea La Rose, Pavel Hrubý, Ian Mikyska, Valentin Duit, and others.

In 2023, the PMP Orchestra performed the world premiere of Anthony Braxton's opera *Trillium X* – in August, the group was also invited to perform and record at the renowned Darmstädter Ferienkurse. In 2025, Prague Music Platform released a limited edition 8-CD box set of *Trillium X*.

The Ivan Moravec Academy was established in 2022 in honour of the important pianist and teacher Ivan Moravec. Visiting lecturers have included Alfred Brendel, Boris Giltburg, Michele Campanella, Saleem Ashkar, and others.

PRAGUE OFFSPRING

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL

festival.cz

Prague Offspring is a weekend for contemporary music within the Prague Spring festival. This “festival within a festival” first took place in 2022, featuring Klangforum Wien as the resident ensemble, as in the subsequent two editions. In 2025, Ensemble Modern began its three-year residency at Prague Offspring. The festival aims to showcase the latest developments in Czech music alongside renowned works by international composers. The opening evening is devoted to premieres of pieces by Czech composers commissioned by the festival. In 2025, this evening featured music by Haštal Hapka, Jan Ryant Dřízal, Barbora Tomášková, and Pavel Šabacký. Each edition also highlights a guest composer; most recently, this was George Benjamin, whose opera *Into the Little Hill* was performed in a concert version on the festival’s second evening. Previous guest composers have included Olga Neuwirth, Rebecca Saunders, and Georg Friedrich Haas.

In addition to presenting new music, Prague Offspring aims to inspire conversations and raise awareness about contemporary music. The festival features a panel discussion with composers, a talk with the resident composer, a masterclass led by members of the resident ensemble, and the Reading Lessons programme, during which the resident ensemble publicly rehearses selected pieces by Czech composition students. These students receive valuable feedback from professional musicians. One participant in the Reading Lessons is then chosen to receive a commission for a new piece, which will be premiered on the opening evening of the next edition of Prague Offspring.

PRAGUE QUIET MUSIC COLLECTIVE

ENSEMBLE FOR CONTEMPORARY REDUCTIONIST MUSIC

pqmc.cz

The Prague Quiet Music Collective (PQMC), a group specialising in contemporary reductionist music, was founded in 2021 by artistic director Ian Mikyska and manager Nikola Štefková. To date, the ensemble has premiered over 50 pieces. Composers who have written for PQMC include both internationally renowned figures (such as K. Lang, J. Frey, E. M. Houben) and young composers from Czechia and Slovakia (L. Páčová, M. Sloboda, M. Nečasová) and abroad (S. Lim, E. Lonsdale, S. Stone). The ensemble's programming primarily consists of new commissions performed at carefully curated concerts, often featuring a strong connection to the concert venue or other artistic elements. Additionally, PQMC aims to be a repertoire ensemble that performs its commissioned works on multiple occasions.

PQMC is also engaged in interdisciplinary collaborations. The most extensive of these was the *Uncertain Situations* project, created in partnership with the Prague City Gallery, featuring new compositions inspired by works from the gallery's collection. Since 2022, the group has been performing *Sitting*, a unique tea ceremony accompanied by live music. In 2024, the group premiered an evening-length piece featuring texts by Petr Borkovec, read by the author. In September 2025, *Hudba na znamení* was released on Czech Radio Vltava, a project in which seven composers composed music for particular segments of public transport across Czechia.

The first album released by the ensemble was *Music for Sixth-tone Harmonium* in collaboration with Fredrik Rasten and Miroslav Beinhauer (Warm Winters, 2024), followed by *Tracings* (Sawyer Editions, 2024, with Germaine Sijstermans) and *Longing Landscape* (Another Timbre, 2025). The group has also released the digital albums *Festivus* and *An Album of Slow Images*.

