"Love's Labour's Lost." I have shamelessly appropriated Shakespeare's title for a play of quite another kind, a tragedy that was played out only once, during the years 1938 and 1939, involving the following principal characters:

Bohuslav Martinu, the Czech composer; born in 1890

Vitezslava Kapralova, brilliant Czech composer and conductor; 25 years younger than Bohuslav Martinu

Otakar Sourek, by profession a civil engineer in Prague, by avocation a musicologist, music editor, and music critic; seven years older than Martinu

Adolf Hitler, architect of a restructured Europe; one year older than Martinu

When Vitezslava Kapralova met Martinu for the first time in April 1937, she had just graduated from a series of master classes in composition and conducting at the Prague Conservatory. Her teachers had been Vitezslav Novak and Václav Talich. Martinu encouraged her to abandon the notion of going to Vienna for further study and, instead, to apply for a grant offered by the French Ministry of Education and Culture for the purpose of studying in Paris at the Ecole Normale de Musique. He felt that Paris was a much more vibrant, artistically progressive city. Her application was approved, and she spent the period from autumn 1937 to June 1938 in France, after which time she returned to her hometown of Brno in Moravia. In addition to studying conducting under Charles Munch, during her sojourn in France she was able to compose several significant works under the watchful eye of Martinu, who, for his part, was touched to the very core of his being by his beautiful young pupil.

Since the death in 1978 of Martinu's widow, Charlotte, (they were married in 1931), and especially after the appearance of Jiri Mucha's book Podivne lasky (Strange Loves) in 1988, the romantic attachment that developed between Kapralova and Martinu has become common knowledge. Musical evidence of Kapralova and Martinu's intimacy may be discovered in Martinu's Eight Madrigals for mixed voices on texts selected from Moravian folk poetry, composed in 1939. In the biography of Martinu written in 1961 by his close friend and trusted confidant, Milos Safranek, the lyrics of the Madrigals are characterized as representing various moments in "a vague love story." Safranek also matter-of-factly affirmed that Martinu did not wish to have the work published because of "the romantic texts which, at the time of writing the Madrigals, had a special significance for the composer."

The purpose of this paper is not to trace the flowering of the relationship between Martinu and Kapralova, but rather to bring to light a very interesting series of letters Martinu and Otakar Sourek wrote to each other as a consequence of Martinu's concern for Kapralova. After a lapse of nearly two and a half years in the correspondence between the two men, on October 25, 1938 Martinu sent Sourek a hastily written, agitated plea for assistance regarding Kapralova's effort to secure another stipend from the French government so that she could return to Paris. He began with these words: "In these sorrowful times, allow me to seek your help, partly for myself but mainly for Vitulka Kapralova."
Love's Labour's Lost

famous Munich Agreement had been signed a month earlier (on September 29), and Martinu obviously feared for the personal well-being of Kapralova. 6

Judging from this and subsequent letters dated November 8 and 13, Martinu also wanted to make sure that Kapralova would be able to accept an invitation to conduct the French Radio Orchestra in performances of her own Vojenska symfonietta (Military Sinfonietta). A contract had been prepared that would place her in front of the orchestra as early as the beginning of December 1938.

Kapralova's application for renewal of the stipend was supported by letters of recommendation from, besides Sourek himself, Vitezslav Novak, Karel Boleslav Jirak, Jan Branberger, Vaclav Talich, Vaclav Stepan, and Charles Munch. 7 Even so, early reports leaking from government sources initially indicated that Kapralova would not receive a stipend, but that at least she had been selected as the first alternate. Martinu pleaded with Sourek, who was a highly respected, influential member of the Prague artistic community, to intercede on behalf of Kapralova by contacting officials connected with the Ministry of Education and Culture. Earlier, he had written to Vaclav Talich with the same entreaty. 8

On November 22, Sourek did, in fact, write a letter to Stanislav Bukovsky, who was serving at that time as Interim Minister of Education and Culture. He described Kapralova's achievements in the most glowing terms and encouraged Bukovsky to give priority to her application in the event that any of the other competitors should withdraw. Two days later Sourek received a letter from L. R. Stransky, secretary to the Minister, confirming the news transmitted orally in a conversation they must have had that day or the day before to the effect that Kapralova would receive a stipend. She returned to Paris in January 1939.

Sourek's praise of Vitezslava Kapralova was sincere, stemming from a close association with the entire Kapral family that eventually was to last twenty-seven years. Vitezslava's father, Vaclav Kapral, himself an important composer, dedicated to Sourek Obet pisni (Songs of Sacrifice) for men's chorus, which he had composed in 1917 and eventually published in 1926 under the title Modlitba (Prayer). Vitezslava likewise dedicated a major work, Suita rustica, op. 19, to Sourek. This composition, perhaps her very best, was completed on November 10, 1938, at about the same time the events we have been considering took place.

Written correspondence between Vaclav Kapral and Otakar Sourek covered the period from March 1922 right up to Kapral's death in 1947. Sourek continued to correspond with the widow Kapralova at least until July 29, 1949. A considerable body of correspondence also exists between Vitezslava and Sourek. One of the most touching and eloquent of the many communications she sent to him is a New Year's greeting for the year 1937. 9 On one side of a plain piece of heavy-stock paper cut to the size of a postcard, she drew three systems of staves for voice and piano and wrote out a newly composed setting of "K novemu roku" by the Czech Nobel Prize-winning poet Jaroslav Seifert (see fig. 1).

