

# The Kapralova Society Journal

A Journal of Women in Music



## Special points of interest:

String Quartet of  
Vítězslava Kaprálová

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## Kaprálová's String Quartet, op. 8

Marta Blalock

### Analysis of opus 8

Vítězslava Kaprálová was in her early twenties when she composed her only string quartet. She began working on the score in the summer of 1935, following her graduation from the Brno Conservatory, and finished it in March 1936, during the first year of her studies under Vítězslav Novák at the Prague Conservatory.<sup>1</sup> She met the challenge confidently, ultimately producing a work of strong character and assured craft. Although the quartet's lyrical style is sometimes compared to the music of Janáček,<sup>2</sup> there are more immediate influences that shaped this work. The quartet's dance-like rhythms, speech motives, metric ambiguities, modal harmonies, and irregular phrase structures suggest the Moravian folk music roots of Kaprálová's music. The music of her father, Václav Kaprál, also appears to have had an impact, at least by her own admission.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the quartet's impressionistic harmonies and extended chords suggest the influence of French composers, also evident in the music of Kaprál.

Kaprálová's earlier works with strings include *Legenda* (*Legend*) op. 3/1, *Burlesque* op. 3/2 [vn, pno] (1932), and *Leden* (*January*) [vx, fl, 2vn, vc, pno] (1933). Although Kaprálová's compositional development progressed since she had written these works, both compositions of op. 3 already contain the stylistic elements later fully explored in the quartet (the expressiveness of *Legenda* and the rhythmic vitality of *Burlesque*). It is the song *Leden*, however, that clearly foreshadows the directions taken in the String Quartet, especially the melancholy character of the quartet's second movement.

The quartet, completed in 1936, is written in the traditional fast-slow-fast scheme, using the formal structures of sonata-form (*Con brio*), rounded binary (*Lento*), and theme with variations (*Allegro con variazioni*). The key centers of each movement form a large-scale V–iii–I progression in B-flat major. As already mentioned, Kaprálová's melodic and rhythmic style draws much inspiration from folk music, and her harmonic language is rich with bitonality, extended tertiary harmonies, deceptive resolutions, modal harmonies, and referential collections such as the whole-tone and chromatic scales. Chords containing unprepared and unresolved dissonances also pose as “stable” harmonies. The use of unifying motivic elements, such as turn figures and tritones, add to the coherence of the work.

The quartet opens with an arresting, dense, and tonally ambiguous six-measure introduction *Con Brio*, elements of which reappear throughout the movement, mainly in the transitional passages. It consists of two gestures, each containing a complex of motives which foreshadow important thematic and harmonic aspects of the movement. The exposition establishes F major as a key center, and develops the rhythmic motive from the introduction (Ex. 1a).

The statement of the first theme already demonstrates many of the composer's techniques: driving rhythms, folk-like accompanimental chords, harmonies with unprepared, unresolved dissonances. The lower strings imitate common folk rhythmic accompaniments of emphasized

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off-beats, as seen in an excerpt from one of Janáček's arrangements of Moravian Folk song (Ex. 1b). The accompanimental rhythm in m. 5 is derived from that of m. 3, but with every second bass note omitted. Kaprálová adopts this pattern and manipulates it for the triple meter and further emphasizes the off-beats in the melody. Whole-tone collections serving as "neighboring harmonies" to dominant ninth chords can be seen as the quartet's theme progresses.

Before the slower and more lyrical second theme (*Cantabile*) is realized, Kaprálová inserts a highly developmental section with fragmented passages from all three themes interrupting each other. Both here and later in the second theme itself, prominent whole-tone harmonies alternate with chromatic transitional passages. Also, the harmonization of the second theme proper recalls the parallel sixths of folk singing. Many of the second theme's features are reminiscent of the first movement of Ravel's string quartet. The melodic contour of the theme (mm. 41-42, Ex. 2a) resembles that of Ravel's in the first movement of his string quartet (Ex. 2b). Texturally, Kaprálová's pedal-tone trill in the viola (which later becomes a tremolo) and cello *pizzicato* gesture recall similar accompaniments in Ravel's second theme (Ex. 2c). Ravel's technique of moving among referential sonorities in discrete steps is also echoed here (moving from diatonic to whole-tone, or moving between octatonic scales in the first movement).

