**The Prague Philharmonia**

In 1994, the world-famous conductor Jiři Bělohlavek, together with a group of talented young musicians, founded the Prague Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra. Its successes abroad and its expanding repertoire led the orchestra first to change its name to the PKF – Prague Philharmonia, and now, in the 2024/2025 season, the orchestra is presenting itself as the Prague Philharmonia. Over the last 30 years, the orchestra has gained respect throughout the music world for its characteristic sound as well as for the focus of its repertoire – music by Joseph Haydn, W. A.Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven. Its core repertoire also includes music by Antonin Dvořak, Bedřich Smetana and their successors, as well as French and German composers ranging from Robert Schumann to Johannes Brahms and Maurice Ravel. 20th century compositions and new contemporary works are an integral part of its repertoire. The Prague Philharmonia retains its chambre character as well as its passionate commitment and attention to detail, although today it falls between a chamber ensemble and a small symphony orchestra in terms of its size.

Since its founding, the orchestra has been led by a number of renowned chief conductors, each of whom has contributed in his own way to the development of the Prague Philharmonia’s distinctive sound. After Jiři Bělohlavek, Kaspar Zehnder took over the role of chief conductor in 2005, followed by Jakub Hrůša in 2008. Since the beginning of the 2015/2016 season the orchestra has been led by the French conductor Emmanuel Villaume. The Prague Philharmonia has also performed with internationally famous soloists including Julian Rachlin, Martha Argerich, Jefim Bronfman, Andras Schiff, Gil Shaham, Isabelle Faust, Emmanuel Pahud, Luciano Pavarotti, Diana Damrau, Anna Netrebko, Placido Domingo, Gautier Capucon, Maxim Vengerov, Mischa Maisky, Juan Diego Florez, Jonas Kaufmann and many others. The orchestra is regularly invited to international music festivals (BBC Proms, Dresdner Musikfestspiele, MITO Settembre Musica, Prague Spring, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden) and gives concerts at top world venues (Berliner Philharmonie, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Gasteig Munich, Tokyo Suntory Hall, Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre in Kuwait, Festspiel Baden-Baden, Seoul Arts Center, Musikverein and Theatre Champs-Elysees, among others).

The discography of this ensemble includes more than 90 compact discs for prestigious international and Czech music labels (Deutsche Grammophon, Warner Classics, Sony Classical, Decca, EMI, Harmonia Mundi and Supraphon). Its recordings have garnered numerous prizes: the Gold Record RAC Canada in 2000, the Harmonie Award in 2001 and the Diapason d’Or in 2007. Its CD Héroïque with Bryan Hymel was nominated for the International Opera Award in 2016, and its CD Bohemian Rhapsody with Gabor Boldoczki was nominated for the International Classical Music Award (ICMA) in 2017. Its Ravel, Debussy & Bizet CD received excellent reviews from the London Sunday Times, Gramophone and the BBC Music Magazine, which included it in its top 10 recordings of the week; its CD with the acclaimed tenor Benjamin Bernheim for Deutsche Grammophon from November 2019 won the Opus Klassik Award and numerous accolades in the international press (the Diapason d’Or and Choc de Classica,

among others).

The orchestra has recently toured Japan, Germany, Italy, Turkey, France and Taiwan, and has performed at the Musikverein in Vienna. In 2023, it made a successful recording for Deutsche Grammophon with the tenor Jonathan Tetelman as well as a recording of Penderecki’s compositions with the flutist Stathis Karapanos (Warner Classics).