Vitezslava Kapralova was not quite twenty-two years old when she presented this little gem to Sourek. Today her gesture of kindness and friendship can be viewed as being uncommonly prophetic of her own untimely death and also of the beginning of a new life for her lover. 10 She died in Montpellier of tuberculosis in June 1940, in her twenty-fifth year, just as Bohuslav and Charlotte Martinu were fleeing France by a hazardous and circuitous route that eventually would lead them to America.

During the preceding seven months, Martinu not only had to concern himself with Kapralova's troubles but with his own and his wife's as well. With each passing day, political and economic conditions in France and central Europe steadily deteriorated, yet as he began groping for alternatives he felt compelled to return to his homeland. A passage in his letter to Sourek dated November 8, 1938, is worth quoting at length:

It is certain that the tribulations that lie ahead for us will be difficult and momentous for our entire nation and painful for every one of us. Even for me, like the rest, the shock has been too violent, considering that I have seen many, many things with which I cannot agree, and even your news concerning the about-face of many people does not surprise me very much. 11 I am convinced, however, that much of it is a mannered response to the pain of the first tragic moments, disappointment and even nervous exhaustion, and that, in the end—not wishing to say that truth will prevail—our people will begin to think again. In the first instant, I saw all my work of those fifteen years in Paris collapse, which really makes us grow bitter, but then I realized that not even what has happened can destroy those ideals that an artist carries in his heart and which, in fact, outlast all the changes that are taking place in the world, and from
which the "change of all values" that today is everywhere in vogue has not detracted and never will detract. And this knowledge has prodded me even to further work, although I must confess that at the moment it seems as if I shall forget completely how to compose; furthermore, I do not have the slightest inclination for work. But it all will come back again. I am finally resolved to return to Prague, and there I will be able to serve our new aims even outside of composition.\textsuperscript{12}

In the remaining letters he wrote to Sourek in the last months of 1938 and at the beginning of 1939, Martinu sought help and advice in his effort to obtain an appointment as a professor of the master class of composition at the Prague Conservatory. As his prospects gradually faded and eventually disappeared altogether, the political situation became increasingly more volatile. No choice was left to him but to flee. One month before writing his letter to Sourek on behalf of Kapralova, he had managed to convey the sense—or, properly, the nonsense—of those "sorrowful" times in his \textit{Double Concerto for Two String Orchestras, Piano, and Timpani}, completed on the very day of the calamitous Munich Agreement. Martinu's score makes us mindful once again of something articulated by Shakespeare in the fifth act of yet another of his plays, Richard II: "How sour sweet music is, when time is broke and no proportion kept! So is it in the music of men's lives."

\section*{NOTES}
\textsuperscript{1} This article was first published in \textit{Irish Musical Studies} 4, edited by Patrick F. Devine and Harry White (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 127-132. (It is reprinted here with permission of Drs. Houtchens and Devine. Translations from Czech are by Dr. Houtchens. - Ed.)
187, 189.

4 [More information about Martinu’s correspondence with Sourek can be found in Katerina Mayrova, “O cem si psali Otakar Sourek a Bohuslav Martinu,” Harmonie 3 (2003), 19-21 and Harmonie 4 (2003), 17-21. Mayrova also includes quotations from selected letters; however, Martinu’s letter dated November 8, 1938 is quoted only in this article - Ed.]

5 Letter from Martinu to Sourek dated October 25, 1938. Jarmil Burghauser kindly granted permission to use this material.

6 One consequence of the Munich Agreement was that Martinu’s hometown of Policka was occupied by the Nazis for a brief period beginning on November 6, 1938.


9 Jarmil Burghauser kindly granted permission to publish this material for the first time.

10 Seifert’s text can be translated as follows: “One waves a white scarf when saying goodbye, | Everyday something comes to an end, | Something beautiful comes to an end. | Dry those tears and smile through tear-stained eyes, | Everyday something has its beginning, | Something beautiful has its beginning.”

11 Sourek had complained in a letter written four days earlier that people were suddenly reversing their political allegiances.

12 Letter from Martinu to Sourek dated November 8, 1938, private library of Jarmil Burghauser. The translation is my own. The original reads as follows: Je jisto ze tato zkouska jez na nas ceka bude tezka a dulezita pro nas cely narod a bolestna pro kazdeho z nas. I pro mne jako ostatne pro vsechny naraz byl prilis prudky, pres to ze jsem videl mnoho a mnoho veci s nimiz jsem nemohl souhlasit a ani mne moc neudivuje Vase zprava o obratu mnohych. Jsem ale presvedcen ze mnoho z toho je zpособeno bolesti tech prvnich tragickych okamziku, zklamani a i nervo veho vyecparani a ze na konec, nechci uzi prava zvitezi alesi nasi zase zacnu premyset. I ja jsem v prvni chvili videl se zrintit celou svoji praci tech patnacti let v Parizi, ktera skutecne nam zkohrla, ale pak jsem si uvedomil ze ani co se stalo nemuze se dotknouti tech idealu jez umelce nosi ve svem svrcli a jez jsou vlastne uz jedne, kterae pretrvaly vsechny ty zmeny co se ve svete deji a jez nezasahla a nikdy nemuze zasahnouti ta “zmena vsech hodnot”, ktera je led vsude v obilie. A to vedimi ne posi luje i na dalsi prací, akoliv se Vam priznam ze momentalne se mi zda jakoby byl vubec zapomnel komponovat a take nemam zadny smysl pro prací. Ale to vese znovu priide. Chystam se vratit definitivne do Prahy a budu tedy moci i jinak nez kom pociti prosperi nasim novym cilum.