As in Kaprálová's second theme, a combination of referential collections with tonally based harmony can be found in the first movement. Kaprálová's exposition concludes with a whimsical statement of the staccato third theme (*Vivace*), derived from the non-equivalent melodic inversion of the second theme (Ex. 3a). The playful *staccato* character is supported by the accompanying four-note turn-figure. Later in the theme, a hemiola built on the four-note turn-figure gives the feeling of a duple meter, a technique echoing the famous Czech dance *furiant*, where a similar hemiola obscures the triple meter of the grotesque character dance (Ex. 3b).

The development section moves rapidly through all three themes, which are subjected to diminution, ornamentation and rhythmic modification. The intervallically extended turn-figures, along with fragments of the first and third themes, are given a subsidiary role to the now more prominent second theme. The central key areas of B major and F major (themselves a tritone apart) remain highly obscured with chromatic, whole-tone, and diminished sonorities. In the concluding section of the development, themes are increasingly more fragmented and reduced into their elemental motivic constituents, which are

then combined to form a unifying statement harmonizing the dominant ninth chord of F major.

The first theme is restated as in the exposition but now concludes with a startling tritone double stop in the cello. In the *Meno mosso* section which follows, a continuous turn-figure hemiola accompanies both the third and second themes (Ex. 4a). Kaprálová later used these two themes as an inspiration for her 1939 violin and piano composition *Elegy*. The third theme is modified by rhythmic and intervallic diminution in *Elegy*'s opening statement (Ex. 4b). A portion of the quartet's second theme (Ex. 5a) is quoted and transposed in *Elegy* (Ex. 5b). Kaprálová transfers the quartet's expressive depth into *Elegy* and demonstrates her gift for further thematic development. The quartet's coda outlines an ii-V-I progression in F major. Dissonant scales and trills from the introduction are combined here with the first theme, and a fragmented second theme returns. Following an introduction-like ensemble gesture, the movement ends conclusively in F major.

The central movement marked *Lento* begins with a pensive and captivating solo cello theme in D minor (Ex. 6a). Upper strings enter with serene harmonics of a descending whole-tone line as the theme unfolds. The movement's melodic, rhythmic and harmonic features are strongly evocative of the 1933 song *Leden*, namely with its somber expansive melody with climaxing triplet passages and impressionistic harmonies. Some motivic ideas already introduced in *Leden* are explored here as well. On the top of page eleven in the quartet's autograph, where the second movement begins, Kaprálová jotted down a brief sketch of a musical idea (Ex. 6b). This motive is also found in the cello part in *Leden* (Ex. 6c) and the sketch can be seen as an intermediate step to deriving a very similar motive in the cello's part in the quartet (Ex. 6a, mm. 10-12). Even the quartet's falling triplet idea (Ex. 6a, mm. 13-16) can be traced back to *Leden*, where it is heard in the flute part (Ex. 6d). Kaprálová's capacity for affective musical language proves to be highly developed in both compositions, creating a sensibly attuned musical character.

The quartet's harmonic language sustains its ambiguity and richness in modulation, and the phrasing gains more irregularity and alteration. The conclusion of the theme accelerates into a lively *Poco vivo* section in D minor, creating a contrasting subsidiary thematic idea marked with an augmented triad and a distinctive dotted rhythm motive (Ex. 7a). This trochaic dotted rhythm later becomes a vital feature of the accompaniment to the first theme, enriching its otherwise somber character with the lively short-long speech motive, idiosyncratic to the

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rhythmic patterns of the Czech language. Most words in Czech have a strong stress on the first syllable which is then followed by a weaker and often longer syllable. Folk rhythms and melodies often follow this natural declamation (Ex. 7b) and the short-long speech pattern becomes a significant part of the thematic material of highbrow Czech composers. Smetana's famous opera *The Bartered Bride* represents one of the best earlier examples of Czech classical music emulating the language characteristics: the libretto is trochaic, and the rhythm adheres to the syncopation the text creates.<sup>4</sup> Kaprálová's second movement is strongly attuned to those principles.