→ Ian Mikyska – artistic director, viola da gamba, guitars, Anna Paulová – clarinet, bass clarinet, Milan Kárník Jakeš – violin, viola, Luan Gonçalves – double bass, Nikola Štefková – manager

PRAGUE QUIET MUSIC FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY REDUCTIONIST MUSIC

pqmf.cz

The Prague Quiet Music Festival is an annual event dedicated to contemporary reductionist music, held at the Fortna Monastery near Prague Castle. A distinctive feature of the festival is its extended duration: concerts lasting 60 to 90 minutes alternate with half-hour breaks, during which attendees can enjoy the monastery garden and church, as well as a reading room, refreshments, and a tea bar. Performances take place in the Large Hall, the Church of St. Benedict, and the monastery garden.

In addition to concerts, the festival offers workshops and other activities related to music, listening, and associated themes, including meditation, conscious movement, and tea ceremonies. Since 2023, visitors have also had the opportunity to stay in the former monastic cells at Fortna.

The first edition, held in December 2021, focused on the sixth-tone harmonium, a unique instrument commissioned by Alois Hába that is now part of the collection at the National Museum – Czech Museum of Music. Two new evening-length pieces were composed for this instrument: *Concord* by Fredrik Rasten and *In* by Ian Mikyska, both performed by Miroslav Beinbauer.

In 2022 and 2023, the principal guests at the festival were K. Lang and J. Frey, respectively, both of whom also performed solo recitals. The 2023 edition additionally featured a piano recital by American pianist Ashlee Mack. In 2024, the Norwegian ensemble *asamisimasa* served as the principal collaborator, followed by the Australian group *Phonetic Orchestra* in 2025. The complete 2024 programme was also performed in Oslo, Norway, while the 2025 compositions were presented at two concerts in Berlin.

PRAGUE SOUNDS

MULTI-GENRE FESTIVAL

praguesounds.cz

Prague Sounds is a platform for the convergence of contemporary music, jazz, and genre-defying sounds that share a commitment to uncompromising musical quality. The festival first emerged in Prague's musical scene in 1996 under its original name Strings of Autumn. In 2022, the festival was renamed to reflect its growing international focus. It is distinguished by its innovative programming and its ability to connect seemingly disparate musical worlds.

Over the past ten years, the programming has expanded to include folk music, electronic music, pop, country, and hip hop. The 2025 edition will feature recent Grammy winners Caroline Shaw and Sō Percussion. Shaw's work was also showcased in previous editions – she performed with Roomful of Teeth in 2024. Returning this year is electronic music producer Alva Noto, who will join Fennesz for a special tribute to Japanese composer Ryuichi Sakamoto. Kurt Wagner will present the music of his band Lambchop accompanied by pianist Andrew Broder. The festival will also feature electronic music visionary Oneohtrix Point Never, jazz singer Cécile McLorin Salvant, and many others.

ENCOUNTERS OF NEW MUSIC PLUS

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

newmusicplus.jamu.cz

This international festival, established in 1997, focuses on composed and improvised contemporary music, as well as multimedia projects. Over more than a quarter of a century of continuous activity, numerous leading artists and groups from around the world specialising in contemporary music have presented their work at the festival, which primarily takes place in Brno. The event is organised by Sdružení Q, z. s., in collaboration with the Music Faculty of the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno.

One of the aims of the festival is to confront trends in Czech contemporary music with international trends, both in composition and performance, regularly providing opportunities for young Czech composers and performers.

Among the performers at the festival were groups such as California Ear Unit, Zeitgeist Ensemble, Aeolian Trio, Smash Ensemble, Ensemble for New Music Tallinn, and Plural Ensemble Madrid. Soloists included Nick Collins, David Rosenboom, Vinny Golia, László Hudacsek, Iva Bittová, Marcus Popp, Daan Vandewalle, Wilbert de Joode, Jonathan Powell, Alessandro Bosetti, Marco Ciciliani, Carin Levine, Peter Sheppard, Gareth Davis, Phill Niblock, Franz Hautzinger, Rohan de Saram, David Moss, Marek Choloniewski, Catherine Tunnel, Ian Page, Ernst Reijseger, Hans Koch, Pascal Gallois, Amelia Cuni, Garth Knox, Tara Khozein, Dano Matej, Maya Homburger, and Barry Guy.