About the author

Alan Houtchens is an authority on the life and times of Antonin Dvorak, and has written numerous articles on other Czech composers and on Czech culture in general. He maintains a broadly interdisciplinary perspective in both his teaching and research activities. On the music faculty at Texas A&M University since 1989, Dr. Houtchens holds degrees in musicology and French horn performance from the University of Colorado, the University of Wyoming, and the University of California, Santa Barbara. Currently he is engaged as chief editor of Dvorak’s opera Vanda, which will be one of the first volumes to be published by Bärenreiter as part of the New Critical Edition of Dvorak’s Works.

Kapralova’s correspondence with Otakar Sourek

By Karla Hartl

The correspondence between the composer Vitezslava Kapralova and the music critic Otakar Sourek was, until fairly recently, preserved primarily in two private collections: Sourek’s letters to Kapralova have been held by the Kapralova Estate as part of the Vitezslava Kapralova Papers; Kapralova’s autographs were part of the Otakar Sourek Papers, held by the now deceased Jarmil Burghauser, Sourek’s son-in-law. Unfortunately, Kapralova’s original manuscripts did not survive and exist only in copies, thanks to Alan Houtchens, who was able to obtain them in time from Jarmil Burghauser for his 1996 article, reprinted in this issue.

The Otakar Sourek Papers contain 9 letters and 3 postcards written by Kapralova to Sourek and 3 typewritten copies of Sourek’s answers to Kapralova that the writer felt compelled to save for his future reference. Two additional (handwritten) letters written by Otakar Sourek to Vitezslava Kapralova have been preserved by the Kapralova Estate. Letters from both collections are included in the description that follows.

Kapralova’s and Sourek’s exchange of correspondence encompasses almost three years - from February 1936 to November 1938. The correspondence can be divided thematically into two basic categories: letters that express Kapralova’s gratitude for Sourek’s reviews of Kapralova’s (and - in one case - Martinu’s) music; and letters that relate to Kapralova’s efforts to secure her scholarship so that she could study at the École Normale de Musique in Paris.

The very first piece of correspondence that Kapralova addressed to Sourek is dated in Brno on 20 February 1936. In this letter she thanks Sourek for his favourable review of her “orchestral suite” in Venkov. The next piece is a postcard dated “in Brno on 12 September 1936”. Here Kapralova thanks Sourek for his favourable review of the premiere of her string quartet, and invites him to listen to a radio broadcast of her Piano Concerto that she is to conduct herself. The next is a letter dated in Prague on 11 December 1936, in which Kapralova rather apologetically asks for Sourek’s support for the upcoming concert of Moravian composers. The concert, organized by the Pritomnost Society in Prague, is scheduled for 17 December 1936, and Kapralova, as a Moravian, was asked to sell a certain number of tickets.

Another piece of correspondence to Sourek is written after a six-month pause, around the time when Kapralova was graduating from the Prague Conservatory. It is a letter dated in Prague on 16 June 1937, in which she pleads with him to support her application for a scholarship to study in France. Sourek felt compelled to save his typewritten reply which is dated “Prague, 26 July 1937”. In his letter, he apologizes for the late reply, and explains that Kapralova’s letter arrived when he was away on summer vacation. Upon his return he immediately phoned his contacts at the Ministry of Education but they too had already left for their vacation. However, he was informed that the matter was to be decided only at the end of August or early September, at which time he would certainly pledge his support. Kapralova replied with a thank you note written on a postcard dated 5 August 1937 and mailed from her summer retreat Tri Studne (postal office Frysava). On 14 September 1937, Kapralova writes to Sourek from Brno asking him to inquire about the status of her application for the French scholarship. Sourek’s reply, a letter dated in Prague on 16 September 1937, brought her the good news that she would indeed receive the stipend. In this letter Sourek also invites Kapralova to use his name for reference purposes at the Czech En-
bassy in Paris, should the need arise. In her reply, dated in Prague\(^6\) on 22 September 1937, she thanks him for his kind and effective assistance.

After another 6-month pause, Kapralova writes her next letter to Sourek from Paris. The letter is dated 30 March 1938 and it is her reaction to Sourek’s review of Martinu’s premiere of Julieta.\(^7\) Kapralova expresses her admiration for Sourek’s understanding of the work, demonstrated by his review, and praises him for the insight with which he has been analyzing contemporary Czech music. She also mentions that she likes her stay in Prague so much so that she would like to extend it for one more year.