Following the return of the first theme, the second and central main theme (*Cantabile*) marks the middle section of the rounded binary movement. The theme is varied and subjected to diminution an octave lower in the second violin (Ex. 8). Some melodic and rhythmic ideas bear features resembling those of themes two and three in the first movement. The central theme concludes in the viola with an eerie violin ostinato comprised mostly of tritones. An abrupt subsidiary theme *Poco vivo* briskly accelerates into an unusual *Vivace* transition, characterized by a syncopated rhythmic motive, a rising *pizzicato* gesture, and graced accented eighth notes outlining tritones, again recalling a similar gesture heard in the first movement. Modes mark the return of the first theme, with harmonically remote double stops in the accompaniment. Such harmonies can be found in Eastern Moravian folk music, where it is influenced by the modal music of Slovakian songs. The movement dissipates inconclusively with a D major-ninth chord and added sixth scale degree.

The final *Allegro con variazioni* movement treats the theme in five rhythmic and melodic variations. While the autograph includes seven variations, the second and fifth variations are marked to be cut.<sup>5</sup> The movement has a gentle character with lively dance-like rhythms and a triple meter with three-bar phrases (which is occasionally playfully interrupted). The bucolic, triple meter setting evokes the folk songs and dances common to the Eastern Moravian region. The youthful theme has an elegant *a-b-a'* design with a slightly longer *b* and *a'* periods (Ex. 9).<sup>6</sup> The phrase is complemented by the chromatic turn-figure motive in the second violin and the viola's pedal tones elongate the turn-figure throughout the theme. A B-flat major key is established and the chord progressions change rapidly within each measure.

In the first variation (*Poco meno mosso*), the theme in the viola is "hidden" between filling sixteenth notes and its motivic ideas are skillfully manipulated as accompaniment figures (Ex. 10). With the same pitch content, the accompaniment in the violins strongly resembles

the folk-like accompaniment in the first movement's exposition. The second variation (*Cantabile*) returns to the theme with the initial rhythm in its pure form but with modified melodic contour and a different key of D-flat major (Ex. 11). The voicing is reminiscent of the instrumentation of characteristic folk dances and songs, where the bravura improvisatory scalar passages are often played by a violin or a clarinet with a simple accompaniment. Concluding in the key of F major and utilizing the repetition and breakdown of motivic elements, this variation calms dynamically and texturally in preparation for the *Molto meno mosso* variation (Ex. 12).

The minor key areas, lyrically expressive setting, and obscured theme in a 4/4 meter, set this somber variation characteristically apart. The melodic line heard first in the measures 114-115 once again recalls the contour of the *Leden* motive (Ex. 6b and 6c). Chromatically ascending double-stops in the cello and viola's faint resemblance of the turn-figure show connections to the theme's accompaniment. A stark contrast to the following fifth variation is created with the strings playing *con sordini* during the *a'* section. The most prominent features of the *Vivo* variation are its rhythmic drive and frequent metric changes. Motivic melodic fragments emerge briefly, obscured considerably with octave displacement, as seen in m. 174 in the second violin (Ex. 13).

A grotesque violin duet begins the *b* section with a vague recollection of the theme after which the returning *a'* section starts to hint at the key-area of B-flat major. The final variation in a key of F major also serves as a coda and returns to a similar format of the original theme but within a thinner, more homophonic texture and with an emphasis on duple feel of its hypermeasures. It is marked by rapid meter changes, fragmentation and abbreviation of the theme, and borrowing of rhythmic elements from the previous variation. The movement builds up quickly to its bravura conclusion with strong restatements of the tonic chord of B-flat major.

The approximately 20 minute long composition leaves the impression of a remarkably promising future for the young composer. The quartet was premiered by the Moravian Quartet in Brno on October 5, 1936 as part of the ensemble's fifth season's opening, and was warmly received.