STRO.MY ENSEMBLE

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

stro.my

STRO.MY Ensemble is a chamber group founded in 2021 by composer and conductor Jiří Trtík, whose original vision and international experience shape the artistic focus of the group. Trtík's work, for which he has received awards including the OSA Award for most successful Czech art music composer internationally (2021), forms an important part of the ensemble's repertoire. STRO.MY also regularly collaborates with other composers from Czechia and abroad. The ensemble brings together young international performers whose skills naturally cross genre boundaries.

One of the defining characteristics of the ensemble is the seamless integration of music with other art forms, including light design, dance, set design, performance, and visual art. STRO.MY Ensemble's concerts are often complex events in which architecture or the surrounding environment plays a crucial role. The ensemble's projects include the environmentally inspired *Concert for the Forest*, which premiered in a cleared forest in Mníšek pod Brdy; a multimedia performance as part of the Electric Universe event, which combines classical and electronic music; the world premiere of J. Trtík's opera *Kafka's Letter to His Father* at the National Theatre in Prague; and the European tour *Smetana: Ambassador of Czech Music*, which formed part of the celebrations of the Year of Czech Music 2024.

TRIO APERTO

WIND TRIO SPECIALISING IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

trioaperto.cz

Trio Aperto is a wind trio specialising in contemporary music, particularly works by composers from Brno (V. Dlask, M. Štědroň, R. Bednařík, O. Kyas, ao.). The group was established at the Moravian Theatre Olomouc in 2014. In addition to performing at Czech festivals such as Concentus Moraviae, Forfest and Encounters of New Music Plus, Trio Aperto has also appeared at L'altra stagione in Porto Recanati, Italy (2020), and the AEMC Montecassiano international chamber group competition (2019), where they won third place. During the lockdown, they performed several concerts in shop windows as part of the "Kulturu nezastavíš" programme. In 2021, the group collaborated with the Theatre Faculty at JAMU on the graduation piece *Tea Rhapsody* by M. Zetel's musical theatre studio. In 2023, the trio released *Works for Woodwind Trio* on CD. Since its establishment, it has fostered the creation of over ten pieces for wind trio, primarily by composers from the middle and younger generations (L. Vítková, J. Věrošová, P. Šabacký ao.), recording many of them for Czech Radio.

Since 2022, Trio Aperto has produced a concert series titled Small Chamber Music Concerts at the Löw-Beer Villa in Brno. This series is founded on collaboration with composers from the youngest generation. Premieres of their works are complemented by Czech and international wind trio repertoire, as well as performances by students from the Brno Conservatory.

→ Barbora Šteflová – oboe, Jan Charfreitag – clarinet, Pavel Horák – bassoon

UMĚLECKÁ BESEDA TUESDAYS

CONCERT SERIES

umeleckabeseda.cz

Umělecká beseda (UB) is an association established in 1863, comprising three branches: music, literature/drama, and visual art. Since the interwar period, the musical section has organised its traditional concert series (almost always on Tuesdays), primarily presenting works by its members as well as other Czech and international composers of all generations. In addition to contemporary pieces, the concerts also feature “classic” works of modernity by former UB members (e.g., L. Vycpálek, M. Kabeláč, K. Slavický, P. Eben, I. Hurník, J. Kapr, ao.) and composers of international modernism (e.g., A. Webern, A. Pärt, E. S. Tüür, B. Kutavičius, Y. Kilpinen, G. Ligeti, W. Lutosławski, A. Schnittke, M. Kagel, ao.). The programmes also include works by recently deceased UB members (e.g., I. Loudová, H. Bartoň, M. Slavický, P. Pokorný). Since Umělecká beseda unites not only musicians, its concerts are unique in featuring artists and writers who present their own works at these events.

Currently, the Tuesdays season typically includes seven concerts. Since 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UB has been streaming its concerts to provide access when in-person attendance is not possible. All these recordings remain available on YouTube, and by the end of the 2024/2025 season, nearly forty concerts were available for streaming.

The biggest piano rental company in Czechia

For households and businesses
Prices from 420 CZK per month

Praha, Brno, Ostrava and Lanškroun

www.hudebnifond.cz