The next piece of correspondence is written by the composer from her summer retreat Tri Studne (fig. 2). It is a postcard, dated 26 July 1938, bringing Sourek her best wishes and the best wishes of those co-signed: Vaclav Kapral, Karel Solc, and Bohuslav Martinu. A month later, Kapralova followed up with a letter, dated in Tri Studne on 22 August 1938. It is a rather substantial piece of correspondence that is worth quoting at some length.\(^8\)

I would like to ask you for a favour. Would you kindly inquire about the “health” of my scholarship application? I am getting worried, for the school year is approaching and Paris is calling me, and I feel compelled to give it one more year. For, as I claim, even if (Paris) gives me nothing (which sounds ridiculous, of course), one learns to think there - to think in a somehow broader, uplifting way, which, in my opinion, is the best way. In Prague, one thinks too, but through others. My application listed the best references one can find in Paris but my cause was damaged a bit by Prof. Kupka,\(^9\) who, when I left for Monaco, decided to believe gossip circulating about me in the Czech community in Paris, (gossip in particular blossoms there), and sent a report about my alleged “illness” to the Ministry of Education.\(^10\) Only after he had done it, he consulted my doctor who reproached him for it a bit (a lot) because my trip to Monaco was not a medical leave but only a break from my hectic Parisian lifestyle. Dr. Kupka decided not to send a correction to his report, however, citing as a reason the unwanted attention that would be drawn to my case.

Sourek responded with a letter dated in Prague, on 6 September 1938, assuring Kapralova that he followed up on the matter of her scholarship with the Secretary to the Minister, Dr. Stranský, and was able to correct the information about her alleged ill health. Although no decision had been made yet with respect to French stay, she entitled Vteriny (Seconds), op. 18.

I am now very busy. I received a commission from the Universal Edition in London to compose a suite from Czech folk songs for large orchestra,\(^12\) and I am supposed to finish the work by the 15th of the next month, although I have barely started. Besides this composition, I am trying to finish two other large orchestral works,\(^13\) of which one is half-promised too. My father

Sourek replied with a letter dated in Stechovice on 31 October 1938.\(^14\) Here he informs Kapralova that he received her letter shortly after a letter from Bohuslav Martinu concerning the very same matter. When he contacted Dr. Stransky, he was told that the decision had not been made yet because “in Paris, they seem to have some extraordinary requirements this year.”\(^15\) However, Dr. Stransky is well aware that the application has Sourek’s and Talich’s support and remains confident that Kapralova’s application will “likely” be approved. Kapralova shared this letter from Sourek with Martinu, as evident from her handwritten note “Return!” and a response in Martinu’s handwriting “Returning with thanks”\(^16\).

At the end, as Dr. Houtchens mentions in his article, Kapralova’s scholarship was renewed, and a grateful Kapralova wrote her last letter that is preserved in Sourek’s collection, dated “Prague, 24 November 1938”. In this letter, she thanks Sourek for his kind assistance, and asks him to accept her dedication of Suite rustica to him, as a token of her gratitude. Kapralova must have believed that Sourek was instrumental in the renewal of her scholarship if she decided to dedicate this substantial piece of orchestral writing, by some considered to be her best work, to Sourek. Sourek was truly touched by her gesture and accepted the honour with pride in his reply dated in Prague on 28 November 1938.\(^17\) His letter was to be the last in the collection of correspondence between these two remarkable individuals who were never to meet again.

NOTES

1 except for 1 letter held by the Moravian Museum in Brno.
2 Kapralova is referring to Suite en miniature, premiered by the Brno Radiojournal Ensemble and the conductor Theodor Schaefer in a Brno Radio broadcast on 7 February 1936. Sourek’s review appeared in Venkov on 11 February 1936.
3 Rather typically for Kapralova, she dated the postcard incorrectly. She wrote it on 12 October 1936, after her string quartet had been performed by Moravian Quartet in Brno on 5 October 1936. Sourek’s review of the premiere performance was printed in Venkov on 8 October 1936. Kapralova’s Piano Concerto, to which she is referring in her correspondence to Sourek, was broadcast by Brno Radio on 15 October 1936 at 15:00.
4 Interestingly, Kapralova failed to mention to Sourek that the concert was to feature yet another premiere of her music, a song cycle entitled Jabiko s klina (Apple from the Lap), op. 10. The work was performed at the concert of the Pritomnost Society on 17 December 1936 by Masa Fleischnerova (voice) and Ludvík Kundera (piano). The letter’s envelope also included a handmade postcard, (reprinted on page 3), with Kapralova’s song “K novemu roku” (For New Year’s Day). Kapralova later included the song in a collection of eight occasional songs that she entitled Vteriny (Seconds), op. 18.
5 On 8 June 1937 Kapralova applied to the Ministry of Education for a French government scholarship, hoping to be able to continue her postgraduate studies at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris. She did not leave her application to chance, however, and sought the support of a number of influential members of the Prague artistic community that also included Sourek.
6 Kapralova was in Prague attending the funeral of T.G. Masaryk, President of the Czechoslovak Republic.
7 The opera’s premiere took place in Prague on 16 March 1938.
February 20 - Brno Publisher O. Pazdrik confirms his interest in publishing *Burlesque*, op. 3b.¹

March - Vitezslava composes her remarkable art song *Leden / January*, for voice, piano, flute, two violins, and violoncello.

May 9 - *Burlesque* and *Legend* are given their first performance by Jan Lorenz and Frantisek Jilek in Brno.

*Burlesque* is published by Pazdrik in Brno.

June - *Sonata appassionata*, op. 6, for piano

December 5 - *Two Songs* are premiered by Milada Musilova and Frantisek Vrana in a private performance at the Brno Conservatory.

1934

June 1 - *Sonata appassionata* is premiered by Frantisek Jilek in Brno.

Kapralova's parents finish building their summer house in Tri Studne.

September - Theodor Schaefer joins the staff of Kapral's private music school. He is to become Vitezslava's tutor and close friend.