## Sound recordings of opus 8

Kaprálová's string quartet has been among her most frequently performed, recorded, and broadcast works. In addition to frequent performances by the Kapralova Quartet, the work has also been performed in

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recent years by the Hawthorne String Quartet, the Cuar-teto Acimus, the Moravian Quartet, and most recently by the Škampa Quartet. Sound recordings of Kaprálová's female Czech contemporaries are extremely rare and when it comes to string quartets, only those of later 20<sup>th</sup> century composers are available on record (Sylvie Bodorová, Zoja Černovská, Olga Ježková, and Ivana Loudová). Kaprálová's case has been a remarkable exception to this dismal record, as the majority of her works are available on record.

There currently exist two sound recordings of Kaprálová's string quartet. The Janáček Quartet's 1982 recording features rhythmic precision, expressive depth, and impeccable blending of instrumental colors. Despite some editing issues (an entire section and part of one measure are missing in the second movement), the quality of the playing exemplifies the Czech quartet performance tradition. The Kapralova Quartet's 2006 release benefits from better recording equipment, which adds spatial depth to their energetic and well-articulated performance; however, frequent cuts alter the continuity of the work. It should also be noted that ambiguities in the autograph<sup>7</sup> and discrepancies among the copyist manuscripts of the individual parts (including cuts, technique, voicing, expression markings, bowings and articulation, rhythm and pitch) pose other interpretive problems, especially since these recordings were made before a definitive edition of the score was available. As a result, the recordings vary both from each other and from the autograph.

### First print edition of opus 8

The first edition of the string quartet's score and parts was published by the Czech Radio Publishing House in 2009.<sup>8</sup> Although the publication represents a major contribution to the Kaprálová catalogue, some of the problems discussed in this article were not addressed by its editors. Furthermore, the edition contains mistakes and typesetting problems as well as several unexplained editorial changes and omissions from the autograph. There are also a few notation problems in the publication, mostly based on Kaprálová's inconsistencies found in the autograph. In addition, many of Kaprálová's bowing markings have been omitted. Finally, there are a few discrepancies between the published score and the individual parts. The most notable problem is in the second movement, of the full score, where the quarter-note pickup is notated as a whole rest in the tacet parts, thus offsetting the measure numbers for the whole movement. The *Editorial Comments* and the individual parts reflect the correct numbering, however. Close attention is also paid to the spacial

organization of the individual parts, with large, easy to read print and convenient page turns.

The first movement posed most difficulties for the editors, as the autograph contains several unresolved musical problems and questionable markings. Although the notation is mostly written in black pen, there are also markings in red pencil (these markings pertain primarily to dynamics, articulation, tempos, expressive markings and cuts), and black pencil (mostly articulation markings, note corrections, and sketches in the margins). The editors' conclusion that some of the black pencil markings are Kaprálová's is disputable, especially when the same pencil appears to be used by a different hand to correct her misspelled expression markings. The editors included the cuts crossed out in red pencil, and labeled them as optional cuts with [Vi-de], giving the performers an option to study the entire score and to make their own performance choices. The cuts marked in black pen, clearly intended for omission, were left out of the publication, with one exception (Ex. 14). In addition to the omitted measure (m. 154) being included, some of its pitches have also been modified.

There are several courtesy accidentals that are marked unnecessarily by Kaprálová. A possible reason for including these could be that she composed at the piano, thinking of voices in the score vertically rather than horizontally. The editors removed those unnecessary accidentals and included some needed ones. In a few instances, the score has typesetting issues such as slurs, accents, and staccato marks not aligning with the note heads.


Far fewer ambiguities are found in the autograph's second and third movement than in the first. Besides incorrect measure numbering in the score, the first edition neglects to address several of the autograph's ambiguities in the *Editorial Comments*. The edition corrected a rhythmic mistake found in the autograph's third movement, with a missing sixteenth beat in the measures 1, 4, 7, 10, 16, 19, and 207 (Ex. 15). This error appears with every recurrence of the motive until it is corrected by Kaprálová in the middle of a phrase in the measure 211 by changing the first sixteenth note to an eighth note, after which it is written correctly in subsequent instances. The edition corrects the mistake by changing the sixteenth rest to an eighth rest throughout, except in the measure 207 where the first sixteenth note is changed to an eighth note. It is possible that Kaprálová intended her correction in measure 211 to be applied for the first occurrences as well.