Vitezslava begins composing *Piano Concerto in D-Minor*.

1935

April - Vitezslava meets Rudolf Firkusny at his concert in Brno where he performs Martinu's *Second Piano Concerto*. The work, particularly its second movement, makes a deep impression on her.

June 17 - The first movement of Kapralova's *Piano Concerto in D-Minor* is premiered by the Conservatory Orchestra under the baton of Kapralova, with Prof. Ludvik Kundera as soloist, at the Brno Conservatory graduation concert at Stadium in Brno.

June 28 - Vitezslava Kapralova graduates from the Brno Conservatory.

July 4 - Kapralova's Sonata *in D-Minor* is premiered by the Conservatory Orchestra under the baton of Kapralova, with Prof. Ludvik Kundera as soloist, at the Brno Conservatory graduation concert at Stadium in Brno.

Vitezslava wins the Frantisek Neumann Award for the best graduate composition.

Vitezslava begins orchestrating four of her Five Compositions for Piano, op. 1 as *Suite en miniature* for chamber orchestra. Summer - Vitezslava spends her summer holidays in Tri Studne and begins composing her *String Quartet*, op. 8.

October 2 - Vitezslava Kapralova is accepted to the master-classes of Vitezslav Novak, a pupil of Antonin Dvorak and one of the foremost Czech composers of the first half of the 20th-century, and of Vaclav Talich, the legendary Czech conductor.

October 8 - *Dve kytky / Two Bouquets of Flowers*, for piano

October - Vitezslava's first assignment given by Novak is to compose a passacaglia. After an initial struggle with the form (and Novak) she solves the musical problem with her usual wit and humour and the result is *Grotesque Passacaglia*.[1]

*Grotesque Passacaglia* and *Legend* are given their first performance by Jan Lorenz and Frantisek Jilek in Brno.

Kapralova's parents finish building their summer house in Tri Studne.

Kapralova's return to Paris. Martinu's correspondence has been recently published in *Arts Consultant for the Department of Canadian Heritage*. Her articles on Kapralova have appeared in *Tempo, Journal of the International Alliance for Women in Music, VivaVoce, Czech Music, and the Kapralova Society Newsletter*.

About the author

Karla Hartl is founder and chair of the Kapralova Society, an international music society based in Toronto, dedicated to promoting Kapralova and other women in music. A graduate of Charles University (Prague) and University of Toronto, she has worked as Program Consultant for Status of Women Canada and more recently as Arts Consultant for the Department of Canadian Heritage. Her articles on Kapralova have appeared in *Tempo, Journal of the International Alliance for Women in Music, VivaVoce, Czech Music, and the Kapralova Society Newsletter*.

[continued p. 10]
Fig. 2: Vitezslava Kapralova with friends in Tri Studne in July 1938. From left to right: Zdenka Duchoslavova, Vitezslava Kapralova, Bohuslav Martinu, Jaroslav Kricka. Photo: Oldrich Duchoslav. Used with permission of the Duchoslav Family.
Where are all the women composers? Reclaiming a cultural heritage.

By Eugene Gates

Writing in 1940, anthropologist Margaret Mead observed: "Once a complex activity is defined as belonging to one sex, the entrance of the other sex into it is made difficult and compromising" (1975, p. 247). Nowhere has this been more apparent than in the field of musical composition - an enterprise traditionally dominated by men. This article focuses on the obstacles that women have encountered in their attempts to establish a presence in this field, and the challenge that the historical invisibility of eminent female creators of art music poses to music education.

Through a conspiracy of silence on the part of historians (Jezic and Binder, 1987), coupled with the gender-biased writings of philosophers and music critics of the past (Schopenhauer, 1952; Upton, 1899) and of psychologists both past and present (Gates, in press), the age-old myth has been perpetuated that the gift of musical creativity is granted only to males. Yet, despite their invisibility, women have been active as composers throughout the entire history of Western art music, frequently producing works of lasting significance.

It is no coincidence that the vast majority of women composers of the past emerged during the latter part of the nineteenth century, a time of increased educational opportunities for women. Indeed, prior to the establishment of conservatories in the late eighteen and nineteenth centuries, and their subsequent reluctant acceptance of female students into classes in theory and composition in the final two decades of the nineteenth century, only three groups of women had access to adequate musical instruction: nuns, daughters of noble and wealthy families, and those fortunate enough to be born into a family of musicians who nurtured equally the creative talents of their daughters and sons (Neuls-Bates, 1982). Even when they did have the opportunity to acquire the skills they needed to become composers, most women did not enjoy the freedom from household responsibilities and child-rearing nor the financial independence that would have enabled them to undertake sustained creative work. Moreover, the chosen few who were more fortunately placed often encountered an impenetrable wall of discrimination and prejudice when attempting to gain a fair hearing for their music (Gates, 1992).

Since the 1890s, observers have been claiming that the obstacles in the way of women composers have disappeared. While it is true that the lot of women composers has improved significantly in recent years, there are still many impediments to be overcome. Not the least of these is the psychological barrier that exists in the woman composer’s mind - the result of internalizing negative societal attitudes toward female creativity. Consider the following statement by American composer Miriam Gideon: “Since serving on many committees and juries I’ve come to sense that there is a subtle discrimination against women. It’s almost unconscious, but I’ve recognized it even in myself. When I’m being very honest, trying to nab my prejudices as I come across them, I’m aware of the tendency to be more skeptical about a woman composer than about a man” (Hinely, 1984, p. 14).

Gideon’s acknowledged tendency to be more skeptical about women composers than about their male counterparts is neither unusual nor surprising. Psychological research has shown that the same piece of professional or creative work is often rated more highly when attributed to a man than to a woman (Archer and Lloyd, 1985). Researchers have also found that, while men tend to view their successes in terms of their ability and hard work, and their failures as lack of effort, women are more likely to attribute their successes to luck, and their failures to lack of ability (Archer and Lloyd) - a further indication of the extent to which they internalize society’s generally negative view of their creative potential.

The fact that gender considerations come into play in the search for artistic excellence is further illustrated by the case of a painting entitled Charlotte du Val d’Ognes, in the holdings of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Long thought to have been the work of David, the painting plummeted both in monetary value and in critical esteem when it was discovered that it was really the work of a woman - Constance-Marie Charpentier (Wolff, 1983).

The negative conditioning of musically gifted young women of creative ability begins with a lack of role models, for the predominantly male chroniclers of music history have largely excluded women’s creative achievements from the historical record. As Dale Spender (1982) explains it: “Women have been kept ‘off the record’ ... by the simple process of men naming the world as it appears to them... They have assumed that their experience is universal, that it is representative of humanity, and that it constitutes a basis for generalizing about all human beings. Whenever the experience of women is different from men, therefore, it stays ‘off the record,’ for there is no way of entering it into the record when the experience is not shared by men, and men are the ones who write the record” (p. 24).

The historical silence surrounding women composers deprives musically gifted women of the awareness that they are part of a long tradition of female creativity in music, and also prevents them from learning from the past so that they can refine their own heritage - something that male composers, with their ‘great men in music’ role models, have always been able to do. Instead, their self-confidence often becomes seriously eroded, they begin to doubt the value of their creative powers, and, because of lack of access to contradictory historical evidence, eventually come to believe the socially cherished myth of their supposedly innate creative inferiority.

Composer Annea Lockwood, born in New Zealand and now living in New York, has written poignantly about what it means to grow up without any knowledge of a tradition of women composers into which one can fit:

“I slowly became aware of the preponderance of male figures in the cultural world. I was educated solely by men once I’d reached the university level, with the exception of my piano teacher... Had I had close contact with a woman composer during those years, I would have become aware of the cultural imbalance much sooner and it might have enabled me to see what I thought were merely personal problems in a truer and broader context. ...As for the benefits of growing up learning about the women musicians and composers of earlier periods, they were so totally absent from texts and consideration that I can't fathom the extent of the difference it would have made having their names and work before me” (Fromm, 1988, p. 50).

Thanks to the pioneering efforts of a small number of feminist musicologists, women composers are at last beginning to learn about the existence of their forebears, but little of this important new research has found its way into standard music history textbooks.
Contemporary composer Emma Lou Diemer recently told an interviewer, “I can remember well that a few years ago the only names of women composers that I knew were Clara Schumann and myself” (Fromm, 1988, p. 44). And Diemer’s colleague Priscilla McLean has written, “I was brought up to believe that all composers were men” (Fromm, 1988).

It should now be apparent that the historical neglect of women composers, coupled with the social myth that it supports (i.e., that women are innately incapable of creating important and enduring musical works), presents a major challenge to music educators. This is dramatically underscored by an incident which occurred in a fourth-year music education seminar at Queen’s University in March of 1989, when the topic under discussion was sexism and education and its possible relationship to music. In response to the suggestion that more information on women composers be included in the curriculum, a female student said: “They can’t be any good. If women composers were any good we would already know about them” (Lamb, 1990, p. 11). This student’s response reflects the sexist bias of her training in music history.

It is readily apparent that a great deal of work needs to be done on the part of music educators, for traditional music history, as it is both written and taught, presents an incomplete, one-sided view of the history of the art. The exclusion of women composers’ achievements from the historical record not only leads to the construction of distorted explanations (such as the explanation that “if women composers were any good we would already know about them”), but it also conveys the strong message that composition is not an activity to be pursued by women.

We have no way of knowing how many creatively gifted young women may have been discouraged from embarking upon a composing career because they knew of no historical role models, but there probably have been a considerable number. In a study conducted by psychologist Paul Farnsworth, top-ranking students at Stanford University were asked to rate a series of artistic activities on a musculinity-femininity scale. The activities deemed most masculine by both men and women were largely of the creative type—including musical composition. Summing up his findings, Farnsworth (1960) wrote:

“Women appear to be so impressed by the dismal picture history has so far given of their contributions to the arts that they picture creativity as an enduring characteristic of the masculine role. So long as they retain this picture of themselves, it is likely that relatively few will ...put forth the effort essential to sustained creativity” (p. 349).

The message to music educators is clear. We must help female students overcome these negative, debilitating patterns of thought by making them aware of the long tradition of female creativity in music that has been 'written out' of mainline history. In short, we need to provide them with role models. To accomplish this end, those of us who teach music appreciation and music history must do all in our power to integrate the music of women composers into our courses.3 We must also make the authors, editors, and publishers of music textbooks aware of the importance of incorporating materials on women composers into their works—not just in the footnotes, appendices, and special indexes, but in the main body of the text. But it is not enough merely to acquaint students with how good the many women composers were whose works have lain neglected on library shelves. If we really want to present our students with an accurate account of music history, we must further insist that the authors of textbooks draw attention to the social factors that prevented many other works from being written.