The following are corrections and suggestions for a revised edition (*A* stands for *Autograph*):



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### First Movement:

- m. 12, I and II: The tenuto dashes (in black pen) were replaced with accents (in red pencil) in *A*.
- m. 18, vla: Despite the Editorial Comment, the fifth note is clearly F in *A*, not E. Furthermore, the identical measure in the recapitulation (m. 148), has F on the fifth note in both *A* and the published score.
- m. 18, II vla vcl: Inconsistent articulation markings in *A*, editors added staccato dots to the fifth eighth note, which should be marked in by brackets. Ex: [...]
- m. 19, I II: Third eighth note added staccato dot not in *A*.
- m. 20, vla vcl: Fourth eighth note added staccato dot not in *A*.
- m. 23-24, II: Last three eighth notes in each measure have the note D2 written in *A*.
- m. 25: Missing *mf* on the down beat in all parts.
- m. 25 vla: Second, fourth, sixth eighth note added staccato dot should be in brackets.
- m. 25 vcl: Second eighth note added staccato dot should be in brackets.
- m. 28, I: Crescendo from m. 29 should begin on beat 2 in m. 28.
- m. 28, II vla: Crescendo from m. 29 should begin on beat 3 in m. 28.
- m. 43, I II vla: Missing crescendo.
- m. 44, I II vla: Missing decrescendo.
- m. 46, vla: Decrescendo not in *A*.
- m. 49, II: Ambiguous in *A* if last sixteenth note should be D or D-sharp.
- m. 52, I: Last eighth note is missing a staccato dot which can be placed in parentheses to show that it might not belong.
- m. 61: Tempo marking Vivace  notes should be reversed.
- m. 61, vla: *pp* should be *sub pp*.
- m. 73, II vla vcl: Missing crescendo on last two beats.
- m. 78, I: Slur not in *A*.
- m. 80, I: Missing *pp* on the third beat.
- m. 81, II: Last eighth note should be D-sharp, not C-sharp. Although the note is ambiguous in *A* (which should have been stated in the Editorial Comments), the vln II part is in octaves with vln I and vcl, which both have a D-sharp.
- m. 85, II: First note is D-sharp, the sharp is clearly marked in *A*.
- m. 86, II: Decrescendo starts on beat one.
- m. 86, vla: Decrescendo starts on beat two.
- m. 89, I: First lower quarter note is marked with a natural sign in *A*. The edition's sharp should be in parentheses and explained in the Editorial Comments.
- m. 89, vla: First sixteenth note is missing a staccato dot.
- m. 92, II: Accidental for the first note is ambiguous in *A*.

- D-sharp instead of D-natural is more consistent, since it has been held as a pedal tone for the previous 7 measures.
- m. 126, I: Slur above third and fourth eighth note not in *A*.
- m. 131, vla: Fifth thirty-second note is F-sharp, not F-flat. Ambiguity of the accidental in *A* should have been stated, however, the ascending scalar passage raises consistently in all instruments from m. 129-133. The note F-flat breaks the ascending scalar pattern.
- m. 136, I: Crescendo not in *A*.
- m. 137: Missing crescendo during the first beat in all instruments.
- m. 142, vla vcl: *A* has *arco* on the second eighth note.
- m. 143, vla: Second sixteenth note is only a single E, the G above it is crossed out in *A*.
- m. 145, vla: Missing crescendo on the last beat is ambiguous in *A*, should be included in brackets.
- m. 147, I: Second eighth note is missing a staccato dot.
- m. 149, I: Staccato dots above all sixteenth and thirty-second notes not in *A*.
- m. 150, I II: Third eighth note is missing an accent.
- m. 150, vla: Second eighth note should be C-sharp, not C. Ambiguity of the accidental in *A* should be stated. However, the identical measure in the exposition (m. 20) has C-sharp on the second eighth note in both *A* and the published score.
- m. 154: The entire measure is crossed out clearly in *A* in black pen. The edition includes this measure, but with many changes.
- m. 157, I II: Missing crescendo starts on beat two.
- m. 158, vla vcl: missing crescendo.
- m. 159, vla: missing *pizz*.
- m. 165, II: Suggested bowing as corrected in m. 147, omitting the staccato dot above the first sixteenth note.
- m. 165, vla: Missing *mp* on the downbeat.
- m. 168, vcl: Second eighth notes can possibly be intended as C-sharp and G-sharp, based on repeating pattern in previous and following measures in the vcl, as well as II and vla.
- m. 177, II: Last eighth note is a G-flat in *A*, not A-flat.
- m. 208, vcl: Slur between the grace note and dotted half note is missing.
- m. 209, II: Flat above the trill is not in the *A*.