The ‘great man/great works’ approach, which continues to influence the writing and teaching of music history, should by now have gone the way of the dodo. But musicology is an extremely conservative discipline, and has fallen conceptually far behind other branches of critical thought in the arts (Kerman, 1985). As Don Randel (1986) reminds us: "Unlike literary studies, musicology has not yet produced a significant body of ...feminist work" (p. 521). If enough music educators are willing to put forth the necessary effort, there is every reason to believe that we can expedite the process. Should we succeed, we will have gone a long way toward exploding the social myth of woman's creative inferiority in music.

NOTES
1 [This article was first published in Canadian Music Educator 35 (Spring 1994): 17-19. It is reprinted here with permission of the author Dr. Eugene Gates and the journal's editor Dr. Lee Willingham - Ed.]
3 Fortunately, this is not as daunting a project as it might seem, because a number of scores and recordings of women's music, and books on their lives and works have become available in the past few years. See, for example, the following: Bowers and Tick (1985); Briscoe (1987); Jezic (1986); Neuls-Bates (1982); Pendle (1991).

REFERENCE LIST

About the author

Eugene Gates holds a B.A. in music (Acadia University), an M.A. in music criticism (McMaster University), and an Ed.D. in aesthetics of music (University of Toronto). He teaches piano, organ, music history and music appreciation at the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto. His research interests include women in music, historical performance practice, and history of opera. His articles on women composers and other musical subjects have appeared in the Journal of Aesthetic Education, Canadian Music Educator, Journal of the American Liszt Society, Music Educators Journal, Tempo, VivaVoce, Czech Music, and University of Toronto Quarterly.

Kapralova’s life chronology [cont. from page 6]

November - Vitezslava begins composing Preludium [Three Pieces for Piano, op. 9].
December 4 - HMUB informs Kapralova that her Grotesque Passacaglia placed first in the Tempo competition among 24 compositions submitted. 4
December - Vitezslava finishes orchestration of her Suite en miniature.
December - Vitezslava begins composing Crab Canon [Three Pieces for Piano, op. 9].
December 26 - Vitezslava spends her winter holidays in Tri Studne.

1936

February 7 - Suite en miniature is given its first performance in Brno by the Brno Radiojournal Ensemble under the baton of Theodor Schaefer.
February - Vitezslava spends another short vacation in Tri Studne.
February 16 - first sketch of Vezdicka / Little Star [Two Choruses, op. 17]
February 20 - Second movement of string quartet
February 27 - Jaro na polonine / Spring on the Meadows
March 25 - Vitezslava finishes her String Quartet, op. 8. 5
April - Vitezslava composes Ukolebavka / Lullaby [Apple from the Lap, op. 10] and consults the composition with Novak.
April 20 - Pisnicka / Little Song
May 29 - Vitezslava composes the theme of Vojenska symfonietta / Military Sinfonietta, op. 11.
June 5 - Vitezslava leaves for a sanatorium in Jince. 6
Grotesque Passacaglia is published in Tempo.
September 8 - final version of Lullaby [Apple from the Lap]
September 26 - Jarni pouť / Spring Fair [Apple from the Lap]
October 5 - String Quartet, op. 8 is premiered by the Moravian Quartet in Brno.
October 15 - Vitezslava conducts the Brno Radio Orchestra in her Piano Concerto in D-Minor, op. 7.
October 23 - Three Pieces for Piano are premiered by Karel Solc in Prague, at a concert organized by the Pritomnost Society.

1937

January 1 - New Year Carol is published by Melantrich.
January 4 - Vitezslava begins orchestrating her Military Sinfonietta.
January 24 - on Kapralova’s birthday - Bohuslav Martinu finishes

Fig. 3: From left to right: Zdenka Duchoslavova, Theodor Schaefer, and Vitezslava Kapralova, c1936. Photo: Oldrich Duchoslav. Photo courtesy of the Duchoslav Family.
Kapralova's life chronology

his operatic masterpiece Julietta. The opera is to have a very special meaning for both Martinu and Kapralova. He is yet to meet her...

February 12 - *Cim je muj zal* / What Is My Sorrow [For Ever]

February 13 - *Navzdy* / For Ever [For Ever], dedicated to Milada Kunderova

February 14 - *Ostinato Fox*, dedicated to Jirinka Cernusakova

February 23 - Vitezslava finishes orchestration of her *Military Sinfonietta*.

March - Bohuslav Martinu arrives in Czechoslovakia to begin preparations with Vaclav Talich for the premiere of Julietta at the National Theatre in Prague.

March 5 - *Velikonoce* / Easter [Seconds], dedicated to Gracian Cernusak

March 11 - *Jarni popevek* / Spring Tune and *Prvni bol* / First Sorrow, [Tri klavirni skladbicky pro deti / Three Piano Pieces for Children], dedicated to Mila Ruzickova

March 26 - *Leta mlic leta jdu* / The Years Pass in Silence [Seconds], dedicated to Vaclav Kapral

March 28 - *Easter* is printed in *Lidove noviny*.

March 31 - The National Women's Council wants to program an orchestral work by a Czech woman composer - Novak recommends Kapralova's *Military Sinfonietta*.

April 2 - Vitezslava meets Dr. Jan Loewenbach at Spolecensky klub in Prague.