### Second Movement:

- (Measure numbers are based on the correct numbering found in the individual parts and Editorial Comments, with m.1 starting on the first full measure.)
- pick-up measure, I II vla: First rest should be a quarter-rest, not a whole-rest; this pick-up measure should not have been counted as m. 1.

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- m. 13, II: Accidental above the trill is a sharp in *A*, not a natural sign.  
 m. 54, vcl: Flat before the first quarter note is not in the *A*.  
 m. 104, vla: Flat before second upper eighth note not in *A*.  
 m. 150, vcl: Accidental before first eighth note ambiguous in *A*, could be B-natural.

### Third Movement:

- m. 1, 4, 7, 10, 16, 19, 207 I: Editorial Comments should have mentioned corrections in rhythm.  
 m. 6, II: Asterisk for the Editorial Comments is missing above the eighth note.  
 m. 26, I: *pizz* and *arco* not in *A*.  
 m. 63, I: Accidental before seventh sixteenth note appears to be a flat in *A*, not a natural.  
 m. 85, I: Accidental before eighth eighth note appears to be a flat in *A*, not a natural.  
 m. 86, vla: First thirty-second note is D-flat in *A*, not B-flat.  
 m. 99, II: Slur is erased in *A*.  
 m. 99, vcl: Accidental before second thirty-second note ambiguous in *A*, could be G-natural.  
 m. 106, I: Slur is erased in *A*.  
 m. 131, I: Accidental before third sixteenth note ambiguous in *A*, could be B-flat.  
 m. 133, II: Accidental before third sixteenth note ambiguous in *A*, could be D-natural.  
 m. 146-147, vcl: Slur ambiguous in *A*.  
 m. 207, I: First lower note ambiguous in *A*, could be A2.  
 m. 211, II: First lower note missing, C2 in *A*.  
 m. 226, II: Accidental before second eighth note ambiguous in *A*, could be A-natural.

### Notes:

The author wishes to thank the Department of Music History, Moravian Museum in Brno for providing her with a copy of the Kaprálová autograph for her research.

<sup>1</sup> Jiří Macek, *Vítězslava Kaprálová* (Prague: Svaz čs. skladatelů, 1958), 62.


<sup>2</sup> "...Celé dílo, jímž prosvítá silný vliv Janáčkův, prozrazuje pozoruhodný talent, jehož schopnosti opravňují k nadějněmu očekávání dalšího vývoje. /... The entire work, which exudes strong Janáček influence, reveals an extraordinary talent, whose aptitudes justify an expectation of promising future development." From a review signed H.P., "Moravské kvarteto v Brně zahájilo svůj V. cyklus komorních večerů," *Národní noviny*, October 8, 1936, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Kaprálová's letter to her father dated March 23, 1939, <http://kapralova.org/LETTER3.htm>

<sup>4</sup> John Tyrrel, "Czech Republic," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, [www.grovemusic.com.proxyremote.galib.uga.edu:2048](http://www.grovemusic.com.proxyremote.galib.uga.edu:2048)

<sup>5</sup> A brief analysis of the work in an April 1939 concert program (published in *Rytmus* under the initials F.B., p. 65) mentions seven variations for the third movement. It remains unclear, however, whether the quartet was performed with all seven variations at this concert or its premiere. It is also not clear whether Kaprálová intended or even authorized the omission of the two variations; the autograph contains at least two different handwritings and it is not conclusive if the cuts marked are in her hand. The two currently available sound recordings omit the second and the fifth variation.

<sup>6</sup> The incorrect rhythm in mm. 1 and 4 appears later in the

autograph as: 

<sup>7</sup> Kaprálová's autograph has been deposited in the collection of the Department of Music History, Moravian Museum in Brno.

<sup>8</sup> Olga Ježková and František Bílek, with revisions by Ivan Štraus, *Smyčcový kvartet č. 1* (Prague: Hudební nakladatelství Českého rozhlasu, 2009).

### Music Samples Cited:

Ex. 1a Vítězslava Kaprálová, String Quartet, op. 8 (autograph), mm. 9-12



Ex. 1b Leoš Janáček, *Hrušky u Břeclavě, Fifteen Moravian Folksongs* (Prague: Panton, 1978), mm. 1-6



## String Quartet, op. 8

Ex. 2a Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 41-44

Ex. 2b Maurice Ravel, String Quartet (Paris: Durand & Fils, 1894), mm. 35-36

Ex. 2c Maurice Ravel, String Quartet (Paris: Durand & Fils, 1894), mm. 55-57

Ex. 3a Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 61-64

Ex. 3b K. M. Jiříček, *Zpěvník* (Songbook), manuscript collection (National Museum Prague. CZ-Pnm, 1845-62)

Ex. 4a Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 183-184

Ex. 4b Kaprálová, *Elegy* (1939) (Prague: Amos Editio, 2009), mm. 1-3

Ex. 5a Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 197-199

Ex. 5b Kaprálová, *Elegy* (1939) (Prague: Amos Editio, 2009), mm. 9-11



Virginia Eskin



Stephanie Chase

**Virginia Eskin**, a California native and long-time Boston resident, is a remarkably versatile solo pianist and chamber player, known for both standard classical repertoire and ragtime. A long-time champion of the works of American and European women composers, she has recently created and hosted 'First Ladies of Music,' a 13-program radio series sponsored by Northeastern University and produced by WFMT Chicago, carried by over 100 radio stations in the United States and abroad.

**Stephanie Chase** resides in New York City. Concert tours in twenty-five countries have brought Stephanie Chase international recognition and include appearances as soloist with the world's most distinguished orchestras, among which are the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, London Philharmonic, Atlanta Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony.

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## Vítězslava Kaprálová

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Legend  
Burlesque  
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Elegy  
Sonata Appassionata  
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*Aaron Green, About.com*

The piano and violin-and-piano music here is richly melodic, highly chromatic, and bursting with invention.

*Jack Sullivan, American Record Guide*

Kaprálová's music displays a remarkable mastery of form and harmony, and radiates youthful spontaneity, lyrical tenderness, and passionate intensity.

*Edith Eisler, Strings Magazine*

Kaprálová was one of the major female composers in history, despite her short time on earth; this Koch disc does her music considerable justice and serves as a strong introduction to Kaprálová's music.

*Dave Louís, Allmusic.com*

I have no doubt that this release will not only please Kaprálová's enthusiasts but also add many others to her following.

*Veroslav Nemec, Harmonie*

Add this to your select discography of a composer whose early death deprived Czechoslovakia of a burgeoning talent.

*Jonathan Woolf, Musicweb.uk*



Ex. 6a Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 1-18



Ex. 6b. Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph)

Ex. 6c Kaprálová, *Leden* (1933) (Prague: Amos Editio, 2005), mm. 19-20Ex. 6d Kaprálová, *Leden* (1933) (Prague: Amos Editio, 2005), mm. 25-26

Ex. 7a Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 39-42

Ex. 7b Leoš Janáček, *Fifteen Moravian Folksongs* (Prague: Panton, 1978), mm. 4-5

Ex. 8 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 105-112



Ex. 9 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 1-6



Ex. 10 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 26-31



Ex. 11 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 79-81



Ex. 12 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 114-119



Ex. 13 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 172-174



Ex. 14 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 154-155



Ex. 15 Kaprálová, String Quartet (autograph), mm. 207-214

**About the author:**

Marta Blalock holds DMA in music performance (violin) from the University of Georgia. Subject of her doctoral dissertation was Kaprálová's String Quartet, op. 8. She has performed as a member and soloist with the ARCO Chamber Orchestra, as concertmaster with Orchestra Atlanta, and as a member of Augusta Virtuosi, Augusta Symphony Orchestra and Gainesville Symphony Orchestra. She is currently a performing and recording artist residing in San Diego and also teaches violin, viola and piano at the Villa Musica Center.