April 4 - *Ukolebavka* / Lullaby [Three Piano Pieces for Children], dedicated to Prof. R. Sichova

April 8 - Vitezslava Kapralova and Bohuslav Martinu meet in Prague. Martinu advises Kapralova to continue her postgraduate studies in Paris.

April 15 - Vitezslava begins composing first of the four piano preludes *Dubnova preludia* / April Preludes, op. 13.

May 3 - Second April Prelude

May 11 - Third April Prelude

May 31 - *Spring Tune and First Sorrow* [Three Piano Pieces for Children] are premiered at the Smetana Museum in Prague.

June 3 - *Sbohem a satecek* / Waving Farewell, op. 14, for voice and piano, dedicated to Prague

June 8 - Vitezslava applies to the Ministry of Education for a French government scholarship so that she can continue her postgraduate studies in France.

June 16 - Last class with Vitezslava Novak. Vitezslava writes to Otakar Sourek asking him to support her application for the French scholarship.  

June 19 - *Waving Farewell* is premiered by Jarmla Vavrdova and the composer at the Victoria College in Prague.

June 26 - Vitezslava graduates with distinction from the Prague Conservatory.

Summer - Vitezslava spends most of her summer holidays in her beloved village of Tri Studne, making short trips to Luhaovice, Uhersky Brod, Javorina, Zlin, and Trencianske Teplice.

September 12 - Vitezslava finishes her *April Preludes*, op. 13, and dedicates the work to Rudolf Firkusny.

September 14 - Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's first president, dies. Vitezslava composes piano interlude *Posmrtna varace* / Posthumous Variation [Seconds] in his memory.

September 16 - Vitezslava receives the good news from Otakar Sourek that her scholarship application has been approved.

September 18 - Posthumous Variation is printed in *Lidove noviny*.

October 3 - Radio broadcast of *For Ever*

October 5 - *April Preludes* are premiered by Dana Setkova at a concert organized by the Pritomnost Society in Prague.

October 9 - Vitezslava receives a one-year scholarship to study at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris.

October 15 - Radio broadcast of *Three Pieces for Piano*, op. 9, performed by Ludvik Kundera


NOTES

1 I am indebted to Dana Neprasova for providing me with this information. The letter is preserved in the OSA Archives in Prague.

2 *Tempo* was a music journal published by HMUB, one of the most important publishers of sheet music in Czechoslovakia, active during 1907-1949.

3 Pritomnost Society - a society for contemporary music, based in Prague. The organization was operating between 1924-1949. It was revived in 1991.

4 For the full story, see Kapralova's correspondence published in the Kapralova Society Newsletter 1 (2004): 7.

5 According to Kapralova's biographer Jiri Macek, Kapralova sketched the entire composition during summer 1935 and brought its score to Novak's class only for his final review.

6 Yet, judging from Kapralova's letter to her parents written in June, it is clear that her health was not deteriorating in any way. It is likely that this was one of the "health prevention" stays, still popular with the Czech middle class that liked to visit spas and sanatoria "to recover one's strength".

7 This was in fact the work's world premiere, since Kapralova's graduation concert just "sampled" the work by featuring the first movement of the composition.

8 see fig.1 on page 3

9 Some writers seem to imply that the work was inspired by Martinu's love affair with Kapralova (e.g. Matthew Boyd, 1997). Although the two met only after Martinu finished the opera, Julietta did have a very special meaning for both Martinu and Kapralova, as it seemed to anticipate their love relationship. Interestingly, Martinu was not the only composer who was inspired by Neveux's text. Theodor Schaefer, a Brno composer and another close friend of Kapralova, composed the opera ("Julie a snar") in 1933-34, several years before Martinu set to the same task.

10 I am indebted to Alan Houtchens for providing me with copies of Kapralova's and Sourek's correspondence (see pages 4-6).

11 Committee Chair: V. Kurz, members: V. Novak, L. Zelenka, J. Herman, J. Kocian, J. Kricka, K. Hoffmeister, J. Branberger. The evaluation of the committee reads as follows: "All Kapralova's work is imbued with youth, overflowing with lively temperament and creative daring. Possessing fresh inventiveness and a fine compositional technique, Kapralova worked easily, but not shakily, in all genres of composition - piano, voice, chamber music, and orchestra. She surprised all by her individualistic solution to the problem of the chaconne and by the unified structure of the sinfonietta. Her marked talent justifies hopes for the brightest future". (English translation © L. Hatrick, 2004.)

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

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

RITONEL, OP. 25
Ritornel for violoncello and piano is one of the two-piece set entitled Deux ritournelles pour violoncelle et piano, op. 25. Kapralova composed the two pieces in May 1940 in Paris (the autograph of the cello part of one of the ritournels is dated "Paris, Mai 1940"), finishing the set on or around 11 May 1940. Of the two ritournels, only one has survived, thanks to pianist Hermann Grab who brought its copy to the United States. The pieces were to be premiered by Karel Neumann (violoncello) and Hermann Grab (piano) in Paris on 29 May 1940, but, due to the rapidly worsening political situation, the concert had to be cancelled. Karel Neumann premiered the work later that year in London. This edition of the work was prepared by editors Prof. Milos Stedron and Prof. Leos Faltus.
H 7827, ISMN M-2601-0114-2, 28 pages, price: 9 EUR

The works are published with the assistance of The Kapralova Society