# Vítězslava Kaprálová

## Smyčcový kvartet č. 1

### String Quartet No. 1

revize Ivan Štraus

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**MAY 5 and May 6, 2010**

Smetana Hall, Obecní dům [Municipal House], nám. Republiky 5, Prague, Czech Republic  
Beethoven, Bruckner, **Kaprálová: Piano Concerto in D-minor, op. 7**

*Tomáš Víšek, soloist**Prague Symphony Orchestra conducted by Martin Turnovský*

The concert starts at 19:30

**First performance since 1948**

Renata Bialasová studied piano at the Brno Conservatory under prof. Josefa Hloušková and at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava (Slovakia) under prof. Eva Fischerová. She advanced her piano interpretation method at international piano interpretation courses in Brno (the Czech Republic) and Weimar (Germany), where she

studied under prof. Bernard Ringeissen. During her studies she won several international piano competitions (Cencertino Praga, Beethoven Competition in Hradec nad Moravicí, Smetana Competition in Hradec Králové and Martinu Competition in Paris). Besides performing at solo piano recitals, Renata Bialasová also plays 4 hands repertoire together with her father, Milan Bialas. She has performed on concert stages in Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, France, Spain, and Luxembourg. She has recorded for Stylton and her performances have been broadcast by radio stations in the Czech Republic, Austria, and Germany. Renata Bialasová currently teaches piano performance at the Brno Conservatory.

Recording director : František Mixa  
 Sound engineer : Radek Roubal  
 Mastering : Radek Roubal  
 Sleeve note : Jindra Bártová  
 Translation : Eva Horová  
 Cover : BEKROS Brno  
 Cover art : Bedřiška Kovářová

Recorded in November 2009 in the Music Studio of the Czech Radio Ostrava

This project has been financially assisted by The Kapralova Society and the Authors' Rights Association (OSA).

The Kapralova Society Inc. is a non-profit arts organization based in Toronto, Canada. Founded by Karla Hartl in 1998, the Society's mandate is to build awareness of women's contributions to musical life and to support projects that make available, in print and on compact disc, Kaprálová's music.



#### Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915-1940)

##### **Sonata appassionata, op.6**

- 1/ Maestoso [7:47]
- 2/ Thema con variazioni [11:25]

##### **Three Piano Pieces, op. 9**

- 3/ Preludium [5:09]
- 4/ Crab Canon [1:37]
- 5/ Grotesque Passacaglia [2:40]

##### **April Preludes, op. 13**

- 6/ Allegro ma non troppo [2:04]
- 7/ Andante [3:03]
- 8/ Andante semplice [2:11]
- 9/ Vivo [1:55]

##### **Variations sur le Carillon de l'Eglise St-Etienne du Mont, op.16**

- 10/ Thème – Andante. Piu vivo [1:29]
- 11/ Allegretto [0:16]
- 12/ Lento ma non troppo [1:27]
- 13/ Quasi étude vivo [0:43]
- 14/ Choral [2:06]
- 15/ Allegro. Coda – Andante moderato [2:36]

#### Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)

##### **Préludes pour piano**

- 16/ Prélude en forme de blues [3:16]
- 17/ Prélude en forme de scherzo [1:16]
- 18/ Prélude en forme d'andante [3:09]
- 19/ Prélude en forme de danse [2:33]
- 20/ Prélude en forme de capriccio [1:26]
- 21/ Prélude en forme de largo [3:20]
- 22/ Prélude en forme d'étude [1:20]
- 23/ Prélude en forme de fox-trot [1:22]



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This project was initiated and financially assisted by The Kapralova Society.

**The Kapralova Society Journal**

Editors: Karla Hartl and Eugene Gates

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ISSN 1715 4146